

# THE STEEPLE

## Williston Federated Church

### Pastor's Message

Dear members and friends of the Williston Federated Church family,

*For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. Jeremiah 29:11*

There is a CD that Gary and I have been listening to lately. *When October Goes* is a compilation of songs performed by a number of artists. One of those songs, *When Fall Comes to New England*, is written and sung by Cheryl Wheeler. Here are some of the lyrics:

*When fall comes to New England, the sun slants in so fine  
And the air's so clear you can almost hear the grapes grow on the vine  
The nights are sharp with starlight and the days are cool and clean  
And in the blue sky overhead, the northern geese fly south instead  
And leaves are Irish Setter red*

I find in those lyrics the delight of the season of fall. I also find the invitation to embrace the change that our seasons offer. I have enjoyed this summer so much - even with it's late start - rain and all. I find a challenge in leaving behind the early morning sunrises and the longer days, the sweet corn, sitting on the back porch, kayaking on warm waters. As I move through this challenge, I am journaling about those moments in fall that I do embrace: the "Irish Setter" reds, the plans for chicken pie supper, a hike on a cool and crisp day. Change.

We are invited as a church family to engage in conversation about those things we truly value and honor in our life together...and those places where we wish to see some changes. The opportunity is there through the month of October and at the Vision Retreat on November 7 for those conversations. Please see the information on this on another page in this newsletter.

What I wish to write on this page is in response to a book I am reading (again), Holy Conversations: Strategic Planning as a Spiritual Practice for Congregations by Gil Rendle and Alice Mann. The authors posit that these "Holy Conversations" about our purpose, our vision, and our identity are important conversations. The authors write, "without a clear sense of a shared identity, purpose, goals, and strategies, plans may never get off the ground. Energy can wane. Frustrations may simmer."

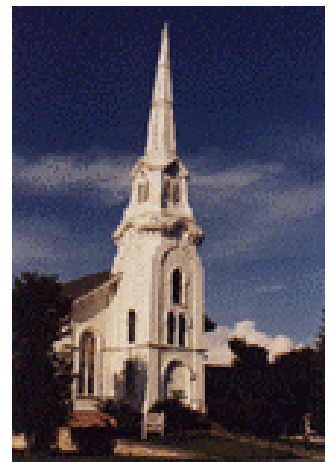
The process of Visioning is based on the insight that before making plans to do things, congregations need to engage in discernment and dialogue around core questions such as, "what is God calling us to be or do?" "What works well for you in this faith community?" "Where and how do you find spiritual life and growth?" In this approach planning is *conversation*, because it truly is dialogue. And conversation is *holy* because, at its best, it is about our understanding of our identity as a faith community with a sense of purpose and a dynamic and growing relationship with God.

Your voice, your opinion, your prayers, your presence...all of these are vital to the church family. Please participate in this Visioning process as we continue on this journey of faith together.

Some closing lyrics from Cheryl Wheeler:

*'Cause when fall comes to New England  
Oh I can't turn away  
From fading light on flying wings  
And late good-byes a robin sings  
And then another thousand things  
When fall comes to New England'*

Peace,  
Pastor Joan



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Church Office Hours:  
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Phone: 878-5792  
E-mail: [office@steeple.org](mailto:office@steeple.org)

Sunday Worship  
Service:  
9:30 AM

**Pastor:**

Rev. Joan Newton O'Gorman

**Local Pastor:**

Rev. Charlie Magill

**Student Pastor:**

Paula Gile

**Church Secretary:**

Suzi Ange-Roland

**Organist and Choir**

**Accompanist:**

Carolyn Pillsbury

**Music Director:**

Martin Hain

**Nursery Caregiver:**

Michelle Davis

**Service of Installation for Brigid Farrell Oct. 4<sup>th</sup> at Hedding UMC, Barre** ~ Bishop Susan Hassinger will preside at a service for the Celebration and Welcoming of Brigid Farrell as superintendent of the Green Mountain District and of the Vermont District which will come into being in July 2010. This service will be held at the Hedding UMC in Barre on Sunday, October 4, at 3:00 p.m. Members and friends of all United Methodist churches in Vermont are invited to this service.

