



UNITED CHURCH OF HINESBURG

Newsletter –September 2024

Contents

Pastor's Page	p.1
Christian Education	p.3
Hinesburg Youth Project	p.3
Property	p. 4
Hospitality & Member Care	p. 5
Prayer Shawl Mission	p.6
Holiday Bazaar	p.6
Community News	p.7
Church Membership	p.7
Calendar	p.7
Donating to UCH	p.8
Contact Information	p.8

Pastor's Page

"Our Spirits Must Grow"

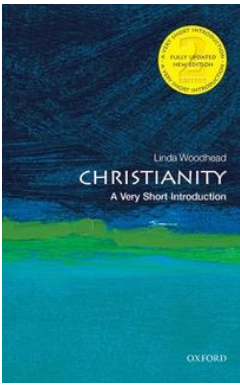
What does it mean to be "spiritual" these days? For some, it means having a relationship with divinity or the spiritual world. This relationship is nurtured through rituals and practices like prayer, meditation, keeping silence, pilgrimage and almsgiving. Others might imagine a connection to transcendent or universal principles. These connections are strengthened through study, policy work, direct action and service. We might be exercising our spirituality when we pray for others, celebrate our ancestors, go on a hike, or serve a meal to those that need it.

If you consider yourself a spiritual being, then it stands to reason that your spirit has the ability to grow and stretch. Spiritual growth is, as the authors of "The Better World Handbook" put it,

a lifelong process of enhancing one's self-awareness, and understanding at a deep level one's place in the world. Cultivating inner peace enhances our daily experiences and enables us to fully experience the joys and wonders of life. This wholeness allows us to lives that emanate from deep within us and prepares us to live balanced lives while making the world a better place.

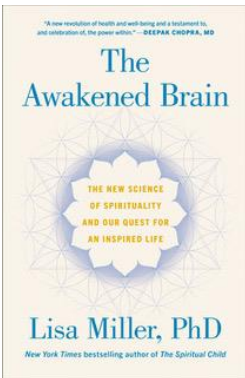
Despite our many scientific advances and new conveniences, for the most part, we're no happier than people were fifty years ago. Knowledge alone will not make the world a better place. We need wisdom to guide our knowledge and direct our energies to where they are most needed. Pursuing spiritual well-being prepares us to reorient our lives around virtues of peace, justice, humility, service, and compassion. These virtues allow us to fully grasp the needs of others and motivate us to address our social and environmental challenges.

For those interested in a little spiritual growth, we will be reading a series of three books this fall. We will also meet to discuss each book on the first Thursday of each month (Oct 3rd, November 7th and December 5th) from 6-7pm in the Parish House. Each book has a different focus and has been chosen with our busy lives in mind (i.e. they are short and readable). Here's the rundown:

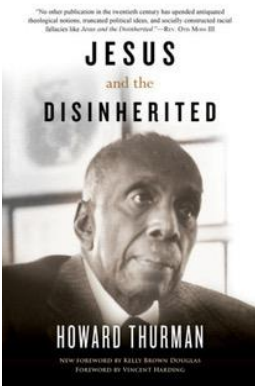


For group discussion on **October 3rd** *Christianity - A Very Short Introduction* by Linda Woodhead (2nd Edition; 2014, 114p). From the dustjacket:

This Very Short Introduction explores the cultural and institutional dimensions of Christianity and provides a fresh, lively, and candid portrait of the world's largest religion over the course of two millennia. It distinguishes three main types of Christianity – Church, Biblical, and Mystical – and examines their struggles with one another and with wider society. \$12 through UCH.



For group discussion on **November 7th** – *The Awakened Brain* by Lisa Miller, PhD. This book advocates for our need for spirituality using science. From the dustjacket: *Weaving her own deeply personal journey of awakening with her groundbreaking research, Dr. Miller's book reveals that humans are universally equipped with a capacity for spirituality, and that our brains become more resilient and robust as a result of it. For leaders in business and government, truth-seekers, parents, healers, educators, and any person confronting life's biggest questions, The Awakened Brain combines cutting-edge science (from MRI studies to genetic research, epidemiology, and more) with on-the-ground application for people of all ages and from all walks of life, illuminating the surprising science of spirituality and how to engage it in our lives. \$17 through UCH.*



For group discussion on **December 5th** – *Jesus and the Disinherited* by Howard Thurman

This book is a classic, written by one of my favorite authors, Howard Thurman. It is a reading of the gospel story that focuses on the those on the margins and Jesus' call to love. This book was a favorite of Martin Luther King Jr.'s and helped to shape the civil rights movement. \$12 through UCH.

