

United Church of Hinesburg
P.O. Box 39
Hinesburg, VT 05461

DECEMBER 2019 NEWSLETTER



TO:

Pastor: Rev. Jared Hamilton
Pastor's Email: revjared@gmavt.net
Church Office Hours: Monday – Thursday 9am – 12pm
Office Contacts: 482-3352 / unitedchurch@gmavt.net / www.ucofh.org

Please help keep our records current by contacting the UCH Office with changes to your e-mail or mailing address. Thank you!

Pastor's Message:

Even Now, Something Is Happening

"You are my place of quiet retreat; I wait for your Word to renew me."

- Psalm 119:114

"Old God sure was in a good mood when he made this place."

- Hunter S. Thompson (1937-2005)

December is, for many, the busiest month of the year. Along with everyday tasks – work, appointments, sports practices and family chores – there is the added work of holiday planning, end of the year work reports and planning for children to be out of school for a week or two. All of this extra work and play is also done during a month where the weather pays no attention to our needs and goes about arbitrarily helping or hindering our travel plans.

December can also be a confusing month. We are simultaneously looking back at everything that happened in 2019 while making plans, commitments and goals for 2020. I find it difficult sometimes to be present in December – moving around too quickly, thinking about what's happened or what might happen, and thinking less about what is happening. But something is happening.

A case in point might be one of the youth program's local service projects. The Hinesburg Youth Project has had a sustained relationship with New Community Project and its director, Pete Antos-Ketcham. This spring youth from HYP worked over several plots in the Starksboro Community Garden for NCP so they could grow produce for their food program run out of the Starksboro Baptist Church every Sunday. The plots our young people



Hinesburg Youth preparing garden beds – the same beds later in the year – November work on the High Tunnel

worked on provided over 1000 pounds of produce for the food program in 2019. It feels good to be a part of that work.

In November, we worked in the blustery weather to build a high tunnel at the Starksboro Community Garden site. This high tunnel will extend the growing season for NCP so they are able to provide more fresh produce for a longer duration to folks in temporary need. This was a great project, but we were unable to complete it. We were then hit with an unusually cold and snowy November, and have not been able to go back to finish the job. As an unfinished project, I've been thinking about the high tunnel a lot over the last month, how we might sneak in a work day here or there, anxiously wondering when the project might be completed.

Reminiscing and worries aside, I am aware that work continues in the present. NCP continues to help folks address food insecurity in the area, I and the youth (and the many adults who have helped with these Starksboro projects) continue to be inspired by the hard work we put in at the site. Even nature continues in the present, freezing and thawing the ground, breaking up hard soil and freeing up nutrients for next year's planting. Sometime is happening.

Something happens in us during December as well, something that goes beyond reminiscing over the last year and worrying about what the future might bring. Maybe it's like the freeze-thaw cycle in the soil: slight movements – nearly imperceptible – that break up our toughest parts so we might have use of them down the road. It's a type of spirituality that recognizes the work that takes place during this time of year, while we wait and prepare, offer and share ourselves and the stories of our faith. Perhaps we will catch a glimpse of it when the tension of the mad rush eases for a few minutes or we find a place for sacred thoughts and feelings one afternoon. Perhaps we will catch a glimpse of it ringing a bell or offering some other service during the holiday season or giving generously and feeling pretty dang good about it.

It can be hard to be present to this type of spirituality, one that moves so subtly. And some years, I can certainly attest, we might miss it all together. But it is happening.

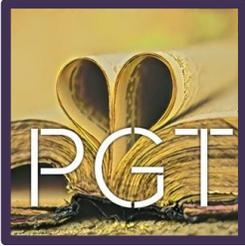
May the spirit of God tend to the soil of our hearts this season of Advent and Christmas. May we go about our work with joy, for God is still speaking, still loving and still working in each of us.

Blessings,

Pastor Jared

Spiritual Formation Activities at UCH in December and January

Practicing God Talk - Third Sunday of the Month - 11:15am to 12:00pm



Practicing God Talk meets on the third Sunday of each month to look at contemporary issues and interesting ideas through the lens of faith. This month we will read a *National Catholic Reporter* article entitled, "Economy Lacking Ethics Leads to 'Throwaway' Culture, Pope Says" by Carol Glatz. The article can be found here: <https://bit.ly/37oNWjL>, in hardcopy at the back of the church or in the church office. Join the discussion about moral and faith dimensions of economic life on December 15th from 11:15-12:00pm in the back classroom of the Parish Hall. All are welcome!

