

# THE STEEPLE

## Williston Federated Church

*An Open and Affirming, Reconciling Congregation*

### Pastor's Message

Dear members and friends of the church family,

February. Valentine's Day. Presidents' Day (although some of us remember when Lincoln and Washington each had a separate day!) Groundhog Day. Add to this list, Ash Wednesday, February 17, the beginning of the season of Lent. At the church, we will observe the beginning of this sacred season with a service at 7 pm in the Sanctuary. The service will include hymns, prayers, silence and the opportunity - should you choose - for the imposition of ashes of your forehead.

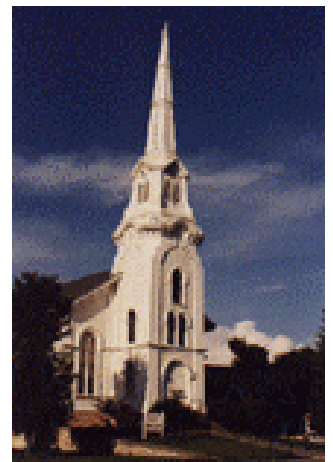
On each Wednesday during Lent, you are invited to gather at 7 pm in the Sitting Room (across the hall from my office) for a brief service (about 30 minutes) for prayer, reflection, and silence. Those Wednesdays are: February 24, March 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31.

I share with you a reading from *Just One Year: A Global Treasury of Prayer and Worship*, edited by Timothy Radcliffe.

*Lent is our forty-day preparation for the Feast of Easter. It looks back to Jesus' forty-day fast in the wilderness before he began his mission. Lent was observed in all the Christian Churches from the fourth century onwards. Christians practiced penance and ate only one meal a day after Vespers, (a worship service held in the late afternoon or evening) abstaining from meat, fish, and even dairy products. For most of Christian history it was as demanding as Ramadan is for Muslims today. Faced with tensions between religions all over the world, it would be wonderful if we were to share fasts together with Muslims and people of other faiths as a sign of a shared longing for peace. In France, Christians often share part of the Ramadan fast with Muslims to show solidarity, and Muslims fast during part of Lent, too. It is also a time when many Christians fast as a sign of solidarity with the hungry throughout the world. Lent is a time to reconnect with the fundamental hunger at the core of our being, for the One in whom we find all happiness.*

Dear friends - that "fundamental hunger at the core of our being" is a call to fast - and Lent is a good time to start. Perhaps you may wish to "fast" from holding a grudge or from being too quick to judge another. A "fast" from consumerism or the stresses or our speeded-up life. A "fast" from any belief you have that one small act of kindness or compassion doesn't make a difference - act with kindness and compassion.

Peace,  
Pastor Joan



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Address:  
44 No. Williston Road  
Williston VT 05495  
Website: [www.steeple.org](http://www.steeple.org)

Pastor's Study: 879-3332  
Parsonage: 876-7070  
Cell: 345-7953  
E-mail: [churchmom432@hotmail.com](mailto:churchmom432@hotmail.com)  
Church Office Hours:  
Tues-Fri 8:30-3:30  
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

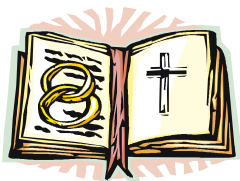
**Thanks to Our Wonderful Caring Church Family** for your prayers and support during Charlie's heart surgery and days of recovery. We are appreciative of the visits, cards, phone calls, meals, and prayers of so many. It is truly a blessing to part of such a Christ like community. May God's peace be with you all. In gratitude to God and the Williston Federated Church we are indeed thankful. Ruth and Charlie Magill

**Lenten Study Series ~ Faithfully Facing Critical Issues and Decisions Toward the End of Life** ~ Prayerfully we will explore and discuss questions that pertain to end of life issues. What is it and do I need an Advanced Directive? What is a Health Care Proxy? Do I need to prepare a Living Will or a Do Not Resuscitate/Do not Intubate Order? What about Organ donation, or Hospice Care? What is Palliative Care and is there a way to manage the pain and suffering of a loved one? Together we will explore and discuss these questions and other concerns that we have pertaining to end of life issues. We will meet for four Sundays (February 28, March 7, March 14, and March 21) from 11am – 12:30pm. Come to one or all of the sessions. A study outline will be posted soon on the bulletin board outside the office. Snacks will be provided. If you have any questions please talk to Paula Gile.

