



# FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF BERLIN

1808 Scott Hill Road, Berlin, VT 05602 ~ 802-229-0338

"No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here." ☩ That they may all be one. ~ John 17:21

## Corner Chronicle for February 2026

An Inclusive, Open & Affirming Church

### From the Pastor's Desk

#### February: Beginning the Lenten Journey Together

As we move into the month of February, the church enters a meaningful season of reflection and renewal. On Ash Wednesday, February 18, we will gather for worship at 6:00 p.m. to begin the season of Lent together. This sacred service invites us to pause, remember our dependence on God, and receive again the promise of grace and forgiveness. Scripture reminds us, "*Return to the Lord, your God, for he is gracious and merciful*" (Joel 2:12-13).

Lent is a season that calls us to intentional faith—through prayer, repentance, acts of service, and a renewed focus on Christ. It is not simply about giving something up, but about creating space for God to shape our hearts and lives as we journey toward Easter.

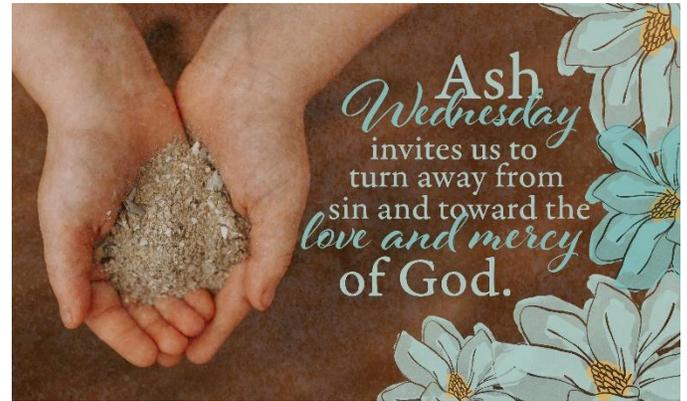
We invite you to join us for weekly Sunday worship at 9:30 a.m., a time to gather as God's people for prayer, Scripture, music, and encouragement as we walk this season together.

During the winter months, we also encourage you to stay connected through Bible Study every Thursday from 6:00-7:00 p.m. via Zoom. This weekly gathering offers an opportunity to grow in Scripture, share conversation, and deepen our faith as a community.

As we journey through Lent, we lift our prayers beyond ourselves and ask God to bring peace to our nation—peace rooted in justice, humility, compassion, and love. May the peace of Christ begin in our hearts and extend into our homes, our communities, and our world.

We invite you to walk this Lenten journey with us—beginning on Ash Wednesday, February 18 at 6:00 p.m.—as we seek God together in worship, prayer, and hope.

Pastor Doug



## A Clazzy Valentine



**Christopher McWilliams and friends**

**present a concert of love**

**Saturday, February 14, 4pm**

**FCCB Church in Berlin, VT**



## Lectionary Readings

### Sun Feb 01: Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

Micah 6:1-8, Psalm 15, 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, Matthew 5:1-12

### Sun Feb 08: Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12), Psalm 112:1-9, 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16), Matthew 5:13-20

### Sun Feb 15: Transfiguration Sunday

Exodus 24:12-18, Psalm 2, 2 Peter 1:16-21, Matthew 17:1-9

### Wed Feb 18: Ash Wednesday

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17, Psalm 51:1-17, 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

### Sun Feb 22: First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7, Psalm 32, Romans 5:12-19, Matthew 4:1-11

## Worship Lay Readers and Ushers

**February 01** - Reader - Heather Mensah

Usher - Ginger Anderson

**February 08** - Reader - Karen Foote

Usher - Aileen Peake

**February 15** - Reader - Beth Cody

Usher - Mary Ellen Hill

**February 22** - Reader - Ellen Moody

Usher - Gary & Linda Isham



## Birthday

2/01 - Linda Mullen

2/03 - Win Bolles

2/03 - Gail (Mullin) Pelkey

2/04 - Josh Cookson

2/05 - Jeanine Kelley

2/07 - Heather Blake

2/14 - Sherry Kimball

2/23 - Andy Lacasse

2/23 - Aileen Peake

2/26 - Chris Balzanelli

2/28 - Carter Austin-Bradley

## Anniversaries

2/01 - Dan and Sue Hudson



**Joys:** Ginger A's daughter Holly made it back to Germany, Evan H. got his first vehicle! Remembering Renee Nicole Good and the words of hope that the power of love overcomes the love of power.

