

The Star



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

The Lenten Journey Continues



March 7 **Week 3: The Teaching -
Risking Challenge**

Matthew 22:15-22; Matthew 4:1-11

March 14 **Week 4: The First Dinner-
Risking Rejection**

Mark 14:3-9; Psalm 23

March 21 **Week 5: The Last Supper -
Risking the Loss of Friends**

John 13:3-16; Luke 4:16-21

March 28 **Week 6 (Palm Sunday):
The Garden-Risking Temptation**

Mark 14:32-36; Ephesians 6:11-17

Holy Week

April 1 **Maundy Thursday**

“First Dinner: Gratitude for those
Who Serve our Community”

April 2 **Good Friday**

“Last Supper: The Rest of the Story”

April 4 **Easter Sunday!**

Dare to Dance Again!!!

Results of the 2020 Financial Annual Zoom Meeting

Thank you to all who attended or helped prepare for our Annual Financial Meeting on February 14. We had 71 people attend (a quorum). We ended the 2020 budget year with a \$6,594 surplus (which will roll into the 2021 budget). The 2021 proposed budget is balanced, in large part with strong support on the pledge line. It passed unanimously. For 2021, Legacy Funds will be used to assist needy church members (\$5,000) and for church flowers (\$2,000).

A Word from Our Pastor

To place us in the picture; in the passion of Jesus; to help us renew; get reacquainted or find what we are willing to sacrifice our time, talents and finances for, our Lenten Season will use visual art. In the March issue of *Sojourners*, the results of the Fetzer Institute study of U.S. spirituality are reported. The study sought responses to the question, “What does spirituality mean?” The “questionnaire” tool used was the reproduction of 38 drawings.

The article reminds us that we have always known, “that empathy may be inherent in portraiture.” *Sojourners* cites the words of renowned 15th-century painter and monk Fra Angelico: “He who wishes to paint Christ’s story must live with Christ.” These are the opening words of the *Sojourners* article:

THE ONENESS OF LINES: DRAWING, RATHER THAN TALKING, MAY BE A KEY TO ACCESSING SPIRITUALITY-AND ALSO EMPATHY.

“Stirring Up Good Trouble: Entering the Passion of Jesus,” is our 2021 Lenten theme. Hopefully, the words and the visual art will give us, as the *Sojourners* article says, “new language to convey the spiritual and sacred in Human Experience.”

Pastor Alberta



From LMNOPI.com/ permission granted by Lopi Laroe. Mural located directly across from the West Ridge Center where hundreds of people go daily to receive treatment for addictions.



NOMINATING COMMITTEE IS ACTIVE

The Nominating Committee has begun working to fill the slate to be presented at the Program Annual Meeting in the spring. Foremost are vacancies for the Chair of Council and the Vice-Chair of Council, as well as many seats on the Diaconate. Stewardship and Personnel Committees need members, as well as the new Learning with Grace Committee (replacing Adult Spiritual Growth).

Your help is needed! Consider not just the vacancies mentioned above, but all positions and committees. Call Jody Guimond (558-7343), David Hazen (345-7380), or Susan Stager (325-2564) with a question, suggestion, and/or a nomination of yourself or someone else. How can your time and skills help the church? Where do you see yourself in service to Grace? Jody, David, and Susan are waiting to hear.



It is good to praise the LORD and make music to your name, O Most High.

March Musicians

Mar. 7: Barry Cohen, bassoon, and Jen Cohen, steel drums
Mar 14: Jazz Quartet

Mar 21: Handbells
Mar 28: Palm Sunday Brass Quartet

BROC Benefit Concert

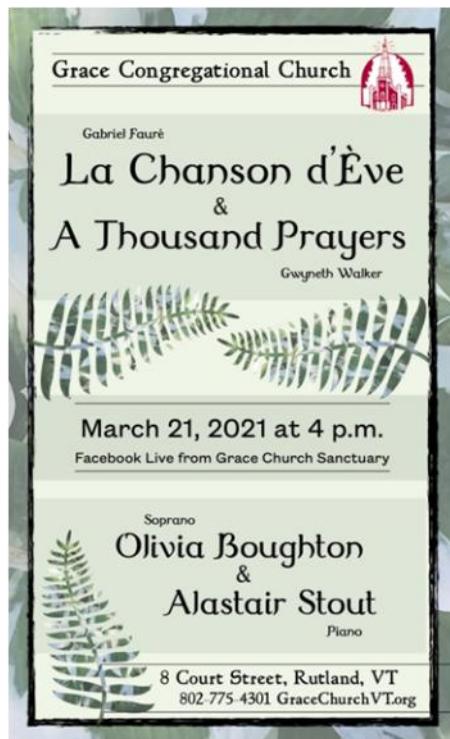
Thank you to all the musicians who contributed their time and talents to make the February 28th Benefit Concert a success. The donations will be combined with the Shetland Night offering - we'll have a grand total for the April STAR. **Watch the benefit concert on the Grace Church YouTube channel at 4 p.m. on February 28.**

