



# “SpiritSpark”

## The First Baptist Church of Manchester Center, VT

P.O. Box 1049, 4895 Main St. 802-362-1555

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**Pastor: Rev. Rebecca Sommons**

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MAY 2017

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### MESSAGE FROM PASTOR REBECCA ~

Daffodils, tulips, and hyacinths have begun popping through the soft soil. The grass is green and dotted with little blue glory-of-the-snow flowers. Trees are sending out buds that burst into bloom. The glory of spring is here, coloring our days and inviting us to step out into the sun’s warmth.

Some of us enjoy the arrival of spring more than others. Seasonal allergies can dampen people’s enthusiasm about this explosion of life. If one’s immune system reacts to the presence of pollen or fragrance, histamine is released starting an allergic cascade of uncomfortable symptoms.

(Continued on next page)

I was thinking about this as I read a passage suggested by Daily Bread devotional.

*“Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ,  
and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.*

*For we are a fragrance of Christ to God  
among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing;  
to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life.*

*And who is adequate for these things?*

*For we are not like many, peddling the word of God,  
but as from sincerity, but as from God,  
we speak in Christ in the sight of God.”*

*2 Corinthians 2:13-17*

If we have found true life in Jesus Christ, we carry the fragrance of Christ’s life with us wherever we go.

It is there, permeating our church when we gather to worship God. It is also there when we go about our activities of the week. Those who do not know Christ may have an allergic reaction, sensing that this fragrance is foreign to them. We do not need to take their rejection personally. Instead, we can pray for God to work in healing, transforming ways, so that they are drawn to life in Christ.

We do not need to change the fragrance to make it more pleasing to people. Our part is to let it come through clearly by having sincere hearts, knowing that it is God’s gift, speaking as the Holy Spirit leads, and remembering God is watching all of this.

May the beauty and aroma of Christ in us  
draw people into the radiance of the Son’s warmth.