Wednesday Night Considering Faith Small Group - First Wednesday of the Month - 6:30-7:30pm



New at UCH! Our Wednesday Night Considering Faith Small Group will meet on the first Wednesday of each month (December 4th this month, January 1st, etc.) at Parkside Café (10244 Route 116) from 6:30pm to 7:30pm. Come, grab a drink, and share life as we talk about our encounters with faith: good, bad and everything in-between. This month we'll discuss our faith origin stories and what we think about them today. All are welcome!

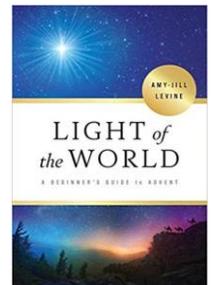
Advent Book Group - Beginning December 5th - 3:00 to 4:15pm

NOTE: The time has been moved up to 3pm

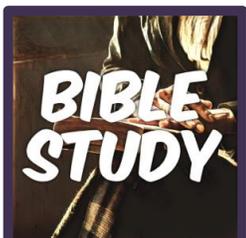


Light of the World: A Beginner's Guide to Advent by author, professor and scholar Amy-Jill Levine explores the story of Jesus' birth through Jewish culture, the role that women held in first century Palestine and the revolutionary implications of Mary's Magnificat. This is a new resource for 2019, and will be our Advent Book Group reading this year. This group, which is open to anyone, will meet on Thursdays at 3pm in December (Dec. 5th, 12th and 19th) in the Parish Hall. The book can be purchased online in print and e-book formats at:

<https://www.cokesbury.com/p-9781501884375-light-of-the-world> or through the church office for \$15.



AM Bible Study - Last Sunday of the Month - 9:00 to 9:45pm



We are also bringing back AM Bible Study the last Sunday of each month before Sunday Worship services from 9:00 to 9:45am. Come for good coffee and conversation about the lectionary passage for the day. All are welcome!

Worship Committee News

Worship Committee: Judy Parker & Sandy White – Co-chairs; Sammy Angstman, Barbara Forauer, Barbara Herrington, Rufus Patrick, Kate Schubart



It is time to think about Christmas in our church. This year the poinsettias which decorate our sanctuary will cost \$18 for an 8" plant from Paquette Full of Posies in Williston. One plant can be purchased for one or a number of loved ones with the names listed in the Christmas Eve programs. There will be order forms in the Sunday programs during December or you can email the information to unitedchurch@gmavt.net. You can pay with cash or by check made out to the United Church of Hinesburg with "flowers" on the memo line.

The Christmas tree will be up on December 15th. This year we request that the gifts under the tree be donations of food for the Little Pantry or the Food Shelf. Monetary donations will be accepted also with checks made out to The United Church of Hinesburg with "food shelf" in the memo line. Thank you!

Special Holiday Worship services



Sunday, December 8th – Pageant Sunday

Sunday, December 15th – Hand Bell Choir; Christmas tree goes up

Sunday, December 15th @ 3:00pm – Blue Christmas service

Tuesday, December 24th – Christmas Eve services

5:00pm Family Candlelight Service: Geared toward children and families with gifts, laughter and music from Larry Rice, Steven Kingrea and Matt Bean

10:00pm Traditional Candlelight Service: A traditional service with lessons & carols, candlelight and choir

Hymnals Available



We have recently purchased new *Chalice Hymnals* to replace the *United Methodist Hymnals* we have used for many years. There are many *United Methodist Hymnals* that were dedicated in memory or honor of someone when given to the church. The full list can be found at:

<https://www.ucofh.org/hymnal-dedications.html>

If one or more were given in memory of a family member, loved one or friend and you would like it, please notify the church office. If you would just like a hymnal to have at home, that's okay too!

Membership Care Committee News

Membership Care Committee: Dianne Hall – Interim Chair; Alice Cobb, Grace Farley, Bonnie Farrow, Carrie Huestis, Barbara Lyman, Heather Roberts, Mary Thompson

Are you interested in becoming a member at 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 or the church office at 482-3352 or unitedchurch@gmavt.net to receive more details.

Save the Date - Holiday Breakfast

Saturday December 7, 2019 at 9:00am

at the Osborne Parish Hall

The women and men of the United Church of Hinesburg are a very special group. We worship together, as well as feed the hungry, raise money, help others, and work on parish committees. Come celebrate the holiday season, our friendships, and count our blessings!

We will be providing a holiday breakfast to start your day on Saturday, December 7th. This has been a well-attended, fun event the last couple of years and it has proven to be a great way to start off a holiday weekend morning.

