



# UNITED CHURCH OF HINESBURG

Monday, April 6, 2022

Newsletter –April 2022

## Contents

Pastor's Page  
p. 1

Christian Education  
Youth Programming  
Worship  
p. 3

Stewardship and  
Finance  
Missions  
p. 4 & 5

Property and Grounds  
HCRC Friends of  
Families Program  
Plant Sale  
p. 6

Community News  
Church Membership  
Calendar  
p. 7 & 8

## Pastor's Page

A Less Abstract Easter



... And so we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

*Christ has died,*

*Christ is risen,*

*Christ will come again.*

- The short versions of the *Mysterium fidei*

“People can say what they like about the eternal verities, love and truth and so on, but nothing’s as eternal as the dishes.”  
- Margaret Mahy, (1936-2012)

Easter was a true springtime event for me growing up. With the rare exception, Easter fell during the beginning of spring in central Ohio – a place where spring is a real season that lasts more than a few weeks and hasn’t been superseded by “Mud Season.” Every year my brother and I would get a set of Easter Sunday clothes that included new short-sleeve button-down shirts and clip-on ties and, to mark the spring, squirt guns. After Easter services, my entire Hamilton family would get together, share a meal, go on an Easter egg hunt and play outside until it turned dark.

Easter falls on April 17th this year, a date later than usual for the holiest Christian holiday. The timing coincides more closely with the actual arrival of spring in Vermont, and the analogies between Easter and spring are

hard to miss. For centuries, preachers, poets, theologians, and writers alike have used the images of spring to describe the mystery of our faith – the resurrection of Jesus. Martin Luther once wrote, “Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in springtime.” Bernard Williams tells us, “The day the Lord created hope was probably the same day He created spring.”

I love the metaphor of spring to describe Easter. Life reveals itself – is resurrected – from the dark and muddy ground, heralding a time of growth and longer, warmer days. Even when the world is dark and gray and covered in snow, we can count on spring's arrival.

But the metaphor does not work for everyone. Easter in the global south occurs in the fall – a more subdued season where life goes into hiding and cold nights grow longer. The imagery of spring does not work for those in seasonless places and dry climates, too – where spring is eternal or non-existent. What's left when the metaphors we use to help us understand our faith's greatest mystery don't work? What about those who wish for something more than metaphor in the Easter message, something less abstract and more tangible.

The post-resurrection account found in the gospel of Luke might be of interest here. More than any other gospel, Luke's resurrected Jesus is physical, present, and human. He walks with a group to Emmaus and discusses current events. He eats a meal with this group because he is hungry. Likewise, when Jesus appears next to his disciples, he invites them to see and touch his body, which still carries the wounds of his death. Again, he's hungry, so his disciples give him food to eat. And it is only after Jesus walked, talked, ate, showed his wounds, and ate again that the resurrection miracle was revealed and a final message proclaimed.

Tangibility lies at the heart of Luke's story of the resurrection. It takes place in real-time with a real Jesus doing human things. It takes place in a dynamic environment, on the road from Jerusalem to Emmaus, at a table, breaking bread. And it takes place in the real, imperfect world, where even the risen Christ bears the wounds of violence and hatred. The resurrection for Luke is something that is lived out in the real world.

As such, the Easter proclamation – Christ is Risen! Hallelujah! – isn't so much a doctrine of faith, a rigid statement of faith that we either believe or don't, but a call to practice resurrection in our world today. Planting trees is a form of practicing resurrection because it brings health and renewed vitality to overused land and exhausted soil. Reconnecting or reconciling with an old friend is practicing resurrection because in doing this, we breathe new life into a relationship that was once dead. Offering service is practicing resurrection because these acts of sacrifice (giving our time, money, etc.) strengthen our bonds with one another. Even doing the dishes on Easter Sunday is a way to practice resurrection because all those dishes piled to the kitchen ceiling remind us that we are able to celebrate this day with the people we love.

For those who need more than a message this Easter, practice resurrection. Find practical, tangible ways to bring new life, healing, and hope into the world. Sacrifice something to strengthen our common bonds and celebrate Hallelujah moments even during the messy cleanup. And may God bless you with a true, down-to-earth Easter this year.

Blessings,

Pastor Jared

## Christian Education

We continue to evaluate the safety of resuming indoor weekly Sunday school as the situation evolves and the vaccine becomes available to our younger children.

## Youth Programming

We restarted the Hinesburg Youth Project this spring, meeting on Sunday evenings. The middle school youth have focused on different ways Christians celebrate communion. The high school group has explored a seed bank program and a possible summer service trip.

The middle school program also worked with 6th graders from Robinson Elementary in Starksboro to fundraise for Ukrainian refugee humanitarian relief. At a service on March 27th, several middle school students spoke during the service. Barbara Herrington presented the group with a check for \$500 from the United Church of Hinesburg to get the fundraiser started. So far, the group of concerned middle school students have raised over \$1,200 to benefit a Ukrainian children's education program sponsored by UNICEF.



Youth speaking at the morning service on March 27th.