Olivia Boughton Vocal Recital: Songs of Eve

Local soprano Olivia Boughton will give a recital of music by Gabriel Faure and Gwyneth Walker at **4 p.m. on March 21st.**

New Dismas House Opening Ceremony

The Musicians of Grace Church will be taking part in the online opening ceremonies of the new DISMAS House in Rutland on **March 26th at 7 p.m.** Alastair is composing and arranging music that will include all the choirs, the steeple bells, the Festival Brass, and the Aeolian-Skinner organ.



One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) Offering Received on MARCH 28th

Through the OGHS offering of the United Church of Christ, we are planting seeds of new life. Together, we are investing in communities worldwide: providing education to girls and boys, empowering communities through vocational training, supporting microcredit lending and seeing people through to self-sufficiency, empowering families with skills to support themselves and their neighbors, and participating in sustainable solutions that offer dignity to all.

Send your offering to the church before Palm Sunday, noting OGHS in the memo line. Your offering touches God's children, in addition to disaster relief and refugee initiatives. Thank you.

ON-GOING WEEKLY EVENTS DURING THE PANDEMIC PAUSE

SUNDAY

10:00 am Facebook Sanctuary service premieres
11:30 am and 10:30 pm—PEGTV (1075) services

MONDAY

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

TUESDAY

12:00 pm Staff Meeting
7:00 pm AA Men's Group

WEDNESDAY

8:00 am Prayer Group
8:00 am AA
9:30 am Bible Study teleconference call

THURSDAY

7:00 pm AA Men's Group

FRIDAY

8:00 am AA

SATURDAY

7:00 pm AA Men's Group

MARCH EVENTS & MEETINGS

Wed, Mar. 3, 9:30 AM—Bible Study (via phone)

Thurs, Mar. 4, 6:00 PM—Diaconate (zoom)

Wed, Mar. 10, 9:30 AM—Bible Study (via phone)

Sun, Mar. 14, 12:30 PM—Outdoor all ages event

Wed, Mar. 17, 9:30 AM—Bible Study (via phone)

Sun, Mar. 21, 4:00 PM—Vocal Concert

Wed, Mar. 24, 9:30 AM—Bible Study (via phone)

Thurs, Mar. 25, 6:00 PM—Church Council (zoom)

Fri, Mar. 26, 7 PM—Dismas House Opening

Sun, Mar. 28—Palm Sunday (OGHS Offering)

Wed, Mar. 31, 9:30 AM—Bible Study (via phone)



Bridge to Rutland—The Time is NOW!

There is a real and exciting possibility that in a week or so B2R will be sponsoring an asylum seeker from Central America! This is a single adult man (40's) fleeing from being targeted by a powerful gang. I have spoken on the phone with him twice. He is so thankful for B2R's promise of support.

Right now we need hands-on help. There are several areas to serve, and you can **call me** at 802-779-4217 or email bridgetorutland@gmail.com to learn more and let me know what your part of the sponsorship commitment can be.

The immediate need is for housing. If you have an "in-law" apartment or a separate space in your home, this could be a quarantine space. We will get testing before he comes and while he's here in quarantine. We need people to deliver food and keep in touch if you can speak Spanish.

After the 2 quarantine weeks, we will need a **host family**. This would include making this man a part of your household with shared meals and chores. B2R will help with costs such as groceries, utilities, fuel. We need a community of support (food, clothing, outdoor entertainment, tutoring, etc). We have found doctors who are willing to serve him pro bono (!) but also need legal help moving forward with the asylum case. And there's always a financial need – B2R is a 501c3. Please write checks to "Bridge to Rutland". Also, if you want to donate any frequent flyer miles, that may help bring him here from the southwest.