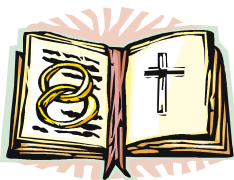
**Mission Committee News** ~ On October 5th, please be generous in response to a special offering of both the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ. Your offering will be equally divided between the UMC which provides scholarships for U.S. and international students with a priority given to those who are studying in the areas of global health, elimination of poverty, and congregational development. The UCC "Neighbors in Need" offering supports ministries of justice and compassion through the U.S. including the Council for American Indian Ministry and justice and advocacy projects.

**Scripture Reading Workshop** ~ all current, past and future readers are invited to a workshop in the sanctuary for an hour on October 20 at 6:30pm. Led by Joe Maloney and Esta Brayton (Music & Worship Committee), the goal is to strengthen the worship experience for all. Please come with your questions, suggestions and prayerful thoughts. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

**Mums the Word** ~ If you pass by the flowers that are at the entry way and they look thirsty, please give them a drink. And a big thank you to Cathy Michaels for the beautiful mums. Thanks Cathy!

**Mission Friends** ~ Our mission trip to Texas to help with hurricane Ike recovery is taking shape. We are going to have two weeks of work, October 18-24 and October 25 - 31. Our capacity is 30 people each week. The first week is scheduled around the Vermont school break, so we expect a focus on youth, although the trip is open to everyone. Because of the youth, everyone going that week will have to go through a free "safe sanctuaries" background check. We will find out the exact church where we will stay in late September or early October. Our plan is to fly to Houston on Sunday morning and drive to the area where we will be working. We will caravan back to Houston in time for mid-morning flights on Saturday. If you plan to participate in this, call the group organizer, Tony Lamb, 876-1200, to be sure there is still space, send \$50.00 per person to Williston Federated Church Mission Trip, 44 North Williston Rd, Williston VT, 05495, and get your airline tickets to Houston. We look forward to a tiring, rewarding, hard working, and enjoyable time serving Christ and the people of Texas in their time of need.

**Cheer Baskets** ~ Donations are needed for Cheer Baskets. It can be any small gift you think might cheer someone up or give them a lift while going through a long illness. This might include hard candy, journal, inspirational book, CD or movie, stamps, note cards, special socks, teddy bear, soy candle, Willow Tree Angel, small colorful towel/washcloth, pocket Kleenex, soup mug, booties, flowers, movie tickets, tea or something that made you feel better in the past. Baskets, gift wrap and ribbon are also needed. Any items may be left in the church office. For more information, please call Ginger Isham at 878-4875 or Barb Powell at 878-5347. Thank you for your help.



### LECTIONARY

Each Sunday we join Christians from many faith communities in hearing God's Word as selected from the *Revised Common Lectionary* ~ readings that over a period of 3 years take us through much of the Bible. Following are the Lectionary readings for this month ~ one or more are read aloud during the service.

**October 4**  
 Job 1:1; 2:1-10  
 Psalm 26  
 Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12  
 Mark 10:2-16

**October 11**  
 Job 23:1-9, 16-17  
 Psalm 22:1-15  
 Hebrews 4:12-16  
 Mark 10:17-31

**October 18**  
 Job 38:1-7 (34-41)  
 Psalm 104:1-9, 24, 35c  
 Hebrews 5:1-10  
 Mark 10:35-45

**October 25**  
 Job 42:1-6, 10-17  
 Psalm 34:1-8 (19-22)  
 Hebrews 7:23-28  
 Mark 10:46-52

**Chicken Pie Supper** ~ The Church's Annual Chicken Pie Supper will be on Saturday, October 10th with seatings at 5:00, 6:00 and 7:00pm. Take out will also be available. Ticket are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. All meals, including take out, are by reservation only. Call early, we always sell out! The sign up sheets for help are on the bulletin board. There are many slots so sign up early to get your favorite job! This is always a fun event that requires the entire church family to be involved to make work. Your mission: Tell all your neighbors and friends, call Carol Bouchard for reservations at 862-7400 and sign up to help. All proceeds will support mission projects. Thanks in advance!

