

# CONNECTIONS

## Go Confirmation Class!!

The “dinner and a show” of the Confirmation Class brought 80 people to Fellowship Hall with donations in hand on Saturday evening, March 7. The before-the-fact jar contest between **Lisa Bessette** and Gary took in \$422.00 and, thanks to all the generous folk who attended, the dinner profit was \$516.00 (less \$160.00 in expenses). Grand total = **\$778.00!** Enough for a visit to Heifer Project’s Overlook Farm in May. **Congratulations!**

Lisa Bessette was the mover and shaker and the main chef, with the class---**Nicholas Coughlan, Amelia Kerin, Zeke Palmer, Dylan Rapoport, Averi Salley, and Kirsten Strum, Molly Tatlock**---assisting in cooking, serving, and cleaning up. **Betty Lewis** chipped in with her gluten free talents, providing no-wheat options for the spaghetti and brownies. She also put together the banana and vanilla cream pies for the “show” part of the evening. Though Gary lost the jar contest by a mere \$8.00, he was not the only pie recipient. Lisa and Zeke Palmer sportingly joined in. With a cloth to protect the rug, vanilla and banana cream went flying, or at least smooching. Dylan Rapoport, Kirsten Strum, and Molly Tatlock were the eager and successful tossers. Fun for all (or at least most)!



Special thanks to Lisa, who came up with the jar idea and ran the show. To Gary and Betty, too, for good sportsmanship and cooking skills. And thank

you to **everyone** for the dollars to go with the fun. It should be a great trip.

## Mark Your Calendar

- March 29, Sunday – Palm/Passion Sunday (with Dramatic Reading).
- April 2, Thursday – Maundy Thursday Service in Fellowship Hall (7:00 pm), followed by vigil in the Sanctuary until 3:00 pm on Good Friday.
- April 3, Friday – Ecumenical Good Friday Service, 4:00 pm at Vergennes Methodist Church.
- April 4, Saturday – Easter Egg Hunt, 9:30 to 11:00 am (see page 3).
- April 5, Easter Sunday – Sunrise Service, 6:45 am at Comfort Hill Farm.  
Easter Breakfast – 7:00 in Fellowship Hall  
Easter Celebration – 9:30
- April 12 – Chessy Kelley leading meditation, 11:00 -11:30 am.
- April 18, Saturday – “Guess Who Is Coming to Dinner” from 6:00 pm (see details page 5).
- April 19<sup>th</sup> – Addison Association Meeting in Cornwall, 12:30 to 3:00 pm.  
One Great Hour of Sharing collection (see details page 5).
- April 24 and April 25, Friday to Saturday – Vermont Conference Annual Meeting at Lake Morey Resort.
- April 24 – Table of Grace free roast pork dinner (5:00 pm).
- Sunday – April 26, Talent Show rehearsal (see details page 3).
- Saturday – May 2, Talent Show rehearsal.

## From Your Pastor

As I write this letter we are still slogging our way through Lent. As we near the end of this season, which coincides nicely with the end of winter (will it ever end?), it seems to be a schizophrenic time. As the sun shows itself to us more and more, and the calendar says it is Spring, the temperature continues to be winter-like.



In the life of the church the movement from Lent to Easter does not just happen. For us to celebrate new life, we must plan for needs to take place. One special area of that planning is in our music ministry. Talk about splitting personalities, **Jenny, Bill, Sue** and our Choir are practicing Easter music, Palm Sunday music, Maundy Thursday music, blending the sounds and the emotions of the Passion with the celebrations of new life. This mix of "Pits and Peaks" is part of life in the Choir, and guess what – we are **all in the Choir**. I believe this human journey of life we are

on is a blend of the good, the bad, the beautiful and the ugly mixed together daily and not relegated to one defined segment of time or place. Our faith calls us to be an Easter People. This does not mean that we move effortless from Peak to Peak, but that we travel through our days experiencing all of life and knowing that the final word is God's word and we can be a part of that word.