While we can't guarantee when this person will come, this is real, and we really need your help now. We've been in a holding pattern for so long, but now must get organized and ready to **celebrate** this wonderful opportunity to share God's love and justice. I guarantee that in our community of support, we will receive even more than we give. That's how this works.

Call with questions; check our website <https://bridgetorutland.wordpress.com/> or our Facebook page. Thank you! – Ellen Green, Exec. Dir, B2R

From our Members

Prayer Shawl Ministry—A Tribute

The Prayer Shawl ministry will not be meeting until further notice.

*In the meantime, we received this tribute to their work from our dear friend, **Kris Charles**:*

Years ago, we received a prayer shawl due to one of Steve's surgeries. I keep mine folded on the back of my comfy chair. If I am cold or tired, I put the shawl on. When I'm going through hard times (which fortunately have been few), I put it on. In the past month, as I have prepared to watch my sister from afar leave for incarceration, I have put the shawl on many times. I have requested prayers and I have several Grace friends who have checked in on me and the situation.

Today, as I write this, I'm feeling surrounded by the love that went into making of the prayer shawl and the prayers that it holds. I'm extremely grateful for my Grace friends and the support that I continue to feel regularly. And to reciprocate, I have prayed for all of you and the challenging times that you have faced in the changes in leadership within the church walls and with the pandemic. Know you are all in my heart and on my mind. I've listened to the services on my drives to work and have smiled when I hear the familiar voices. Pastor Alberta delivers some amazing messages!

Thank you all for your continued support and love. We are still out here and still connected to you all.

Much love, Kris Charles

Mary Crowley has a new television show — “Draw”

In Mary's new show, she demonstrates drawing, shows drawings and doodles, and tries to involve the viewer. She was having so much fun doodling and drawing in 2020 that she decided to do a show! (She previously had two TV shows—The Arts Show & Zing.) Drawing is a natural activity that children around the world do on their own; however, many children stop drawing because it is not encouraged in our culture. Letters and numbers matter more. The show is for children as well as adults, those who are comfortable drawing, as well as those who think they can't draw. (They CAN draw!)

The easiest way to get the show is to Google “youtube draw Mary Crowley”.

Episode 3 is a good place to start. (Also, there is a 10 minute promotional, as well as Episodes 1 and 2.) Anyone can send a photo of their doodles or drawings to artandmarycrowley@comcast.net so that she may share them with those who watch the show. You can also catch the show on Channel 1075, PEGTV at 3 p.m. Monday; 11 a.m. Tuesday; 7 p.m. Thursday or on PegTV.com. Looking for something to do during COVID time? Try “Draw”. And doodling and drawing! Have FUN!

Mission and Service at Grace Church

MISSION AND SERVICE UPDATE

Grace Church is a beacon of hope for so many in our community. This past year has delivered challenges and insecurities the likes of which most of us have never experienced. There is light ahead, yet the needs continue.

Mission and Service does what it can to alleviate some of the countless needs right here in Rutland and as far away as Kenya. Your support of our work is not only essential but also deeply appreciated by our small committee and by the many recipients of your blessings.

As 2020 came to a close, Mission and Service was able to send more financial support to several area agencies and to two local families in need who had fallen between the cracks. We sent contributions to BROCC, the Community Cupboard, New Story, Rutland Free Clinic, and Vermont Adult and Teen Challenge (formerly the Dream Center). We were also made aware of two families who were in dire straits during the holidays. We anonymously paid the electric bill for one and a fuel bill for the other. When they were notified of our actions, both recipients expressed deeply felt gratitude, great surprise, and actual tears. Heartwarming to hear, a privilege to do.

One of the sadder side effects of Coronavirus was the sudden cancelation of our Fourth Sunday Dinners. We know how much the community enjoyed and counted on them for fellowship, hot meals, and plentiful leftovers. We are attempting to fill part of the void by partnering with the Methodist Church in providing baked goods (cookies and muffins) on a monthly basis. Please watch for our next opportunity to bake in Grace Good News.

We will continue to share with you the many ways Mission and Service is utilizing your generous financial gifts, and we will put letters of gratitude from recipients in the Star for you to enjoy. Thank you for providing food, housing security, fuel assistance, safe places, clothing, and joy to those who need our help. You are a blessing!