We will have a small number of books available for purchase through the church. Alternatively, each of the books may be found through your various library lending apps, audible, Kindle, or wherever you get your books.

Blessings,

Pastor Jared

Christian Education

Our Sunday School program kicked off on Homecoming Sunday, September 15th, with some time to reconnect and get to know one another playing "minute-to-win-it" games in the Parish Hall. We welcomed back many familiar faces as well as some new friends.

This year we will continue using the Faith Practices curriculum in the classroom with lessons in Giving and Receiving Hospitality, Working for Justice, and Encountering Scripture. In addition to regular Sunday School classroom days, we have planned a variety of other activities throughout the program year. We will enjoy outdoor programming one Sunday each in October, January and April.

We will undertake several mission projects during our Sunday morning gatherings and will remain in church for two All Together Sundays in November and February. Our annual Christmas pageant is scheduled for mid-December and we expect to offer lessons and activities related to the season for both Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter.

Outside of Sunday mornings, we plan to participate in the Feed My Starving Children mobile pack event in Essex in October. We will also be partnering with the Hospitality & Member Care committee for some "all ages" game or movie nights during the year.

Our Sunday School schedule for the month of October is as follows:

- October 6th - Giving & Receiving Hospitality lesson (classroom)
- October 13th - Outdoor Classroom
- October 20th - Giving & Receiving Hospitality lesson (classroom)
- October 27th - Giving & Receiving Hospitality lesson (classroom)

Registration forms can be completed online; the link is under Resources on the Children's Programs page of the website, ucofh.org/childrens-programs. If you are interested in volunteering as a Sunday school leader, please contact Heather at uchsundayschool@gmail.com. You can check the availability of teaching opportunities in our Sunday School calendar [here](#).

We look forward to a fun and meaningful Sunday school year and hope your family will join us!



Photo by Eileen Ashe

Hinesburg Youth Project

Summer Trip Report



The Hinesburg Youth Project travelled to Salem, Massachusetts for in June, 2024 for a few days of service and fun. Pastor Jared and Peggy Dippen led ten young people on this year's trip.

The trip was an exercise in agility. With the exception of our first day there, each subsequent day was altered by a heatwave and power outages that hit eastern Massachusetts during the week. We volunteered with the Salem Food Pantry, the North Shore Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth, Cape Ann Animal Aid, and the Service Dog Project. We also had a lot of fun walking around Salem, at the beach, and at Canobie Lake Park in New Hampshire.

The kiddos were terrific as we adjusted each day to offer service hours where we could while trying to keep cool. Although we were unable to offer the service hours we had hope on this trip, it still provided a wonderful growth experience, and got us back into the rhythm of yearly service trips. Our 2025 trip is currently being planned. Details soon to follow.

Several of the youth helped to kick-off fundraising efforts for next year's trip by serving up root beer floats at the Hinesburg Fall Festival.



This year's group will have more opportunity for local service. Each month will have one gathering event – program, learning, meal sharing – and one volunteer opportunity.

Upcoming HYP gatherings:

Sunday, October 6th: 12:30 - 2 – Gathering Meal

Sunday, October 20th: 3 - 5:30 – Volunteer Work at the Starksboro Community Gardens

Sunday, November 3rd: 12:30 - 2 – Program Meal

Sunday, November 17th: 12:30 - 2 – HCRC Snack Bag packing party

Property

Wetland Restoration, Green Space, and the Playground

Wetland Restoration

- * In early August the long-awaited wetland restoration project behind the church began with the installation of new culverts under Stella Road.
- * Construction work continued in mid-September, including tilling the field and building up the playground area grade. After that work is completed the tree and shrub planting can begin.



- * The project is paid for through grants secured by the Lewis Creek Association.