In Paul's letter to the Galatians we read (he writes) "... the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." (Galatians 2:22 NRSV)

May each of us, no matter in what season we are in, seek, find, own and share the fruits of the Spirit, locally grown and readily available year round.

Fruitingly,

Gary

## LENTEN THOUGHTS

**In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. -- Genesis 1:1**

Being disabled I find that I'm easily "triggered" and weighed down by life's difficult challenges. What I find to be helpful when my life feels out of control is being out in Nature. No matter the season, the time of day/night, when I am surrounded by the beauty of the heavens and the earth, I feel God's love. What a generous and merciful God. For in nature's ability to nurture, I find peace and a sense of healing. Thank you Jesus for the blessings you bestow, simply in the beauty of your creations. Amen.



**Bonnie L. Barrows**

The Vergennes Congregational Church invites you to share your gifts in our first

## HIDDEN TALENT SHOW 2015!

Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> – 5:30-7:30pm @ Vergennes Congregational Church

Let's share our talents with each other during a FREE, all-ages, family-friendly evening of fun. Experienced & novice performers of all types are invited to participate: musicians, singers, actors, comedians, magicians, poets, hula-hoopers, dancers and more. We can accommodate 20 acts on a first come, first served basis (no auditions!). Performance requirements:

- Three (3) minutes or fewer per act.
- Each act must have at least one adult and one child. Need help finding a partner? We can help put teams together! (see form)
- All acts must attend at least one pre-show rehearsal on Sun, 4/26 **OR** Sat, 5/2 as well as the final dress rehearsal/pizza party on Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup> from 6-8pm.
- All performance material and costumes should be suitable for all ages.

If you'd like to perform in the show but don't have a specific idea, have we got a job for you! We are planning two comedic, group skits and need actors of all ages to join the fun. (see form)

But we need more than stage performers. Gifts abound in our community! We need yours! Before and after the show as well as during the dinner intermission, we will display the art and craft work of community members in Fellowship Hall; photographers, potters, painters, quilters and artists/crafters of all types are encouraged to submit a piece or two for display.

We're also looking for someone to produce a show program, a nourishment team to coordinate a lite, potluck dinner buffet to serve during intermission, those with staging/equipment know-how to help transition between acts, greeters to seat attendees and photographers/videographers who can preserve this fun night. Everyone has a hidden talent!

And, of course, we need a packed house to cheer, clap and whistle for our brave performers, oooh and ahhh over the work of our talented artists/crafters and just generally soak up and share the delight of the evening.

Attached is a registration form for performers, artists/crafters and other talented participants who can help make this event an exciting memory for all. Please call or e-mail Alex McGuire with any questions (877-3574 or [alexandjack@myfairpoint.net](mailto:alexandjack@myfairpoint.net)). Please have all forms turned in by 5:00 PM, Monday, 4/27/15.

Still accepting new acts!!

## Easter Egg Hunt

The search is on!! Come join the hunt for Easter eggs on April 4th, the Saturday before Easter. There will be craft activities for children 4th grade and under beginning at 9:30. The Hunt itself runs from 10:00 to 11. Hope to see you there.

Donna Lalumiere, Christian Education Coordinator



## More Lenten Thoughts –

### How can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? Matthew 6:27 (NRSV)

My dad is a worrier – always has been. He'll worry about my business, about our boys far away in Oregon, about the farm economy and the price of milk. He lives in Indiana and is an obsessive Weather Channel watcher. He calls after nearly every storm and asks about our welfare. Once many years ago he called my receptionist when he wasn't able to get ahold of me to make sure everything was well, telling her "I know he's 35 years old, but he's still my little boy". (I was mortified, but my receptionist, who had lost a father at a young age, counseled me to treasure those calls). He still can't let go of the worry; I think it gives him some purpose now that he's long retired and most of his own needs are met.