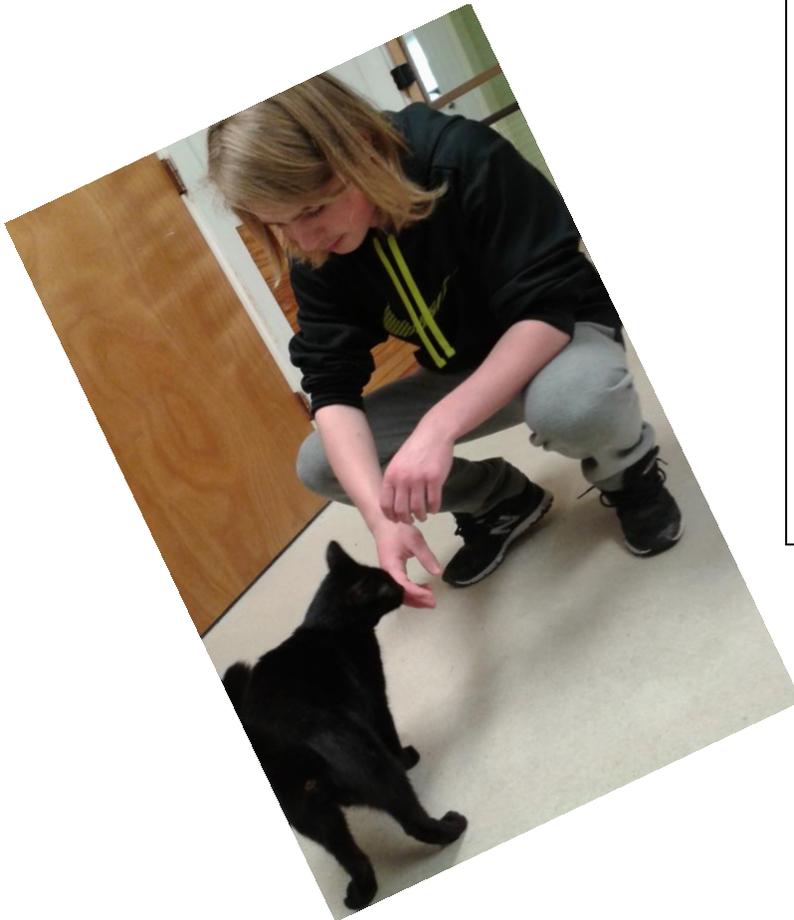
*Pastor Rebecca Sommons*



### **Christian Education Notes**

On Sunday, March 26, the FBC Youth Group (Kelsey Towslee, Ronan O'Brien, and Natalie Sommons, accompanied by Holly O'Brien, Matthew Sommons, and Pastor Rebecca Sommons) made a trip to Second Chance Animal Center in Shaftsbury for the opportunity to serve as Animal Socializers to the animals available for adoption. They were also able to deliver a number of items on the SCAC Wish List to help the shelter with the daily care of the animals. Thank you to all who contributed to the Wish List collection!

Submitted by Maurie Hill



## **PRUDENTIAL COMMITTEE**

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, Russ Taxter and Jeremy Crumb presented a proposal to the Prudential Committee to upgrade the sound system in the Sanctuary. As a result of that presentation, there will be a special meeting of the Church membership on May 21<sup>st</sup> to learn about the project and to discuss how it will be funded.

Other topics of discussion that are presently on our Agenda include replacement of the Bilco door at the Parsonage, minor roof repair on the Church Building and the Parsonage, the cleaning routine in the church building, Installation of an infant changing table in the first-floor bathroom, replacement of the dehumidifier in Joy Hall, and the concept of a mural being painted in Joy Hall.

We are presently looking at the cost of our Insurance coverage and are reviewing three different quotes to be sure that coverage is adequate and premiums are as affordable as possible.

We are interested in obtaining some "Play and Learn" items for the Children's Room to be used when kids are there during the Church Service. Anyone who has interest in providing those types of items please feel free to speak to Maury Hill or Pastor Rebecca.

An adequate Vacuum Cleaner continues to be an issue for those who do that type of cleaning in the Church building. If you have a spare one that is in good condition or you would like to donate toward the expense of a new one, please let me know.

Respectfully, submitted,

Jim Comar, Prudential Committee Chairperson

## **MISSION COMMITTEE**

At our last Missions meeting we voted to send donations to a project called The Fold which helps troubled teens and Teen Challenge another project for teens.

The committee also voted to send money to The South Londonderry Baptist Church as they are trying to rebuild. The work of their church proceeds because they have a ministerial couple there leading them. This is a good opportunity to make a gift because donations are being double matched.

The America for Christ Offering taken during the month of March has raised \$396.  
Submitted by Martha Thompson  
Secretary

## **MARY & MARTHA FELLOWSHIP**

Our benefit soup and bread lunch fundraiser for the First Baptist Church in Lebanon, New Hampshire netted \$716.51. At our last Mary & Martha Fellowship we voted to add funds to make it an even \$1,000. Rebecca will present it at the Annual Meeting in West Lebanon in May. Thank you to all you who donated food and helped serve. Also, thank you to all who came to the lunch to support our cause.

Our Basket Party netted \$1527.95. Without all of you this would not be possible. Everything that was donated was wonderful! Who knew that using multi-colored tickets mattered! Mary & Martha voted to put \$1,000 into the kitchen renovation fund. A small step forward but all steps matter.

All women of the church are invited to our Mother's Day breakfast on Sunday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at 8:30. We are fortunate once again to have the Men's Group provide the breakfast. There will be a Mary & Martha meeting right after the meal at 9:00 a.m.

The date for the Ham and Strawberry Dinner has been set. It will be June 17<sup>th</sup>. Please mark your calendars.

Lorraine Wilkins, President

### **WARNING**

The members of the First Baptist Church of Manchester Center, Vermont are hereby warned to meet in their house of worship at Manchester Center on Sunday, May 21, 2017, following worship for the following purposes:

- 1.) To hear and approve the plans to install a new sound system in the sanctuary of the church
- 2.) To vote on accepting John Hess as a member of our church by Christian Experience
- 3.) To discuss any other business proper to come before the Meeting.