**Shared Ministries** ~ Membership is looking to update the Shared Ministries data base which is housed on Suzi's computer. This data base helps identify many areas we often need help in, and who is willing to help. A survey is in this issue of the October Steeple and extras can be found on the table by the name tags near the back entrance of the church. Please fill out a survey (double-sided to save paper if there are two people in your household who can help). You may leave them in the church office, church mailbox, mail it or hand it to someone on the Membership Committee. Thank you for helping us update this important information. ~ Membership

**Mission Committee News** ~ On October 5, World Communion Sunday will be observed. On this date, we invite you to be generous in response to a special offering. Both the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ suggest a special offering be taken on this Sunday. This offering will be equally divided between our two denominations. How will your offering be used? The United Methodist Church "provides scholarships for U.S. (racial- and ethnic-minority) and international students.. These scholarships enable people from around the world to serve and lead in their home churches and communities by making higher education a reality. Ethnic scholarship recipients study in a wide variety of fields: family pastoral care, Christian-Muslim relations, clinical psychology, peace and governance, crop production, law and more. Priority areas of mission include elimination of poverty, expansion of global health, leadership and congregational development. We can make a difference for the future by preparing and nurturing the students of today." (umc.org) The United Church of Christ "Neighbors in Need" offering "supports the UCC's ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States.



### **Christmas Bazaar ~ November 21st 9 AM - 3 PM ~**

The Christmas Bazaar is coming soon. Here is a list of the various tables at the bazaar and ways in which you can help. If you would like to help or if you need more information contact any of the people listed below. A sign up will appear the end of October. on the bulletin board near the kitchen. All proceeds from the Bazaar, with the exception of the Silent Auction, go to various local and world wide missions. The Silent Auction money will benefit the youth groups.

**Craft Table** ~ Chairperson, Carol Bouchard 862-7400 - We need hand made items such as mittens, scarves, ornaments, jewelry, wooden items, Christmas or other holiday decorations. If you need ideas, call Carol.

**Bake Sale Table** ~ Chairperson, Rebecca Dubois 658-2865 - We need all sorts of baked goods including pies, cakes, cookies, breads, jams, pickles, fudge etc. The bake sale table is one of the most popular.

**Plant Table** ~ Chairpersons ~ Romaine Decamp 288-9114 & Polly Malik 879-6968 - We need houseplants, dried flowers, wreaths, gourds and gifts for gardeners.

**RAADA Cutlery** ~ Chairperson, Jan Lawson 985-3355 - Here you will find great kitchen knives and utensils.

**Silent Auction** ~ Chairperson, Liz Lemieux. 878-0221 - Proceeds from this event will go to the youth group - Donations of goods and services of all types are needed - Be creative!

**Lunch** ~ Chairperson Vicki Watson, 434-5637 - We will be serving home made soups, bread, chili & hot-dogs. Donations of soup are needed.

**Pie Baking** ~ Date TBA ~ Please come peel apples or roll out pie crust. All the supplies are provided, just bring your favorite peeler.

**Set Up** - Thursday, November 19th from 1 to 4pm and Friday, November 20th from 9am to 4pm - Card Tables and holiday table cloths needed. Bring your donated items and come help.

**On Line Calendar** ~ To make sure events get posted online, in a timely manner, it is extremely helpful if the "Announcement Submission Form" is used. It can be found at the top of the calendar on our website - [www.steeple.org](http://www.steeple.org). Thanks so much for your cooperation.

**The Steeple**  
**Williston Federated Church**  
**44 North Williston Road**  
**Williston VT 05495**

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Pone: 802-878-5792  
E-Mail: office@steeple.org  
**Come, Meet Christ, Go Serve**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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covering these words.  
Thanks

We don't want to inundate you with unwanted paper. Please leave a message at 878-5792 if you would prefer to be removed from the Steeple mailing list. The Steeple is available on our website!

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**Thinking about Membership? ~** An informal meeting for those interested in learning more about church membership will take place after worship on Sunday, October 18th in the sanctuary. Members of church committees and groups will be present to share information. If you plan on attending, please call the church office and let us know. New members will be received on November 1st.

## An Opportunity for Vision - A day, a month...and more

"I am the church, You are the church, We are the church together" are the opening lines of an Avery & Marsh hymn. There are 5 verses that talk about not being just a building and that we are varied peoples all over the world. Sometimes we march and sometimes we hide but always we are learning. There is laughing, crying and praying as we spread the good news. This is a comprehensive hymn but the message comes back to....."We are the church". Williston Federated Church has a great mission statement (see below) and now the exciting part is that we each may share our own vision of how best to implement our mission.