**Mission Trip to Texas** ~ FEMA is pushing for everyone in East Texas to be out of their trailers by Mid March. We are putting together a team to put finishing touches on homes so that families can move back in by then. Leave Sunday, March 7, back Saturday, March 13. Contact Tony Lamb 343-1544 or [alamb@alamblaw.com](mailto:alamb@alamblaw.com) for details.

**Come Celebrate YOUR Birthday** at our Intergenerational Birthday Celebration in the Fellowship Hall on Friday, February 12th at 7pm. What month were you born? Meet others in the church who share your birthday month! Each month will have a table complete with decorations, cake or pie, and beverage. Please sign up on the bulletin board to get a seat at your birthday table. For more information, contact Cathy Michaels.

**The Missions and Social Concerns Committee Fall and Holiday Summary** ~ The past few months have been very busy in the mission life of our Church. We would like to re-cap the mission activity and express our appreciation to you. So far we have filled about 40 "Happy Birthday Food Bank" bags. (Cake and candles included!), filled 22 Thanksgiving baskets, raised \$5,515 for charities through our Alternative Gift Shop, gave about 150 Christmas gifts to 69 children from the Williston School district and beyond, raised over \$3,000 from our Christmas offering, which will be divided and given to the Spectrum Youth Shelter Program and the Vermont National Guard Charitable Foundation and the Summer Camp Scholarship program. A special thanks to the Trustees who were able to give us a little more than \$750 from a previous donation. We were able to get gifts for families that came to our attention after the tags had been put on The Giving Tree. We were also able to purchase oodles of winter coats, hats, boots mittens and diapers!



### 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.

#### February 7

Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13)  
Psalm 138  
1 Corinthians 15:1-11  
Luke 5:1-11

#### February 14

Exodus 34:29-35  
Psalm 99  
2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2  
Luke 9:28-36 (37-43a)

#### February 17

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17  
Psalm 51:1-17  
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

#### February 21

Deuteronomy 26:1-11  
Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16  
Romans 10:8b-13  
Luke 4:1-13

#### February 28

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18  
Psalm 27  
Philippians 3:17-4:1  
Luke 13:31-35

### **Haiti Earthquake Relief and Request for filling Health Kits**

~ The Missions and Social Concerns Committee would like to thank everyone for their generosity during our recent special offerings for the Haiti Earthquake Relief. The total received over the last two Sundays exceeded \$2400. WOW! The reports are still rolling in from Haiti... over 150,000 dead, 1 in every 9 Haitians are now displaced, 194,000 people injured and they've had at least 50 aftershocks. A huge effort is underway to restore clean drinking water with millions of purification tablets being distributed. Health kits and blankets were sent out right away and we've now heard that UMCOR is in need of restoring their health kit supplies. We will be distributing bags with a list of requested supplies and collecting them for the first two weeks in February. The following should be new and placed in a sealed 1-gallon zip-lock bag:

1 hand towel (15"x25" up to 17"x27")- please no kitchen towels.

1 washcloth

1 comb (large and sturdy, not pocket-sized please)

1 nail file or fingernail clipper (no emery boards or toenail clippers)

1 bath-size bar of soap (3 oz. or up)

1 toothbrush (single brush in original package- no child size)

6 adhesive plastic strip sterile bandages

\$1.00 to purchase toothpaste (NOTE: toothpaste is purchased in bulk by UMCOR and included close to when kits are sent out.)

Due to the fact that these kits are used in a variety of emergency situations and the strict rules of different governments regarding what is allowed to enter countries, UMCOR requests that only the above items are included in each bag. Thank you in advance.

**Dismas House Sign-Up** ~ A new sign up has been posted for the Monthly Dismas House Meals. You have the choice of making the meal, providing salad and rolls or a dessert. Don't have time to cook - salad, rolls and desserts are always easy to buy and provide to this important mission. Think about delivering and sharing the meal and help show your support for these men as they transition back into society. Questions, please contact Polly Malik at 879-6968 or [ptmalik@myfairpoint.net](mailto:ptmalik@myfairpoint.net) or Vickie Walker at 497-0017 or [vwalker56@comcast.net](mailto:vwalker56@comcast.net).