Worry is easy, trust is hard. To trust means we need to let go of some of our precious control. It means becoming just a little vulnerable. Trust maybe even means to put our hand in the hand of another and allow them to guide us somewhere we don't expect. That's a difficult concept for we hard charging modern Vermonters; so proud of our self-sufficiency and resilience. We can't do it all or see it all, however, and as tough as it may be perhaps we can trust Jesus a little to take care of what we can't do or can't see.

Prayer: Lord, help me to trust that your will for me and my life is the right one.

Joe Klopenstein

Say hello to **Janet Price**. She has said the same to you many a Sunday morning from her post downstairs by the door. Church greeter has been one of her jobs (and she will admit pleasures, too) for the past 10 years at least. **Thank you, Janet!**

**Janet Roberts** was born at home in Barnard, VT, on June 2, 1930 (85 years ago this year if you're counting). She grew up there and attended Whitcomb High School in Bethel, graduating in 1949. ("Woodstock was too snooty.") In 1953 she earned an education degree at UVM, and later achieved a Masters in speech and language in 1957. That primed her for what was to become her vocation---teaching.



After a year in the classroom in Proctor, she moved to Jacksonville, VT, married George Price, and her first daughter, Deborah, (now **Deborah Angier**) was born. That marriage sent her across the country, following her husband when he was a member of the National Guard with two young daughters in tow. **Stephanie** (now **Stephanie Kilbride**) was born in 1956. Their first stop was Fort Louis in Tacoma, Washington, then on to Fort Benning, Georgia, and back to Jacksonville, where son **Tim** was born in 1961.

Soon they moved up the road to Ferrisburgh, bought a house, and George taught agriculture at Vergennes High School. After a short hiatus in Cornell, NY, when George earned his Masters, they settled back to life in Ferrisburgh with George teaching. After some years he moved to Montpelier and a job as a marketing specialist for the State Department.

After their divorce in 1971, Janet was on her own, raising two children (Tim went with his father) and working many jobs just to keep the home fires burning. Picture her driving a farm tractor and taking the Census door-to-door. She mainly relied on her teaching degrees, running a speech lab in the Vergennes area that required working with 100 children every week. (So that's why she knows EVERYONE!) After 23 years and hundreds of children, she decided to retire in 1994, but not completely. For another 14 years she handed out education kits to area schools for her daughter, Deb, who had followed her mother's career path in early education. In 2008, at 78, she decided it was time to slow down a bit, sort of. Now, despite the addition of a heart defibrillator several years ago, she volunteers at the Food Shelf twice a month, takes tickets to the Main Street Methodist dinners once a month, works on the daily crossword, and bakes the best cookies in town. Count yourself lucky to be on that list.

Did you know she is a member of the 251 Club? Several years ago she and Jeanne Bodette (now gone) traveled over three years to **every** Vermont town and county, visiting churches or church sites. Quite an accomplishment.

Most of her family lives nearby, and she enjoys time with her grandchildren, **Justin** and **Ashley Angier**, **Allison** and **Brian Kilbride**, and **Tanner Price**. A year ago she added her first great-grandchild to the list, Justin's daughter, **Juliette**.

How did this life-long faithful Methodist end up at our Church? More than 10 years ago Janet went on a quest and found Gary "The people here were nice. I liked them, and **that was that!**"

It took her many years of faithful attendance (and greeting every Sunday) to officially give up the church of her youth, but on December 9, 2012, she became a Congregationalist and has not looked back. As she says, "I am extremely happy here. I know if I needed anything, someone would come." We are extremely happy to have you, Janet.

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## A FUN NIGHT--- GUESS WHO IS COMING TO DINNER?



On Saturday evening, April 18<sup>th</sup>, our Church is sponsoring an event with a bit of mystery to it. You can sign up as a guest or a host. The hosts will determine how many they would like to have in their home for dinner that evening. The guests arrive at the Church at 6:00 pm **not knowing where they will be going!** There they will get their assigned hosts (including directions). The hosts do not know who will show up – all they know is the number of guests to arrive. Hosts will provide the dinner, and the guests can bring appetizers, the dessert and a beverage of choice. There is no agenda other than to enjoy an evening together and get to know people better. The sign-up sheet will be available in Fellowship Hall following church service or you can contact Gary directly, and he will get you on the list. Enjoy!