**Who:** Everyone, from the youngest children to the most senior, new comers and people who have attended for many years. It is so important to have as much feedback as possible to get a clear picture of where we want to be 5 years from now.

**When: October:** Think and pray about the various aspects of our church life that feed us, move us, challenge us and make us who we are. Each week, members and friends of the congregation are invited to answer a different question posed by the retreat steering committee around the central theme of "What is God calling us to do?" There are five weeks leading up to the November 7 retreat and there are five questions to answer! Make your answers as broad or as specific as you like. In fact do both. There is room for all information. Please post your responses on sticky notes on the "Vision Wall" - the wall in the gallery area (near the elevator on the second floor). Be creative...There are three questions in response to five areas of life together as a congregation.

#1. What works well for you in this area of ministry?

#2. What would you like to see more of in this area of ministry?

#3 What are the challenges?

**The five areas are:**

**Week #1 ~ October 4:** Fellowship. Think Chicken Pie Supper, monthly fellowship suppers, men's Bible study, women's book group, children's movie night and more. Then refer to the three questions above in response.

**Week #2 ~ October 11:** Worship. Think Sunday morning, special services (Christmas Eve, Easter), weddings, funerals, ecumenical services, peace vigil and more. Then refer to the three questions above in response.

**Week #3 ~ October 18:** Education, Discipleship and Learning. Think nursery care, Sunday School, youth groups, adult studies, men's Bible study, women's book group and more. Then refer to the three questions above in response.

**Week #4 ~ October 25:** Mission and Service. Think *Volunteers in Mission* (trips to Mississippi and Texas), food shelf, Dismas meals, CROP and COTS walks, alternative Christmas shop and more. Then refer to the three questions above in response.

**Week #5 ~ November 1:** Outreach. Think about the ways in which we reach into the community - and the community reaches toward us: funeral and memorial services, 12-Step meetings, support group meetings (NAMI - National Alliance for the Mentally Ill), Odyssey of the mind. Then refer to the three questions above in response.

Each week's question is a *suggestion*. If you are not here on a particular week(s), there is ample opportunity to respond to the questions as your schedule Permits.

**November:** The steering committee will collate all the responses into a usable form to be the basis for the large and small group discussions that attendees of the November 7th retreat will have.

**November 7<sup>th</sup>: 2PM – 6M** the retreat, held at Williston Federated Church, will be facilitated by Rev Marjorie MacNeill, Interim Pastor, New Haven, Vermont Congregational Church, UCC. Child care will be provided. 6pm Dinner will be served.

**January:** All church meeting to revisit the retreat and conclusions. What would be wonderful is that the questions spark ongoing conversations and family dialogue. Perhaps they will inspire more people to attend then come to the Chicken Pie Supper. Wouldn't that be terrific?

Here are some answers to some frequently asked questions about the November 7 Vision Retreat. If you have other questions, please contact a member of the Steering Committee.

***I haven't participated in the vision process during October, may I come to the retreat?*** Absolutely. We are trying to get as much participation in the process as we can. While the retreat will build on the information gathered during the preceding steps in the process, that input will be presented in a highly usable form for all participants. We'll also be gathering new input as the retreat progresses.

***I can't participate in the retreat will there be more opportunities to get involved?*** Yes. Once some areas of interest are defined at the retreat, there will be opportunities to get involved at the committee level, as well as any informal ad-hoc groups that may form in response to the areas of interest.

***Are young people invited to the retreat?*** Yes. We are hoping for active participation of our teens in this retreat. For young people under 13, childcare will be provided throughout the afternoon. All ages will join together in the supper meal at 6 pm.

*Our Mission Statement. Our church is a community which seeks, welcomes and gathers people to share the Gospel of God's love, enables people to find fullness of life through Jesus Christ, and responds actively to human need.*

Peace, The Steering Committee

Trudy Anderson, Connie Kendall, Tony Lamb, Polly Malik, Joan O'Gorman, Barb Powell, and Vickie Walker.