**For FCCB family & friends:** Thanna A., Donna C.'s ongoing tests/issues with brain aneurysm, everyone dealing with the current round of colds/flu/Covid, Melissa "Bidey" W. hospitalized with Covid, Ian L., Andy L. with new health issues, Kathryn L. recovering from surgery, Erin M., Dan H., Denise R., Marilyn (Rick's sister), Paul in California, Kevin G., Arthur and Nancy Z., Brenda C., Shannon (Thanna's and Barbara's granddaughter), Donna C., Lesley, Eli, Logan C., Donna T. & Peter H., Ray and Cindy C., Jordan's son, Yolanda, Pastor Doug's sister and niece.

**For the loss of a loved one, the families of:** the Mount Anthony High School wrestling team, Larry Miller, Marilyn (Linda I.'s sister), Brian Jacobs, Tatiana Schlossberg (environmental journalist and granddaughter of JFK), Karen Robbins, Virginia Collins, Kathleen Clow

**For our members and friends in residential and**

**independent care facilities:** Jeanine, Jamin, Elaine, Anita, Sandy, Ann, Renata, Marvie, Toni, Sue, Steve

**For our World:** the people of Minneapolis (especially Ginger's friend Jerry), the people of Venezuela and our service people there, victims of recent mass shootings, all military service people, food shelves & support services (and those who work there), storms that surround our country and world, starvation in Gaza, Ukraine, homeless communities in VT, all those battling cancer, mental illness, domestic violence and substance abuse.



1. The Bible Study will be continuing on ZOOM for the rest of the winter. This will avoid winter weather, difficulty driving after dark and having to heat up the parish hall for just an hour meeting. We meet every Thursday from 6 pm to 7 pm. Please use the same zoom link that you use for Sunday service. We are currently studying the women of the Bible. This week January 29th will be Ruth. All are welcome!

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89101553827> meeting ID: 891 0155 3827 Passcode: 1808 1-646-558-8656

2. Fund Raising: We are going to have a chicken pie supper again this fall.

**Why?**

- Many people in our community miss it.
- It was always a sold-out crowd
- It' is a great team building and bonding time for our members

**What's next?**

- Please contact me with your thoughts and ability to work on this dinner with us.
- What role would you be willing to commit to?
- We want to build a team to lead this. Let me know if you are interested.
- Are there any fall dates we should avoid?

We will pick a date at the next council meeting after the Sunday service on February 15th.

I hope to hear from you: [Ellenmoody777@gmail.com](mailto:Ellenmoody777@gmail.com) or 802-522-7728 or see me in person at church.

Respectfully, The FCCB Council



## Finance, Stewardship & Trustees

### A Note from the Music Director

We had a very exciting, colorful and satisfying musical year in 2025. I'm delighted to share a broad range of musical pieces, from serious classical works to traditional hymns and popular songs. I also greatly appreciated the musicians who filled in for me when I was away, including Arthur Zorn, Lorna Carty and Stephen Brown.

Our Sunday morning services were often enhanced by instrumentalists, particularly Lotta Suter on violin, Denise Ricker on flute, Hannah Brown on viola, Kailea Silvers on cello, Jordan Mensah and Samuel Marquaye, on drums, and Maggie Sample and Rosie Badeau on piano. We were joined by several guest vocalists, including Jessica Collins and Arthur Zorn. We are blessed with an excellent choir; many of choir members sang solos in services or concerts, including Paula Jean Chiuchiolo, Jeanine Kelley, Rosie Badeau, Karen Foote, Stuart Williams and Dan Hudson. Our ensemble of chime ringers provided special music on several occasions, including Easter and Christmas. We have a truly vibrant music program at FCCB!

I'm looking forward to a music-filled 2026. In addition to the music for our Sunday and special services, we are organizing at least five benefit concerts in 2026. Some of these will include the choir and most will include guest musicians. Our first concert of the 2026 season will be on February 14, entitled "A Clazzy Valentine". We'll be presenting "My Funny Valentine," "Plaisir d'Amour" and other popular songs as well as some less familiar works. The concert will be at 4 pm and will be followed by a reception in the Community Hall.