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## One Great Hour of Sharing

On Sunday, April 19, the One Great Hour of Sharing Offering will be collected. Watch for a special envelope in the bulletin on April 12.

One Great Hour of Sharing, as part of Our Churches Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in 138 countries. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water and food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, emergency relief, and advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

More than 60 percent of the UCC's offering supports international development initiatives, including annual support for missionaries. Currently there are 7 OGHS supported missionaries and 2 Global Mission Interns working in disaster relief, health care, education, and agricultural development. The offering funds disaster preparedness and response, and disaster related volunteer initiatives in the U.S.

More information can be found at <http://www.ucc.org/oghs>



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## Trustees Correct 2014 Financial Report

Following our recent Annual Meeting, a perceptive church member came forward to point out an inconsistency between what I reported and what is written in the Annual Report's financial statement. On page 15, the column listing actual income and expenses for 2014 shows that total expenses exceeded total income by \$8,709. Our Congregation voted at our previous Annual Meeting to utilize up to \$25,000 of the Jessie Gatow Fund to cover a deficit in 2013 and the deficit projected for 2014. In hindsight, the financial report should have included a line item indicating that the authorized Gatow Funds had covered the \$8,709 deficit, **and that all expenses had been paid in 2014.** The Trustees apologize for the oversight and any confusion this may have caused.

In faith,

Paul Vachon, Current Chair of Trustees

## SUNDAY SCHOOL 2014 – 2015 AND BEYOND

**What a year it has been so far!** Our original goal and hope for this year was to offer our children (families) a variety of learning approaches, creating exciting and innovative experiences for faith formation. Blessed with the vibrant leadership of our team leaders, dedicated teaching teams, and the vital support of families coming to church, we have made great strides toward that goal. The remainder of this year's Sunday School schedule is below.



As we move from winter to spring – from Lent to Easter -- our sights are beginning to focus on opportunities we may want to offer our children next year, building on what we learned this year. To create an exciting, energizing and spirit-filled program we plan to have next year's staff in place by May and curriculum (programming) plans in place by June, so we can hit the ground running in September. The Team concept seems to work well, offering teachers flexibility of schedule and opportunities to blend the teaching ministry with times of worship --- not a bad blend at all.

As we continue to grow opportunities of Faith Formation for our children, we are reaching out to you, the congregation, to see who might want to participate in this very, very important, life-giving ministry for the 2015-2016 school year. If you sense that this would be a "fit" for you or you have any questions please contact **Donna Lalumiere, Barb Ouimette, Sharon O'Daniel, Carolyn Tatlock** or **Cherie Vachon**.

Growingly,

Gary

## SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

The following is a revised schedule for the remainder of the Sunday School year. Please mark your calendars accordingly:

- March 29 -- Palm/Passion Sunday – **no** Sunday School for grades 1 and older, activity time for preschool/ kindergarten with Donna.
- April 5 -- Easter Sunday--- **no** Sunday School
- April 12 -- Regular Sunday School
- April 19 -- **No** Sunday School. Donna will provide a children's activity time.
- April 26 -- Regular Sunday school
- May 3 – Mission focus: "Taking Care of the World"
- May 10 -- Regular Sunday School
- May 17-- more practice and regular classes.
- May 24 -- Kids yoga with **Chessy Kelley** (parents are welcome).
- May 31 -- Children's Celebration Sunday (kids will sing and teachers will be recognized).
- June 7-- To Be Announced.

Your editors, **Alice Maurer** and **Jeanne Peters**, welcome all suggestions for the newsletter. Content is due by the 20th of each month and everyone has a chance to comment on their copy before publication. Thank you all for past and future help.