

The Star



PUBLISHED FOR THE MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF GRACE CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, RUTLAND, VERMONT

September Worship at Grace Church

August 30th: *Let's Flow!*

Romans 12:9-21; Matthew 16:21-28

September 6th: *Remember, Restore, Renew*

(Communion will be served)

Romans 13: 8-14; Matthew 18: 15-20

September 13th - Fall Kick-Off Sunday

Rising Above Limited Potentials Held

Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35

September 20th: *Tensions to Peace*

Philippians 1:21-30; Matthew 20:1-16

September 27th: *The Glow*

Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32



On **September 13**, we move into the fall season with **Fall Kick-Off Sunday**: a Sunday of celebration. We celebrate new leadership, we celebrate the Grace Church community, and we celebrate Grace Church's outreach to the community.

Rev. Dr. Alberta C. Wallace will offer her sermon *Rising Above Limited Potentials Held* and the Grace Church Festival Brass will lead us in songs of praise.

Thank You from Rev. Holly



Dear Members and Friends of Grace Congregational Church,

What a blessing it was to me to serve your congregation for 3 1/2 months! In so many ways you affirmed me and my ministry as I sought ways to bring light and hope to you from God's Word each week. It brought me to new heights (the bell tower!) and I enjoyed sharing some of my joys and struggles with you. Thank you for letting me be part of your ministry - and I will continue to hold Grace in my heart and in my prayers as you venture into the future.

It is from the depths of my heart and soul that I thank you for the cards and emails and phone calls, expressing your gratitude for my time with you. I have never in my 38 years of ministry been showered with so much love. Diane Chartrand can tell you that I was rendered **speechless** (that's quite an accomplishment) by your thank you card and check.

Thank you so much for everything. In Christ's Service,
Holly



A NOTE FROM THE PASTOR

○ God show us kindness and bless us and
make your face smile on us!
- - - *Selah* — Psalm 67:1

May God remember all your offerings,
and regard with favor your burnt sacrifices.
- - - *Selah* — Psalm 20:3

The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.
- - - *Selah* — Psalm 46:11

Trust in God at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before God;
God is a refuge for us.
- - - *Selah* — Psalm 62:8

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth
- - - *Selah* — Psalm 67:4

Selah is used seventy-one times in the book of Psalms. This mysterious word has been debated on its meaning and purpose in the Bible. It is a word that cannot be translated into English as its English equivalent is unsure. Therefore, it is transliterated.

A *transliteration* is when a Hebrew word is simply sounded out to English so we can read and pronounce it. An example is Hallelujah. Hallelujah is a transliteration of a Hebrew

word that literally means, Praise God (Hallel=praise, Jah =God). Instead of being translated as "Praise God," this word has been left for us to sound out as it would be in the original Hebrew and continues to be a powerful expression of praise.

Many have suggested that *Selah* means to pause or reflect. Since it is found so frequently in the Psalms, it has also been said it gives instructions to the musicians, like a rest or change in volume between notes and phrases. This beautiful mysterious word is sometimes omitted from translations and placed as a footnote, because the translation is obscure.

Look what comes before the phrase *Selah*. I agree that it is the writer's way to get us to pause, reflect, meditate, remember, breathe deep. Read the verses above again. Reflect. Stop. Pause. Meditate. Remember. Breathe deep.

The Intentional Interim season is a time for you to *Selah*. As you pause; reflect; remember and breathe deep, reach out to me, and share what the Lord said.

Email me at alberta@gracechurchvt.org or call me at the church or at 520-954-2163. I am in the office Monday – Wednesday. On Thursday's I work from home on sermon preparation. If you want to talk with me on Sunday, I am available by appointment. Friday and Saturday, I try to keep as my refreshment days. Life happens on Friday and Saturday also, and if it does, call me. I will be present for you. *Selah!*

Pastor Alberta

News about the Healing Ministry

We received the following letter from the Rev. Robert B. Boutwell, Minister for Healing. He was honored during the worship service on August 23, with gratitude expressed for his many years of service, healing, and compassion.



Dear members, friends, and staff,

Please accept my resignation as Commissioned Associate for Healing Ministry. I am unable to continue to offer healing ministry for Grace Church. The COVID-19 restrictions have made it impossible for me to offer the rituals of healing touch, laying on hands, and anointing with oil. I am not able to offer the Healing Prayer Service in the Chapel, nor do visitations at the hospital and nursing homes, and I am unable to have office hours and to meet and pray for people in the office. My wife, Florence, has been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. She is increasingly disabled, and cannot be safely left at home alone. That means that I will not be able to participate in the Church Council nor the Board of Deacons. I will continue to meet with the Prayer Group, to hold the members and staff in my prayers, and to do what I can to assist with the work of the church. I give thanks for all of you who have assisted and supported me in this healing ministry.