A Thank You from BROCC

On behalf of BROCC Community Action and the thousands of people with low income or living in poverty that we serve, we want to personally thank you for your donation of \$345 for fuel and food for those in need.



Our mission is to offer hope, opportunity, and a path forward out of crisis or poverty, so our neighbors and communities thrive. With your donation, we are able to carry out that mission by directing your donation to those who need it most.

EASTER GIVING PROJECT

Mission and Service, along with Children's and Youth Ministries, is **partnering with Easter Seals of VT** to collect toys and other items to be used for supervised family visits. Toys cannot be reused for consecutive visits due to Covid-19. The items we collect can therefore be sent home with the child after their visit. Easter Seal's clients are children from infancy to 18 years old.

Some suggested items from Monika Sheehe, Family Engagement Specialist of Easter Seals:

Art supplies, coloring books, crayons, colored pencils, activity books, children's puzzles, construction paper, card games, Uno and other games, and small toys.

They also often facilitate meetings with young mothers and teenagers. Items which would be beneficial with this group would be sippy cups and hygiene products for young adults.

The campaign will run from March 1 to 29. Drop items in the Easter basket inside the West Street vestibule (the entrance under the roof), 8:30 am-3:30 pm T-Th; 8:30 am -8 pm M. Please contact Sarah Pulcer (802-775-8861; sehenry2001@yahoo.com) with questions. Thank you!

Grace Church Youth and Family Ministry

INTERGENERATIONAL SLEDDING / WINTER HIKE EVENT!

Join us on **Sunday, March 14th from 12:30 – 2 p.m.** for a fun outdoor family event. This is the day that we all “spring forward” into daylight savings time. We will meet at the same place where we did the Fall Hike – the Cadwell Trail in Pittsford. (<https://pittsfordvermont.com/about-pittsford-vt/trail-network/cadwell-trail-meadow-loop-trail/>)



The lot is plowed, and there is a sledding hill. Bring your own snowshoes, grippers, cross country gear, and sleds. If you are not up for all that exercise - bring your own hot cocoa to tailgate outdoors and enjoy the fresh air! Contact Sue Best with questions: 775.5079/dsjbest@comcast.net.

Parking/Trailhead: One trailhead (east/west) is at a farm road about 0.6 miles south on Elm St from the intersection with US Rt 7 on the right. Turn into the plowed lot (just a field!).

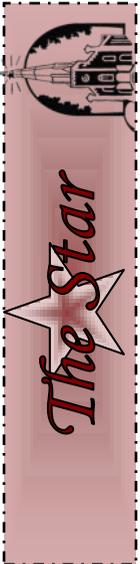
GRACE CHURCH VALENTINES

In early February, the Children and Youth Ministry held a virtual craft event to make valentines for our Grace Church friends who have felt isolated during the pandemic. We had enough valentines to send to 28 people from our church! Thanks to Marty Barclay of the Visitation Ministry for a list of names, and to all who shared their creative talents by making valentines.



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Grace Church Memorials The Sanctuary and Chapel Flower Memorials



Until Grace Church resumes in-person worship, a beautiful silk flower arrangement will grace the altar in the Sanctuary. This arrangement is given in memory of **Ted Mandeville** by his loving wife Pat.

(Contact David Hazen: 483.2337/peren@aol.com with questions.)

The Church Spire will be illuminated

Each Sunday in March to the Glory of God and in loving memory of **Richard Harrison Allen**.

March 29 to the Glory of God and in loving memory of **Robert and Lila Branchaud**.



The **star on the steeple** is lit as a beacon of hope and peace for the Rutland community.

We thank **Mary Wilkins** for contributing to this mission.

****If you would like to have the Church Spire lit in memory of a loved one, please contact the Church Office (775.4301).

Easter FLOUR—not FLOWERS

While we are worshipping remotely, we will not request real live flowers for Easter memorials. However, in the past we have given people the option of donating to Easter **Flour** ... which we then pass on to the Vermont Foodbank. If you would like to memorialize a loved one in that way, please send a check to the Office by March 22 and note “Easter flour” along with the name of your loved one. Names will be published in the April Star.

Thank you.

SUNDAY, MARCH 14 is the start of Daylight Savings Time! Remember to turn clocks forward one hour.

THURSDAY, MARCH 11 is the STAR deadline for the April 2021 issue.