No need to bring anything – just yourself (and a friend or family member of course!)

We want to know how many places to set at the tables so please RSVP by December 6th to the church office at 482-3352 or at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c49adaa29aaf49-holiday1>. Please join us!

***We are in need of food donations for the Holiday Breakfast: quiche/egg casseroles, fruit salad, coffee cake/muffins and cider. If you are able to provide any of these items, please contact the church office or visit <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c49adaa29aaf49-holiday>.



Our knitting/crocheting group meets on the first and third Wednesdays of each month from 12:30-2:00pm in the Parish Hall. Join us on December 4th and December 18th. Bring your project, old or new, or just bring yourself. We have a large supply of yarn if you need some to start a prayer shawl or a project for next year's Holiday Bazaar. Come for some stitching fun and conversation!

Missions & Social Justice Committee News

Missions: Lori McKenna - Chair; Sue Barden, Karen Farnsworth, Barbara Forauer, Cathy Foutz, Penny Grant, Kristi Johnson, Kristi Kilbride, Melissa Loretan, Meaghan McKenna, Katie Dooley Morris

Free Community Brunch – Sunday, December 1st

Missions and coffee hour are co-hosting a seasonal holiday brunch immediately following worship on Sunday, December 1st. This will be open to the community. Choices include quiche, breakfast casseroles, fruit and salad along with a few tidbits of dessert. During this busy time of year, let us serve you brunch so you can be on your way to whatever the day has in store for you! As always there is no charge for this; donations will benefit the Hinesburg Food Shelf.

Salvation Army bell ringing – Saturday, December 14th

Our congregation will be covering the Salvation Army bell ringing at Walmart in Williston on Saturday, December 14th. One hour time slots remain from 5:00pm-7:00pm. Sign up today at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C49ADAA29AAF49-salvation2>. Be sure to dress warmly and bring your holiday spirit!

Holiday Baskets for local families – Sunday, December 15th

The Missions & Social Justice Committee and the Sunday School will be assembling 15 holiday food baskets for our neighbors in need on Sunday, December 15th. You can sign up to donate items to the baskets by calling or emailing the church office or visiting

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/10C0C49ADAA29AAF49-christmas5



Members of the Missions & Social Justice Committee assembled 30 tourtiere (meat pies) on Sunday, November 3rd. The pies raised over \$600 for Hearts for Hunger 2020!

Christian Education Committee News

Christian Education Committee: Eileen Ashe - Chair; Heather Roberts – CE Coordinator, Leah Hamilton, Mary Hong, Theron Main, Renate Parke, Sharonlee Trefry

During November, the **Sunday School** classes completed lessons from our *A Joyful Path* curriculum: “God in Nature” on November 3rd and “Remembering God’s Presence” on November 10th and then began rehearsals for this year’s Christmas Pageant. Unfortunately, the Sunday School movie night planned for Friday, November 1st had to be cancelled due to a scheduling conflict.

Our next Friday Night event will be an evening of **cookie decorating** on Friday, December 6th from 6:00-8:00pm in the Parish Hall. All Sunday School children are welcome to this very popular event. We will share a dinner of pizza and veggies and then bake and decorate cookies for the Missions & Social Justice Committee’s Christmas Baskets. This is a friend-friendly event so feel free to bring others along! To help us with meal planning and to ensure we have enough dough prepared, please RSVP at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0c49adaa29aaf49-sunday15>

Our annual **Christmas Pageant** will be performed during the service on Sunday, December 8th. It will be another great performance you won’t want to miss! Children received their lines (if applicable) and the lyrics to the Christmas carols we’ll be singing during the two rehearsals in November. Hopefully they’ve been practicing at home! We will rehearse during Sunday School this Sunday, December 1st and have our final run-through at 9:00am on Sunday, December 8th (before our performance during that morning’s worship service). **Please note that this is a change from the original plan to have no Sunday School this week and then rehearse on the morning of Saturday, December 7th.**

Can you help our growing Sunday School program by volunteering your time on Sunday mornings or one Friday evening per month? We are in need of:

- Leaders for our younger Sunday School classroom (grades K-3)
- Leaders for our older Sunday School classroom (grades 4-6)
- Roamers to monitor Sunday School classrooms and help out where needed
- A musician or vocalist to work with the Sunday School for 4-6 weeks at a time, learning a song to be performed in church
- Folks who have a special project or activity to share with the Sunday School during a One Room Schoolhouse (usually around holidays or school vacations when attendance is lower)
- Chaperones for our monthly movie or game nights on the first Friday of the month
- Nursery substitutes to cover when our usual providers are unavailable

If you are interested in any of these opportunities, please contact Heather in the church office.