It has been a rich blessing for me to offer the healing love of Jesus, and the powerful healing gifts of the Holy Spirit to people at Grace Church. I give thanks to God that I was called to this ministry and for all the healings and blessings that have happened here. If there is someone who discovers that they have been called by the Holy Spirit to continue the healing ministry, or is interested in exploring the possibility, I will help them to develop their gifts and learn how to put them into practice here.

I will clear my stuff out of my office as soon as possible and will leave some spirituality and healing resources there for others to use. Pray for me now as I go back into retirement.

Grace and peace to you all in Christ,
Robert B. Boutwell



Volunteer Help Needed at Grace

Grace Church Web Manager

We are looking for volunteers to help maintain the church website. The job would involve updating the online events and notices, and keeping the information on the website current. The volunteers would need access to their own computer.

Grace Church Online Ministry

We are asking for volunteers with knowledge of video editing and who have their own software to help with the online ministry. Please contact Alastair or Diane for more information. Thank you!

FALL MUSIC PROGRAMS 2020

Sunday Musicians through September

August 30: Ryan Mangan, tenor

September 6: John Kirk and Trish Miller,
fiddle and guitar

September 13: Brass quartet

September 20: Judy Pomainville, soprano
and Doug Olufsen, baritone

September 27: Tintinnabula handbell choir

A Message to Parents about the Children's Choir

It would be wonderful to make music with your children again this fall! There are fun non-singing activities that we can do with them, including musical games, hand chimes, and more. They would be required to use hand sanitizer, wear masks, and observe distancing protocols, which are now 3-6 feet for children. Meeting time is 4:00-4:30 Wednesdays and begins **September 16**. Please let us know whether you are interesting in having your children participate.

Travelogue - Thursday, October 1, 7:00 PM, Jenn Wright

Please join us for a travelogue on October 1 at 7 p.m. Jenn Wright, executive director of HEAL, will update us on her work and show recent pictures of the wonderful progress HEAL is making in Kenya. Maximum 25 people, so please call the church office to register.



Grace Church's First Steeple Chase a Big Success!

On Saturday, August 22nd, Grace Church hosted its first annual Steeple Chase - a celebration of Rutland's history and heritage - in memory of local historian, Lincoln Fenn. The teams had to solve cryptic clues, leading to well-known locations within a short radius of the church. Seven teams braved the misty, cool morning, starting at 9 a.m. First prize was awarded to Barb Kirk and Tegan Kirk-Elkin, whose team, 'The Great and Powerful B-T', completed the chase in 1 hour and 53 minutes. Barb and Tegan won a tasty gift certificate to Jones Donuts, which they turned around and gave to Pastor Alberta and Wendy. Now that's generosity!

All the participants had a great time, and we look forward to the next Grace Church Steeple Chase!

From the Treasurer ...

Grace Church finances continue to be on track relative to budget through the end of July. We can see, however, that there are problematic trend lines due to COVID-related impacts on various streams of income. In particular, as you might expect, non-pledge plate offerings are greatly reduced from what they were prior to the statewide lockdown and our modified service format. We recognize that the pandemic is causing uncertainty and instability for everyone.

If you normally contribute in the plate, please know that those contributions are appreciated and are an important part of sustaining the church's mission. To the extent that you are able, we ask that you continue to keep pledges and other offerings current by mailing in your contributions or by using Tithely if you are unable to attend church in person. This financial turbulence is manageable, and together I know we can finish the year strong.

Matt Getty, Treasurer



The Fortnightly 2020-2021

*Celebrating 141 Years at
Grace Congregational Church*



During World War II, Fortnightly meetings were curtailed as women worked on the war effort. Because of the pandemic, we will also postpone meetings for an indefinite period.

However, at this time a sculpture of Julia Dorr by Amanda Sisk is in progress (see sketch) and will be installed as an addition to the Rutland Sculpture Trail. When completed, it will be dedicated on the grounds of the Rutland Free Library, which Julia Dorr founded. We have been invited to be a part of this ceremony. I'll let you know when the date is announced.