I hope you can join us for this and other special musical events, as well as for our Sunday morning services!

Christopher McWilliams - FCCB Music Director

## Worship & Church Life

**Deacon's Fund** - Deacons Fund donations will be collected on Communion Sundays. There are special envelopes in the Pew holders. If you are writing a check make it out to the First Congregational Church of Berlin and indicate on the memo line Deacons Fund. Donations can be made anytime by putting it into the Sunday collection basket or mailing check to the church at PO Box 1157, Montpelier, VT 05601.

### Deacons Fund Committee

Gordon Clow, Andy Lacasse and Joan Verchereau

### Pastoral Relations Committee

Ellen Moody, Andy Lacasse, Blair Austin-Bradley, Thanna Adams

\*\*\*\* Cheryl Poor will continue to assign ushers and lay readers as well as keeping the contact list up to date. \*\*\*\*

## Faith Formation

## Missions & Outreach

### Report on 2025 FCCB Missions

In 2025, a year of great need for many people, FCCB continued its tradition of great generosity. Throughout the year, the congregation, led by Joni Verchereau, gave food, clothing, and other necessities to the Tatum's Totes program of Green Mountain United Way. We also gave tangible goods such as these to the program run by Berlin Police to help unhoused people in our area.

The congregation and community donated a total of \$9,759 to our missions:

Deacon Fund \$1,408  
Tatum's Totes: \$6,106  
One Great Hour of Sharing: \$743  
Tools of Hope: \$170  
Blanket Sunday: \$195  
Neighbors in Need: \$337  
Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross): \$800

We are planning to support these same missions in 2026. We look forward to the continued generosity of the FCCB family for our work as a caring congregation.

Donations from the church family and the community collected in the benefit concerts organized by Christopher McWilliams (FCCB music Director) and in the three evening services led by Mary Bonhag enabled us to give \$923 to Capstone Community Action and \$100 to Vermont Food Bank. Christopher is planning benefit concerts for 2026 that will again contribute to these and other organizations that help the hungry and unhoused in our area.

Heather Mensah - Team Lead, FCCB Missions

"AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME,



I AM SENDING YOU!"  
JOHN 20:21, NIV

Tatum's Totes - the collection for February is **DIAPER BAGS**. Neutral colors are best for any gender.

Thank you to all who donated goods or money toward the January collection of diaper bag items!

**\*\*\*Per Green Mountain United Way - all items donated must be new / unused items. They cannot accept used items\*\*\***

When donating by cash or check please clearly mark that it is for Tatum's Totes and who it is from. You may give your monetary donation to Rob or place in the collection basket or mail to FCCB so that the donation can be accounted for.

When donating goods please include a total dollar value. The GMUW gives us a monthly statement with the estimated cash value of all goods received that month.

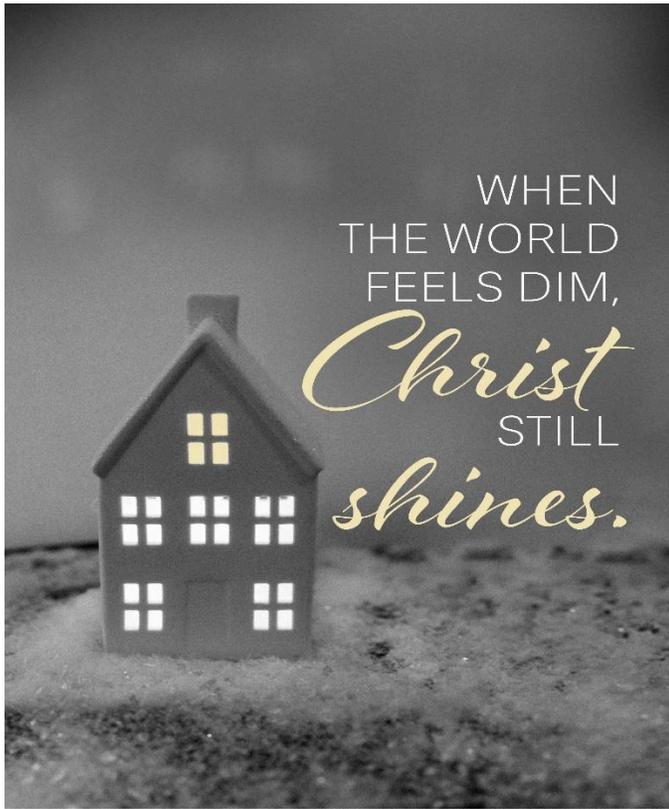
Please contact Joan Verchereau if you have questions about this mission.