Green Space

- * Work on an initial phase of a green space (“an area of grass, trees, or other vegetation set apart for recreational or aesthetic purposes in an otherwise urban environment”) located adjacent to the wetland will get underway once the wetland project is completed.
- * Donations made in memory of Paul Eddy and Sandy White will fund the initial phase, which includes the purchase of trees and benches.

Playground

- * The playground, which was severely affected by the flooding, was taken down and the parts stored. Replacement parts have been purchased.
- * The playground will be installed in its new location in conjunction with the wetlands project.

For more information about these projects, including a link to the design plan for the area, go to: www.ucofh.org/property-updates.html.

“Baptist Lot” Conservation Easement

Background

- * In 1876 and 1913 two plots of land located to the west of Silver Street and just south of the Hinesburg Community School and the LaPlatte River were deeded to the Baptist Society.
- * The land (17.3 acres) is primarily wetlands and cannot support any type of septic system because the water table is too high. Due to its location connecting to the town sewer system is not an option.

Conservation Easement

- * The USDA approved an application submitted by the church for a conservation easement purchase covering 14.6 acres of the land; the church will continue to own and pay taxes on the property (taxes are assessed because the property is not used for religious purposes and is not contiguous to the land on which the church buildings sit).

Hospitality and Member Care Team

Coffee Hour

The Monthly Coffee Hour Chairs and Crew list for 2024-25 has been updated and posted on the refrigerator in the kitchen, along with reminder checklists. While all crews are solid now, there is always room to join in. If you would like to join a specific Monthly crew, speak with the monthly chair. Contact Carla if you would like to be a substitute for coffee hour or a Helping Hand for any other of the many church activities.

Celebrating Newcomers

If you are relatively new to UCH or have been attending church and/or participating in various events at the church for a while and have not been part of a formal orientation and celebration process, please reach out to Carla, Lisa, or Pastor Jared to explore further.

Celebration of Life and Funeral Receptions

We are very grateful that Laurie Danforth will continue to lead this important and caring time for the families. Contact Laurie (lauriedanforth@gmavt.net, 802 922-0150) if you are interested in being a Helping Hand for these events.

Sunshine List

We have been working on updating the Sunshine List to be sure we not only have the accurate names and contact information, but also know a little more about each individual and the ways that might bring them light now; for example, a visit, cards, email/text/phone call connections, prayers, run a short errand, etc. Also, knowing their interests, such as pets, nature, music, etc., can give our Helping Hands an idea of how to personalize the sunshine.

If you or someone you know would like to be included on an on-going or event-based Sunshine List, please let Pastor Jared, Lisa or Carla know. If you can, include suggestions for meaningful ways to show we have them in our thoughts and prayers.

Random acts of sunshine: if you would like to “shine” on someone with a card, there are blank cards and copies of the Church Directory on the table at the back of the church.

Carla Wuthrich, ccwuthrich50@gmail.com, 802-734-1227

Lisa Zengilowski, lzengilowski@yahoo.com, 802-734-5014

Prayer Shawl Mission

A dedicated group of knitters and crocheters have stocked the prayer shawl cabinet in the entryway to the church. The shawls are not necessarily for wearing while praying, as is the custom in some religions. The shawl, made with love and prayers, provides a warm hug and a comfort when things are just not right.

You are encouraged to take a shawl to give to someone in our congregation or the greater community who is experiencing challenges with health, a recent loss, or who could use a warm hug. If you take one, please write your name and the recipient’s name in the book.

The Prayer Shawl Blessing is attached to each shawl.

Prayer Shawl Blessing

This shawl was made just for you
To bring comfort
To know you are loved
To share in your joy.
This shawl is to wrap you up
When you're cold
When you're hurting
When you need to snuggle.
This shawl was knit or crocheted
With Blessings
With Love
With Prayers.

Holiday Bazaar



Mark your calendars for our annual Holiday Bazaar on **Saturday, November 23rd**. We will solicit donations for the bake sale, including pies for our online pie sale, and the luncheon closer to that date, but it’s not too early to start thinking about donations of items you no longer use that would be suitable for Grandmother’s Attic, and making handmade arts and crafts items. Below are donation suggestions and guidelines.