**NAMIWalks for the Mind of America** ~ I am writing you today to tell you about an upcoming event that I am participating in that is both very important and very exciting to me. It is NAMIWalks for the Mind of America, NAMI's signature walkathon event that is being held in Montpelier, VT at State House Lawn on May 15, 2010. As you know, I have been active in NAMI VT for many years as a Family to Family volunteer educator and more recently as a member of the Walk Committee and its chair in 2008. One out of every four persons will experience a mental health issue in their life time. Several members of my immediate family have struggled with depression, severe anxiety disorders, autism and alcoholism. This year my team is called "Minds Matter." I would like to ask you to come and walk with me or to donate to support my participation in this great event. Visit my personal walker page to sign up: <http://www.nami.org/namiwalks10/VMT/saramoran>. It features a link to my team's page there where you can see who else is walking with me. There is also a link so you can donate directly to me online, which I would really appreciate. Donating online is fast and secure, and I'll get immediate notification via e-mail of your donation. NAMI, the Nation's Voice on Mental Illness, formerly the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, is the largest education, support and advocacy organization that serves the needs of all those whose lives are touched by these illnesses. This includes persons with mental illness, their families, friends, employers, the law enforcement community and policy makers. The NAMI organization is composed of approximately 1100 local affiliates, 50 state offices and a national office. The goals of the NAMIWalks program are: to fight the stigma that surrounds mental illness, to build awareness of the fact that the mental health system in this country needs to be improved and to raise funds for NAMI so that they can continue their mission. NAMI is a 501(c)3 charity and any donation you make to support my participation in this event is tax deductible. NAMI has been rated by Worth magazine as among the top 100 charities "most likely to save the world" and has been given an "A+" rating by The American Institute of Philanthropy for efficient and effective use of charitable dollars. NAMI has also been given 4 out of 4 stars by The Charity Navigator for short-term spending practices and long-term sustainability. Thank you in advance for your support.

Sincerely,

Sara Moran

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

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**Calling All Sunday School Teachers/Helpers** ~ The third session of Sunday School will begin on February 28th. Again this will be an abbreviated session because the Education Committee has planned other events and Communion classes during this time. If you are interested in teaching or helping with Sunday School please sign up or contact Polly Malik at 879-6968 or ptmalik@myfairpoint.net.

**Women's Celebration VIII** ~ *Together Building Bridges* is the theme for this weekend of spiritual renewal, inspirational worship, exciting music, dynamic speakers, fun entertainment, and lots of varied displays, vendors and much more. Join about 1,000 women from New England and beyond in Burlington on March 12, 13 and 14, 2010. This is an intergenerational event - bring your daughters (ages 14 and older), mothers, grandmothers, sisters, friends! There are registration forms/more information on the bulletin board. For more information and online registration go to [www.uccwomenscelebration.org](http://www.uccwomenscelebration.org).

## Youth News

**February 6<sup>th</sup>** Youth Leader Training 8am to 12. Join local youth pastor Rachel Stampul as we explore what youth ministry is, how to be successful and why it is so important for our youth. Breakfast will be provided.

**February 7<sup>th</sup>** Souper Bowl of Caring. The youth will be joining youth around the country in collecting donations for local food shelves. This year's donations will benefit the Williston Community Food Shelf.

**February 12-13<sup>th</sup>** Junior High Lock-In!! Starts Friday at 7pm ends Saturday at 9am. The theme will be "Happy Birthday"

**February 14<sup>th</sup>** Pancake Breakfast. Proceeds will benefit the youth mission trip to Nicaragua. Breakfast will be served from 8 to 9am and from 10:45 to 11:30.

**February 14<sup>th</sup>** Night Light will be hosted at Williston Federated Church starting at 5:30. The guest speaker will be a refugee from Somalia.

**March 2<sup>nd</sup>** Ripple in South Burlington. Join area junior and senior high youth groups in fun and fellowship while exploring the topic of homelessness.

The youth participating in the 2010 mission trip to Nicaragua are holding an ongoing bottle drive. Please feel free to bring your bottles to church and place them in the bin by the coat racks. Need your bottles picked up from your house? Call Ashley 233-5824.