Youth programming will continue April 10th. We will take a short break and then continue for a short, three-week session beginning May 15th.

## Worship

In person worship will continue as we follow COVID procedures. We've moved to a mask-optional format for Sunday worship and will continue to practice social distancing, good hygiene, and other precautions as best we can.

At this time, we are suspending the online Zoom worship services that took place at noon. We have restarted the worship service podcast at The United Church of Hinesburg Podcast website. The Sunday service podcasts can also be downloaded from your favorite podcast catcher like Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, etc.

Please see the Calendar section below for the April Worship Schedule.

Find audio recordings of our Sunday morning services here: <https://www.buzzsprout.com/1002412>.

## Stewardship and Finance

While the strength and vitality of our church is not only based on our finances, they are an important measure. Thanks to the ongoing support of members and friends of our congregation and careful management of our expenses, I am pleased to report that our church remains financially strong.

We are in the process of developing the FY23 (July 1, 2022-June 30, 2023) budget. There will be challenges as we look to employing a Christian Education Coordinator and Nursery Assistants during the year ahead, but that is also a cause for celebration as we work our way back to a more normal time.

If you make an automatic monthly donation to the church and want to change it, the way to accomplish that depends on how you set up your donation:

- If you used your bank's bill pay system, contact your bank
- If you completed a form authorizing Vanco, our payment processing service, to pull the funds from your bank account and deposit them into the church account, submit a new form (available from the church office)
- If you set up your donation through the Donate page on the church website, log in to your account, cancel the upcoming scheduled transactions and create a new donation record

If you are unsure about how your donation is set up or if you have any questions about our church finances, please contact me at [whitaker@gmavt.net](mailto:whitaker@gmavt.net) or by phone at 802-482-4279.

Yvonne Whitaker, on behalf of the Stewardship and Finance Committees

## Missions

### Migrant Worker and Afghan Refugee Fundraiser

A huge thank you to those who so kindly donated to support our state's newly arrived Afghan Refugees. We donated \$450 and many needed household items to the Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program! These donations will go toward supporting the 80 families that have resettled in Vermont since the US withdrawal and subsequent fall of Kabul, Afghanistan in November of 2021. Thank you for your support!

**8HouseholdCleaners**  
**1DownComforter** **2DishTowels**  
**144FlossPicks** **7LaundryBaskets**  
**7WindowCleaners** **69Toothbrushes**  
**5Dustpans** **47BarSoaps**  
**1Conditioner** **4HandSoaps**  
**9Shampoos** **4Bleach** **11papertowels**  
**85Floss** **1BoxContractorBag**  
**5Deodorant** **3Scissors**  
**98CoatHangers** **3Brooms**  
**6PacksBatteries** **7LaundryDetergents**  
**8TravelMouthwashes**  
**5DishSoaps** **82Sponges** **229Toothpastes**  
**12MagicErasers**



And thank you for all the donations for Vermont's year-round migrant dairy farm workers! Several years ago, the Committee had been anxious to provide some sort of relief for the South and Central American immigrants coming over the southwestern U.S. border. We attended many presentations but found that there was little direct action we could undertake. Last fall, we had a conversation with a representative with the UVM Extension Service and learned that they provide support for some 700 migrant dairy farmers in our own State! They and their families stay in Vermont year-round, primarily on central and northeastern dairy farms. The UVM office suggested that we collect new warm gloves, hats, and socks for these workers – and we are so grateful for all the congregation's support! We passed along from donations and with monies provided, over two dozen pairs of warm socks, some 40 hats, and more than a dozen pairs of good gloves. Here is a photo of just a portion of the wonderful donations:



## Missions Committee Responds to Ukrainian Need

*We stand with the people of Ukraine and the world who do not want this war. This invasion is an attack against humanity and is causing considerable suffering, disruption of family life and loss of life. It is an attack on freedom, and on democracy. We urge you to respond by supporting the people of Ukraine through the following organization, World Central Kitchen <https://wck.org> which is already providing hot meals to Ukrainians who have fled the Ukraine and those who have chosen to stay.*

Last week UCH sent approximately \$4000 to World Central Kitchen that is distributing hot meals to Ukrainians fleeing their homeland. In addition, a private FaceBook page of committee member also raised \$2650 for WCK! Want to help?

Simply sign in to website <http://ucofh.org> to donate link, and choose "Ukraine Mission." One hundred percent of your proceeds will be sent to World Central Kitchen. Alternatively you can mail a check to The United Church of Hinesburg P.O. Box 39, Hinesburg, VT 05461; please indicate "Ukraine Mission" in the memo field. Thank you.

World Central Kitchen (WCK) founder José Andrés said on [Sunday](#) that his non-profit organization has provided more than 4 million meals to refugees since Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine more than a month ago. During an appearance on CNN's "State of the Union," Andrés said that WCK is distributing more than 290,000 meals daily at more than 1,000 locations in six countries. "Inside Ukraine, we are in 21 cities. Obviously, Lviv has become our headquarters inside Ukraine," he said. "But we are delivering food every day to places like Odessa, Kyiv and other places." Andrés also applauded the volunteer workers, referred to as "food fighters" for their effort to feed refugees."