Martha Thompson, Church Clerk

The following information is a continuation of last month's document from American Baptist Churches, USA, titled **10 Facts You Should Know About American Baptists**. Here are facts #3, #4, and #5, again representative of the tradition and practice of American Baptists. This information is being submitted by Dottie Sundquist, Missions Chairperson.

***3 American Baptists partake of two ordinances: believers' baptism and The Lord's Supper.***

Baptism, an act of full immersion following Christ's example, is undertaken by those spiritually mature enough to understand its profound, symbolic significance: resurrection to new life in Christ. Through The Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion, the bread and cup that symbolize the broken body and shed blood offered by Christ recall God's great love for us—just as they did for the disciples on the eve of Christ's crucifixion.

***4 American Baptists believe that the committed individual Christian can and should approach God directly, and that individual gifts of ministry should be shared.***

American Baptists hold that all who truly seek God are both competent and called to develop in that relationship. They have rejected creeds or other statements that might compromise each believer's obligation to interpret Scripture under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and within the community of faith. American Baptists also celebrate the special gifts of all believers, testifying that God can use each of us in ministry.

***5 American Baptists take seriously the call to evangelism and missionary work.***

American Baptist worldwide mission work is a response to Christ's call to "make disciples of all nations." Through the efforts of our missionaries in partnership with others, ministries of evangelism, healing, education and development have made Christ's love known in the U.S. and around the world.

**The Prudential Committee would like to remind everyone that the Sanctuary of our church is a "No Food Zone" area in an effort to preserve the carpet and the pew cushions. Thank you for your help!**

**YOU CAN NEVER DO A KINDNESS TOO SOON  
BECAUSE YOU WILL NEVER KNOW  
HOW SOON WILL BE TOO LATE.**

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**

## **CALENDAR OF CHURCH EVENTS**

Friday-Saturday, May 5-6: Annual gathering for ABC VT NH  
Saturday, May 6: Men's FOCUS meeting in Vestry 8:30 AM  
Sunday, May 7: Special Presentation on Mission Trip to Guatemala during Fellowship time  
Tuesday, May 9: Prayer Group at Lois Squires' Home 7:00 PM  
Wednesday, May 10: Pastoral Relations Committee 4:00 PM  
Sunday, May 14: Mothers' Day Breakfast 8:30 AM in Vestry  
Sunday, May 21: Church Business meeting following service (see details elsewhere in newsletter)  
Tuesday, May 16: Prudential Committee 5:00 PM  
Thursday, May 18: Christian Education 5:00 PM  
Tuesday, May 23: Prayer Group at Lois Squires' Home 7:00 PM  
Thursday, May 25: Diaconate 4:00 PM

## **OUR CHURCH IS PRIVILEGED TO BE ABLE TO OFFER OUR FACILITY TO THE FOLLOWING AA GROUPS EACH WEEK.**

Equinox Group: Mon-Fri from Noon to 1:00 PM  
Thursday Morning Men's Group: Thursday 7:30-8:30 AM  
Primary Purpose Group: Sunday 7:30-8:30 PM

## **IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Church Office Hours 9:30-12:30 AM on Tuesdays and Wednesdays  
Pastor Rebecca's e-mail address: [rebeccasommons@gmail.com](mailto:rebeccasommons@gmail.com)  
Pastor Rebecca's cell phone: (802) 688-3024  
Church office Phone: (802) 362-1555  
Parsonage Phone: (802) 362-5335  
Please call to request a meeting or visit outside of regular church office hours.

## **CHILD CARE PROVIDERS**

May 7: Cathy Comar  
May 14: Barb West  
May 21: Judy Koch  
May 28: Lindy Mylott

## **FLOWERS**

May 7: Martha Thompson  
May 14: Anna Ennis  
May 21: Jackie Perry  
May 28: Jackie Perry

