



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 July & August 2026

An Inclusive, Open & Affirming Church

From the Pastor's Desk



As we enter the month of July, we are reminded of the many blessings God has given us. This year is especially meaningful as our nation marks its 250th anniversary—a time to reflect with gratitude on the freedoms we enjoy and the responsibility we share to care for one another. As we celebrate Independence Day with parades, fireworks, and family gatherings, let us also remember that true freedom is found in God's love and in living as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Summer also offers us the gift of a different pace. It is a wonderful season to spend time with family and friends, enjoy God's beautiful creation, sit on the porch with a good book, or simply take a quiet moment to pray and reflect. These moments of rest are not wasted time; they renew our spirits and remind us of God's presence in the ordinary joys of life.

While many of our schedules change during the summer, our need for worship and Christian fellowship remains the same. Whether you are at home or traveling, I encourage you to make worship a priority. Join us whenever you can, or seek out a local church while you're away. Together we continue to grow in faith, encourage one another, and give thanks for God's many blessings. May you have a safe, joyful, and faith-filled July!

Peace - Pastor Doug

Please note Pastor Doug will be away August 9 and 16.

August 9 will be communion Sunday and worship will be led by Rev Carol Anne Barker.
August 16 will be led by the council.



Saturday, July 18 - 6:00 pm Bonfire Worship Service
(no church on Sunday the 19th)

FCCB Ice Cream Social



**Saturday
July 25
2-4pm**

Ice Cream
cones & cups
Bake Sale
Live Music

Saturday, July 25 -- Ice Cream Social and Bake Sale
FCCB will be holding an Ice Cream Social on Saturday July 25th from 2 to 4 pm. Ben and Jerry's ice cream will be available in either cups or cones for free, at a nominal charge or with a donation basket. Bake goods provided by the church family will also be for sale. While folks enjoy their ice cream, they are invited to listen to live music provided by Lotta Suter and Rob Griffin, and also see the new art exhibit in the community hall of works by the artist Deborah Prince Smith.

We plan to have the Ice Cream Social outside, in front of the church, so that people driving by might stop in. In case of rain, we will move into the FCCB community hall.

Sign-up sheets are on the usual table in the community hall both for helping out at the Ice Cream Social and for contributing baked goods. Please help out in whatever way you can! This is a wonderful opportunity to get together with family and friends, and to meet new friends. For more information, contact Rob Griffin at 802-272-2376 or griffinsuter@hotmail.com.



July 25 - Art Exhibit by Deborah Prince Smith reception

On Saturday July 25th from 2-4 pm, FCCB will host an opening reception for a new art exhibit of works by the artist Deborah Prince Smith. The reception takes place concurrently with the FCCB Ice Cream Social and bake sale. The pictures by Deborah Prince Smith will be shown through the end of August.

Deborah Prince Smith has worked as an artist, a musician (she sang with the Boston Camerata for seven years and has taught piano and voice privately), and an editor. She illustrated *A Guide to Nature in Winter*, *A Guide to Observing Insect Lives*, and *A Guide to Enjoying Wildflowers*, all by Donald Stokes and published by Little, Brown; *The Natural History of Wild Shrubs and Vines*, also by Stokes but published by Harper & Row; *The Sequences*, a book of poems by Samuel French Morse, published in the Poets at Northeastern Series; *Many Blessings*, a songbook to accompany an LP recording by Robbie Gass and singers at Spring Hill; and *A Cradle for the Child: Twelve Stories for Christmas*, written by Rob Griffin. Friends since college, Deborah and Rob established Batraxoi (the "frog chorus"), which performed in and around southern NH for over twenty years, often performing Rob's compositions.

Please join us for this opening reception. For more information, contact Rob Griffin at 802-272-2376 or griffinsuter@hotmail.com.

Sunday, August 2 - 11:00 am Worship & Picnic at Waterbury Center State Park



Monday-Thursday, August 10-13 -- Shidaa Summer Camp

August Trip to El Salvador

Bethany Church once again invites FCCB members to participate in an upcoming trip to El Salvador, August 6/7 to August 14. Bethany has been in a relationship with a Salvadoran village since 1992 and has sponsored many trips over the past 30+ years, and several FCCB folks have participated. Nancie and Blair Austin-Bradley will be on this trip, as they have the past few times!

These are terrific trips, during which we engage with wonderful people, learn a lot about their country and our own, and have a very good time. You do not need to speak Spanish. The all-inclusive cost is approximately \$1,600, depending on what the airfare is at time of booking. If you're interested, or just want more information, please contact Theresa Lever at 802-498-5019, thelevers@comcast.net.