Thank you ALL! A second distribution of your donations will be sent soon.

## Property and Grounds

Thank you to all our snow shovelers who kept the grounds safe this winter.

The end of the snow shoveling season means that the lawn mowing season will soon be here. We rely on volunteers to keep the grass mowed weekly and the more volunteers the better. If you would like to help, or if you have any questions, contact Andy Seaton at [aseaton61@gmail.com](mailto:aseaton61@gmail.com).

## HCRC Friends of Families Program

In January, 2022 the church signed an agreement with the Hinesburg Community Resource Center (HCRC) to share our space with the Friends of Families Program for their weekly playgroups and other activities such as their annual clothes swap.

We began discussions with HCRC late last year after they learned that the Town Hall would no longer be available to them. The signed agreement includes expectations regarding keeping the nursery clean and organized.

Anna Main and Amy Sayre, co-chairs of the HCRC Board, spearheaded the effort to get the space organized, incorporate the FOF toys, and repaint it. New valances adorn the windows.

It will be exciting to have young ones using our space during the week, once their programs start up again! If you have any questions, contact Yvonne Whitaker (802-482-4279).

## Plant Sale!

Get ready! It's almost time for the plant sale! Order perennials online and, on the day the orders are ready for pick-up, there will be an in-person sale of annuals and baked goods.

As usual, there will be generously sized, hardy perennials recently dug from local gardens to share with you. To avoid the possibility of spreading the invasive Asian Snake Worm, all roots are washed thoroughly after they are dug. Most plants will be potted in light potting soil, with the exception of the hostas, irises, and daylilies which will be dug just before the sale to allow them to get a better start. These plants will not be potted but will be wrapped in damp newsprint, ready for planting directly into your gardens.

Also available for pre-order and ready for pick up the day of the plant sale will be biscotti, baked and packaged by members of the Missions Committee, with proceeds going to Hearts for Hunger which benefits the VT Foodbank's Backpack Program.

The store will be live on **Friday, April 15th through Saturday, April 30th** on the church website [www.ucofh.org](http://www.ucofh.org). Place your order and pay with a credit or debit card. Shop early to ensure the best selection!

Your order will be ready for pick up on **Saturday, May 7th** in the church parking lot between 9 AM and 1 PM.

Contact Anne Donegan ([ardonegan@gmail.com](mailto:ardonegan@gmail.com)) with any questions.

# Community News

## Friends of Families Spring Kids' Clothing & Book Swap

This popular free event is for anyone seeking children's clothing and books. The swap will be in our new location this year, The United Church of Hinesburg's Parish Hall, on Saturday, April 30th from 9-10:30am. To ensure another successful swap please note that we accept all gently-used children's clothing, sized infant to 14, and children's books, toddler to middle-school level. Drop off clothing and books at the Parish Hall on Friday, April 29th from 12-8pm. Donations can also be dropped off at Carpenter-Carse Library from April 25th – 28th. No toys, and no drop-offs on the day of the swap, please.

This is a great way to do your spring wardrobe switch, get new sizes for your own kids and pass on some clothing to friends and neighbors. If you just need clothing for your family and do not have anything to donate, you are welcome to just "shop."

Sponsored by Hinesburg Community Resource Center's Friends of Families Program. For more information, please call or email Alexandra Koncewicz at 482-4946 or [koncewicz@hinesburgresource.org](mailto:koncewicz@hinesburgresource.org).



### Are you interested in becoming a member of the United Church?

Joining a church is one way of acknowledging the bond between individuals and a community of faith. When new members join, the entire community has the opportunity to pledge their care, support and commitment to the new member and the new member does the same.

If you are new to the United Church of Hinesburg and are interested in learning more about the church and/or joining as a member, please contact Pastor Jared at [revjared@gmavt.net](mailto:revjared@gmavt.net) or the church office at 802-482-3352 or [unitedchurch@gmavt.net](mailto:unitedchurch@gmavt.net) A New Member Sunday service will be planned for this Advent Season.

## Calendar

April 3: Youth Group

April 10: Palm Sunday

10 AM service

5 PM to 6:30 PM Youth Group

April 14: Maundy Thursday

7 PM service at UCH. Service of Tenebrae and Holy Communion offered.

April 15: Good Friday

3 PM Ecumenical service at St. Jude's Catholic Church in Hinesburg.

April 15 – 30: Online store for plant sale perennials and biscotti is live ([www.ucofh.org](http://www.ucofh.org)); pick up on May 7

April 17: Easter Sunday

6:15 AM Sunrise Service outside the United Church of Hinesburg

10 AM Easter worship service

April 24: Second Sunday of Easter

10 AM Service. Rev. Debbie Ingram presiding.

April 30: Friends of Families Spring Clothing Swap

9:00 AM to 10:30 AM

May 7: Plant Sale pick up, church parking lot

9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

May 15: Youth Group 3-week session begins

5:00 PM to 6:30 PM

## **Contact Information**

### **The United Church of Hinesburg**

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