From the organ bench:

## Admin and Communication

**\*\*\*\*\*Check it out - the FCCB web page**

<http://www.fccbvt.org>



FAITH FORMATION - Beth Cody,  
codycastle@gmail.com, 802-279-5921

MEMBER-AT-LARGE - Mary Ellen Hill,  
meqhill@yahoo.com, 802-279-8704

MEMBER-AT-LARGE - Nancy Fowler,  
[fowler5vt@gmail.com](mailto:fowler5vt@gmail.com), 802-477-2715

FCCB email address:  
[firstcongregationalchurchberlin@yahoo.com](mailto:firstcongregationalchurchberlin@yahoo.com)

FCCB Mailing Address:  
PO Box 1157, Montpelier, VT 05601

*The Vision of First Congregational Church of Berlin  
is to be a friendly, inviting spiritual home that  
practices the deep caring of Jesus within the  
congregation and in the wider community*

The Love God Desires



God's love is never meant to stop with us; it's meant to flow through us. When we love others, we reflect his very heart. As 1 John 4:12 (NIV) reminds us, "If we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us."

This is the true mark of a Christian – love that reaches beyond comfort zones, opinions and differences. Jesus said in John 13:35 (NIV), "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

The world is watching, not to see how loudly we profess our faith but how deeply we practice it. Every act of compassion, every gentle word and every moment of grace reveals something divine – God's love at work in us. The more we give that love away, the more it grows within us, mirroring the heart of Christ, who gave Himself for all.

## FCCB Pastor Contact information

Pastor Doug Cameron  
Email: [dougc9927@gmail.com](mailto:dougc9927@gmail.com)  
Home: 802-276-3404  
Cell: 8802-356-0578  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00a - 2:00p

## Council Members 2026

COUNCIL CHAIR & MODERATOR - Ellen Moody,  
[ellenmoody777@gmail.com](mailto:ellenmoody777@gmail.com), 802-522-7728

VICE CHAIR - Ginger Anderson,  
[quedaV06@gmail.com](mailto:quedaV06@gmail.com), 802-229-1665

TREASURER - Rob Griffin, [griffinsuter@hotmail.com](mailto:griffinsuter@hotmail.com),  
802-272-2376

ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNICATION and CLERK -  
Karen Foote, [kbf789@aol.com](mailto:kbf789@aol.com), 802-223-7286

MISSIONS & OUTREACH - Heather Mensah,  
[withheather@yahoo.com](mailto:withheather@yahoo.com), 617-780-2458

FINANCE, STEWARDSHIP & TRUSTEES - Rob Griffin,  
[griffinsuter@hotmail.com](mailto:griffinsuter@hotmail.com), 802-272-2376 and Gary  
Isham, [glisham@yahoo.com](mailto:glisham@yahoo.com), 802-917-8027

WORSHIP & CHURCH LIFE - Carole Lacasse,  
[calacasse@netscape.com](mailto:calacasse@netscape.com), 802-229-9504

So ask yourself: Does the world recognize you as his disciple by the way you love?

### A Taste of Loving-Kindness

A Sunday school teacher once asked her class, "What do you think the Bible means when it speaks of loving-kindness?"

A young boy thought for a moment and replied, "Well, if I were hungry and someone gave me a piece of bread with butter on it, that would be kindness. But if they added a spoonful of jam, that would be loving-kindness."



*Dear Lord, thank you for the blessings of children and families. Help us rely on you for guidance, patience and even-temperedness throughout our days.*

*We pray that our children will love you, worship you and serve you with their God-given gifts. Grant us the wisdom to know how to influence them to live godly lives. Prevent us from provoking our children to anger and from manipulating or nagging them.*

*Fill our households with abiding love and respect. And help us all be united in purpose to do your will. In the name of Christ our Lord. Amen.*

donate  
extra

produce  
from your  
garden to  
the Food  
Banks  
in our  
communit  
y.  
(Consider  
planting a  
whole row or

section of  
your garden,  
dedicated to  
helping feed  
the nee