Middle and High School Youth Groups – Upcoming fundraisers



Holiday Music with HYP

Date: Saturday, December 7th

Time: 6:00pm

Cost: By Donation

Where: United Church of Hinesburg

Hinesburg Youth Project (HYP) will be presenting a relaxing and festive evening of holiday favorites with a variety of musical selections. Our very talented youth will be performing both instrumental and vocal pieces that will get you ready for the holidays! HYP is raising money for their service trip in the summer of 2020 (location to be determined).

Holiday Cookie Walk Sale

Date: Saturday, December 21st

Time: 10:00am – 2:00pm

Where: United Church of Hinesburg – Osborne Parish Hall

Take the stress out of the holidays...let the Hinesburg Youth Project do your holiday baking! Take a stroll around tables loaded with fancy, homemade holiday cookies and select what you want. Cookies will be boxed and sold for \$ 8.00 per pound. Makes a great gift!



HYP youth stacked wood on Sunday, November 24th to raise money for their summer service trip. Bill Lippert says: "Thanks so much for stacking (and partially re-stacking!) our three cords of wood. Happy too to support your participation in the Hinesburg Youth Project. Awesome job by an awesome crew of fine young men!"

Finance Committee News

Finance Committee: Yvonne Whitaker – Treasurer; Ellen Dooley & Sandy Milbank – Co-Financial Secretaries; Phil Pouech, Mary Eddy Stewart

Our offering and contributions of our time and talent help to ensure that our church will continue to grow and thrive to serve the spiritual and physical needs in our local and global communities now and for generations to come.

Plate offering received as of **October 31, 2019** (\$80,668 75% of offering budget)



In thousands

At the February Annual Meeting our church membership approved a deficit budget. Our fundraisers have been successful; however, as of the end of October, our offering is below projections. On a more positive note, our unrestricted investments have increased in value since the beginning of the year. We will need to dip into those investments this year to eliminate the deficit.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Yvonne Whitaker, Treasurer

Planned Giving

If you would like to help to ensure that the United Church of Hinesburg continues to thrive for generations to come, consider making the United Church of Hinesburg a beneficiary in your will or living trust. Another option to consider would be the gift of an appreciated stock instead of cash. This option of donating shares of stock can have tax benefits for you and allow a larger contribution to our church. If you have questions about gifting stock, contact your accountant or contact Damon Kinzie, our Morgan Stanley financial advisor (658-2424). All calls and conversations with Damon will be strictly confidential.

Staff Parish Relations Committee News

Staff Parish Relations Committee: Marie Eddy - Chair; Ellen Dooley, David Eddy, Sheri Hanlon

The UCH Staff/Parish Relations Committee serves as the main conduit for communications between the congregation and the staff. To help us do this, we invite your input on the service, the nursery, the office, the facilities, whether it be praises or concerns. Please feel free to reach out to an SPRC member at any time.

Members:

David and Marie Eddy, 482-2645 marieeddy9@gmail.com and davideddy09@gmail.com

Ellen Dooley, 279-4929 dooley@gmavt.net

Sheri Hanlon, 318-1200 sheri@gmavt.net

December 2019 Happenings at UCH

{All meetings/events are held in Osborne Parish House unless otherwise noted.}

Monday mornings (except 2 nd)	10:00am-11:00am	Spanish speaking group
2 nd Monday	8:00am-3:00pm	WIC
Monday nights	5:00pm-9:30pm	Parish House reserved by private group
Tuesday nights	6:15pm-7:30pm	Cub Scouts
2 nd Tuesday night	6:30pm-8:00pm	4H Midnight Riders
Wednesday nights	6:30pm-9:00pm	Boy Scouts
Thursday mornings	10:00am-11:00am	Spanish speaking group
Fridays (except 1 st)	9:00am-1:00pm	Hinesburg Senior Meal site
Sunday, December 1 st	11:15am	Community Brunch hosted by Missions & December coffee hour
Wednesday, December 4 th	12:30pm-2:00pm	Knitting/crocheting group meets in the Parish Hall
Wednesday, December 4 th	6:30pm-7:30pm	Considering Faith at Parkside Café
Thursday, December 5 th	3:00pm-4:15pm	Advent Book Group – <i>Light of the World</i>
Friday, December 6 th	6:00pm-8:00pm	Sunday School Friday Night event – cookie decorating
Friday, December 6 th	6:00pm-8:00pm	HYP Basket Raffle drop-off
Saturday, December 7 th	9:00am-11:00am	Holiday Breakfast
Saturday, December 7 th	6:00pm	Holiday Music & More fundraiser for HYP
Sunday, December 8 th		Pageant Sunday (rehearsal in the sanctuary at 9:00am)
Thursday, December 12 th	3:00pm-4:15pm	Advent Book Group – <i>Light of the World</i>
Thursday, December 12 th	7:15pm	Hand bell rehearsal in the sanctuary
Saturday, December 14 th	11:00am-1:00pm	Parish Hall reserved by private group
Saturday, December 14 th	3:00pm-5:00pm	Cub Scout pack meeting (caroling)
Sunday, December 15 th	10:00am	Hand Bell performance during the service; Missions & Sunday School assembling holiday food baskets
Sunday, December 15 th	11:15am	Practicing God-talk discussion of “Economy Lacking Ethics Leads to ‘Throwaway’ Culture, Pope Says”
Wednesday, December 18 th	12:30pm-2:00pm	Knitting/crocheting group meets in the Parish Hall
Thursday, December 19 th	3:00pm-4:15pm	Advent Book Group – <i>Light of the World</i>
Saturday, December 21 st	10:00am-2:00pm	Cookie Walk fundraiser for HYP
Saturday, December 21 st	5:30pm-9:30pm	Social Band December Concert (concert @ 7:30pm)
Sunday, December 22 nd		No Sunday School
Monday, December 23 rd		December newsletter deadline
Tuesday, December 24 th	5:00pm	Christmas Eve family service
Tuesday, December 24 th	10:00pm	Christmas Eve candlelight service with choir
Wednesday, December 25 th - Thursday, December 26 th		Church office closed
Sunday, December 29 th	9:00am-9:45am	AM Bible Study before church



The United Church of Hinesburg is host to the first **Little Free Pantry** in Vermont and we continue to need your help to keep it stocked! It is designed to help neighbors in need, whether they are food insecure or have a last-minute need for a food item after the grocery store is closed. The Little Free Pantry is available for food, toiletries and household items 24 hours a day, no questions asked. If you need a little something, stop in and get it. If you can share a little something, stop by anytime and drop it in the pantry. If you have any questions about items that are appropriate to donate, please contact the church office.

****Please note that the colder weather limits the type of items that can be left in the Little Free Pantry – no canned goods or liquids that could freeze/thaw. Dry goods are welcome all year long! Some examples include: breakfast cereal, granola bars, pasta, rice, macaroni & cheese, peanut butter, foil-wrapped tuna or chicken, baking mixes, toiletries & hygiene products.**

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

04	Donald Rahelich
05	Danielle Pezzimenti
06	Meg Reilly
09	<i>Donald & Jan Rahelich</i>
12	Doug Mead
14	Kerri Brien
14	Mary Thompson
15	Henry White
17	Kathy Newton
17	<i>Rev. Jared & Leah Hamilton</i>
18	Erle Mead
18	Lily Mead
21	David Haire
22	<i>Sherrie & David Simmons</i>
26	David Palmer
27	David Danforth
27	Chip Foutz
29	<i>Dianne & Gene Hall</i>
30	Nathan Brown
30	Mackenna Riggs

*If you don't see your birthday or anniversary listed,
please call the Church Office so we may include you!*



December 2019

December 1st

Greeters: The Reilly family

Ushers: Phil Pouech & Lia Cravedi

Reader: Joanne Russell

Advent Readers: The Reilly family

December 8th

Greeters: youth

Ushers: youth

Readers: youth

Advent Readers: The Billingsley family

December 15th

Greeters: The Johnson family

Ushers: Sherrie Simmons & Melissa Loretan

Reader: Thea Gaudette

Advent Readers: The Hamilton family

December 22nd

Greeters: TBD

Ushers: Grace Ciffo & Kate Schubart

Reader: Mary Eddy Stewart

Advent readers: Carrie & Allison Huestis

December 29th

Greeters: TBD

Ushers: Barbara & Bob Forauer

Reader: Yvonne Whitaker

Thank you for your service!



Looking for news regarding specific denominations?

Check these websites...

www.neumc.org | www.vtcucc.org | www.abcvnh.org

**Distributing the monthly newsletter by email
saves the church a considerable amount of**

**money in postage expenses. If you currently receive a mailed hard copy of the church
newsletter, please consider contacting the church office with an updated email address to
which future issues can be sent. Thank you!**