Grandmother's Attic Guidelines:

Please donate only items that you would re-gift to a family member or that you would buy at this type of event. You may bring your donations to church on Sunday mornings or during Church Office Hours (Mondays from 9 to noon).

Arts and Crafts

Handmade items are a holiday shopping favorite. Suggestions are listed below. Please plan on bringing your items, marked with a price, on Friday, November 22.

Holiday: Stockings, tree skirts, ornaments, mantle and table decor, wall hangings, and anything else festive and fun for Christmas or Thanksgiving.

Gifts: Hats, mittens, scarves, sweaters, quilts, wall hangings, hand-crafted jewelry, tote-bags, reusable shopping bags, and other items you enjoy making. Stocking stuffers or small gifts for a co-worker, babysitter, bus driver, or friend are also popular.

For the Table: Placemats, napkins, table runners, centerpieces, aprons, and decorative items.

Community News



FREE KID'S CLOTHING SWAP
*Gently used children's clothing, sized infant to 14
*Now also accepting maternity clothes
OCT 26, 9-11 AM
HCRC
Hinesburg Community Resource Center
FALL SWAP
UNITED CHURCH OF HINESBURG
Drop off donations on Oct 25 from 12-8pm and at Carpenter-Carse Library from Oct 21-24. No toys, no books, and no donations on swap day please. Contact Alex with questions or to volunteer. tel: 802-482-4946 email: koncewicz@hinesburgresource.org



Friends of Families
A Community resource for parents, children and families
COME AND JOIN US!
WEEKLY PLAYGROUP
10-11:30 AM ON THURSDAY MORNINGS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR FOR AGES BIRTH TO 5 WITH A CAREGIVER IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF HINESBURG'S PARISH HALL.
FREE TO ATTEND!!!
FOR FAMILIES FROM ANY TOWN SEEKING FRIENDSHIP, COMMUNITY, PLAY TIME, MUSIC & A STORY TIME.
SNACKS AND COFFEE PROVIDED.
CONTACT ALEX AT koncewicz@hinesburgresource.org FOR MORE INFO

Church Membership



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 pledge their care, support and commitment to the new member, who 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 802-482-3352 or unitedchurch@gmavt.net

Calendar

Sunday, October 6 ~ 12:30 – 2 ~ Youth Group

Thursday, October 3 ~ 6 to 7 ~ Book Group

Tuesday, October 22 ~ 5 to 6:30 ~ Learn to Play Mah Jongg [Sign Up Here](#)

Saturday, October 26 ~ 9 to 11 ~ Friends of Families Clothing Swap

Thursday, November 7 ~ 6 to 7 ~ Book Group

Saturday, November 23 ~ 9 to 1 ~ Holiday Bazaar

Thursday, December 5 ~ 6 to 7 ~ Book Group

Sunday, December 15 ~ Children's Christmas Pageant

Sunday, December 22 ~ 1 to 3 ~ Cookie Walk

Donating to the United Church of Hinesburg and Updating Your Automatic Donation



Thank you for your continued support of our church. If you are not taking advantage of the convenience and ease of electronic giving, we encourage you to consider it. Set up a one-time or monthly donation from a bank account or with a credit card by scanning the QR code with your phone or going to the Donate page on the church website, www.ucofh.org/donate.

If you make an automatic donation to the church from a bank account or with a credit card and would like to change the amount or the account, how you set up your donation will determine how you accomplish that:

- 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, submit a new form (available from the church office)
- If you set up your donation through the Donate page on the church website (www.ucofh.org/donate):
 - log in to your account and click Profile
 - click the Edit button below your scheduled transaction
 - make your changes, and save.

If you have any questions about electronic giving or your donations, contact the church office.

Contact Information

The United Church of Hinesburg

Mailing Address: PO Box 39, Hinesburg, VT 05461

www.ucofh.org

Church Office

unitedchurch@gmavt.net 802-482-3352

Office Hours: Monday 9 to noon

Pastor

Reverend Jared M. Hamilton revjared@gmavt.net

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 9 to noon, or by appointment

We are a welcoming and inclusive community where all are invited to connect, serve, worship, celebrate, learn, and grow with God's help.