Bonnie Kelly, President

ON-GOING WEEKLY EVENTS

SUNDAY

8:30 Chapel Service
10:00 Sanctuary Service

MONDAY

8:00 AA
5:30 AA
6:30 Bells rehearsal

TUESDAY

5:00 AA Women's Group
7:00 AA Men's Group

WEDNESDAY

8:00 AA
8:00 Prayer Group
9:30 Bible Study
11:30 Staff Meeting

FRIDAY

8:00 AA

AA- Alcoholics Anonymous



SEPTEMBER EVENTS & MEETINGS

Wed, Sept. 2, 8:30 AM—Property Committee

Thurs, Sept. 3, 6:00 PM—Diaconate

Sun, Sept. 6, 8:30 and 10 AM—Communion;
Food Shelf Sunday

Sun, Sept. 6, 11:15 AM—Spiritual Growth

Wed, Sept. 9, 9:30 AM—Prayer Shawl

Sun, Sept. 13, 8:30 and 10 AM—Fall Kick-Off
Sunday

Wed, Sept. 16—Children's and Sanctuary
Choirs resume

Thurs, Sept. 24, 6:00 PM—Church Council

Flowers for Worship

We all appreciate the beautiful flowers which grace our Sanctuary each Sunday. Many of these are provided in memory or celebration of a loved one. In recent years, there has been some slippage in the process, and flowers are sometimes not paid for. Since our Flower Committee has few funds of its own, this is not sustainable. We have therefore implemented a new “pay as you go” system.

Flowers for the Sanctuary cost \$80, while those for the Chapel are \$35. If you would like flowers for a given Sunday, please make that reservation with me AND send a check to the church for the appropriate amount three weeks prior to your Sunday. If we do not receive your payment by two weeks in advance, we will cancel the flower order and substitute our back-up single rose.

Thank you all for your understanding, and for your continued support of our flower ministry.

David Hazen, Chair, Flower Committee

Our Church's Wider Mission Offering Received Our Church's Wider Mission Offering Sunday, September 20

Grace Church is a 5 for 5 congregation supporting each of the 5 special offerings of the United Church of Christ. Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) is one of those offerings. Contributions given to OCWM support the work of the UCC nationally and locally through the VT Conference. Areas of focus for this offering include ministers, mission (112 missionaries in 44 countries), and social justice. The UCC works on issues of race, women's rights, health, the environment, LGBTQ rights, among others. Please prayerfully consider your gift to support the work of our denomination here in Vermont and throughout the world!

...AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD. GEN 1: 25

The following was submitted by Margaret Franklin. It was written by her son, Ben Gibson, for the newsletter of his church, St. John's UCC in Laurys Station, PA. Margaret offers it as a message of hope.

We're loving the flowers this year, for a bunch of reasons:

- they're just so happy-looking! Bright and sunny and uplifting to see as we stroll beside them - it feels like they're actually smiling at you.

- they bring in a whole different assortment of wildlife - hummingbirds, finches, grosbeaks, squirrels...and we seem to be supporting a huge population of honey bees as well. Hours of enjoyment for ourselves and the kids, watching all the wildlife.

- seeing them display their daily phototropism - they literally follow the sun from East to West across the sky each day...turning their faces and their leaves to soak up the absolute maximum of the sun's life-giving light...creating within themselves the strength to thicken their stalks, deepen their roots, and reach ever higher and CLOSER to the sun. When the next summer storm blows through they will stand strong, because of these daily efforts. They don't languish, they don't sit still and just wait for the sun to shine upon them...rather they actively pursue it, eagerly seeking its light.

Quite a metaphor there for us!



We can also actively follow the SON. Rather than languishing, sitting still, waiting for His light to shine upon us...we can rise up each day and seek Him, eagerly pursuing His life-giving Light. Just like the flowers, this allows us to strengthen ourselves, our faith...to deepen our roots...to reach ever higher, closer to the SON. When the next storm of life blows through (like a pandemic, for instance, or a national crisis of racism)...we who actively follow the SON can stand strong, because of these daily efforts.

God has covered us in His love and His grace; our debts are paid...but there is SO MUCH we can still do during our time in this world! Faith in ACTION is a living, vibrant faith. And, if a simple flower can show me how it's done...





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Grace Church Memorials The Sanctuary and Chapel Flower Memorials



September 6 to the Glory of God and in loving memory of **Axel J. and Jane Olney Anderson** by their family.

September 13 to the Glory of God.

September 20 to the Glory of God and in loving memory of **Jane Martinez** by her husband Bill and the family.

September 27 to the Glory of God and in loving memory of **John Stager** by his family.

(Please note: If you would like to have a flower memorial in memory of a loved one or for a special celebration, please contact David Hazen: 483.2337/peren@aol.com).

The Church Spire will be illuminated

September 6 and 13 to the Glory of God.

September 20 to the Glory of God and in loving memory of **Odell Johnston, Sr.** by his family.

September 29 to the Glory of God and in loving memory of **John A. Densmore** by his wife, Barbara Densmore.

***If you would like to have the Church Spire lit in celebration or in the memory of a loved one, please contact the Church Office (775.4301). The cost for this is \$20.



Church Office Hours

Beginning September 8

Monday – Thursday

8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Closed on Friday