August 29 - Pie-looza bake sale, cafe and Live Music

FCCB will be holding our annual Pie-looza on Saturday August 29th from 11 am to 1 pm. Pies will be available as individual pieces (of select pies) for eating in a cafe setting, as well as complete pies to take home. There will be live music provided by Lotta Suter and Rob Griffin, and also the opportunity to see the new art exhibit in the community hall of works by artist Deborah Prince Smith.

We plan to have the cafe and live music outside, in front of the church, so that people driving by might stop in. In case of rain, we will move the cafe and music into the FCCB community hall, where the pie sale will be in any case.

Sign-up sheets are on the usual table in the community hall, both for helping out at the Pie-looza and for contributing pies. Please help out in whatever way you can! This is a wonderful opportunity to get together with family and friends, and to meet new people. For more information, contact Ginger Anderson at QuedaV06@gmail.com or Rob Griffin at 802-272-2376 or griffinsuter@hotmail.com.



Studying the Hebrew Bible in the UCC Ministry 21 Program

I've been a participant in the Ministry 21 program for lay ministry for the past two years, getting together with colleagues from the UCC Vermont and New Hampshire conferences to study topics such as effective sermons, pastoral counseling, social action and church management. In the next semester of Ministry 21, starting this September, the classes will focus on understanding the Hebrew Bible. Here's the course description from the Vermont Dean of Ministry 21, Susie Webster-Toleno:

Registration is open for Ministry21's exciting fall class: From Exodus to Exile: An Overview of the Hebrew Bible in Context, taught by the Rev. Bill Borrer. Classes will meet in person in Meriden NH ~ one Saturday per month. Participants will also engage in online learning and community between classes. This class will be a good place to start for those who are already Members in Discernment, for those who are considering a call to ministry, and will also be an excellent refresher for licensed and ordained clergy whose seminary days are far behind them.

Pastor Doug and I want to share this information, in case anyone is interested in studying the Hebrew Bible in the context of a role in lay ministry. If you are interested, please contact me for more information. I don't know yet whether I'll be taking the course, but would be happy to explain the Ministry 21 program and to put you in touch with the program deans and administrators. Please don't hesitate to contact me at 802-272-2376 or griffinsuter@hotmail.com

Regards - Rob Griffin

Lectionary Readings

Sun July 05: Sixth Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67, Psalm 45:10-17, Romans 7:15-25a, Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Sun July 12: Seventh Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 25:19-34, Psalm 119:105-112, Romans 8:1-11, Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Sun July 19: Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 28:10-19a, Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24, Romans 8:12-25, Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Sun July 26: Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 29:15-28, Psalm 105:1-11, 45b, Romans 8:26-39, Matthew 13:31;33, 44-52

Sun Aug 02: Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 32:22-31, Psalm 17:1-7, 15, Romans 9:1-5, Matthew 14:13-21

Sun Aug 09: Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28, Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b, Romans 10:5-15, Matthew 14:22-33

Sun Aug 16: Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 45:2-25, Psalm 133, Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32, Matthew 15 (10-20), 21-28

Sun Aug 23: Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Exodus 1:8-2:10, Psalm 124, Romans 12:1-8, Matthew 16:13-20

Sun Aug 30: Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Exodus 3:1-15, Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45b, Romans 12:9-21, Matthew 16:21-28

Worship Lay Readers and Ushers

July 05 - Reader - Karen Foote

Usher - Cheryl Poor

July 12 - Reader - Heather Mensah

Usher - Gary & Linda Isham

July 19 - Reader - NO SERVICE

Usher -

July 26 - Reader - Thanna Adams

Usher - Mary Ellen Hill

August 02 - Reader - Gordon Clow

Usher - PICNIC

August 09 - Reader - Ginger Anderson

Usher - Aileen Peake

August 16 - Reader - Beth Cody

Usher - Joan Garcia

August 23 - Reader - Cheryl Poor

Usher - Ginger Anderson

August 30 - Reader - Ellen Moody

Usher - Cheryl Poor



Birthday

July

7/01 - Salem Staab

7/02 - Karen Peake

7/07 - Trina Newland

7/10 - Sandy Clark

7/17 - Stephen Cody

7/25 - Geraldine Check

August

8/01 - Hazel Kelley

8/05 - Gary Arleth

8/07 - Nicholas Richardson

8/09 - Madison May Plant

8/09 - Daelyn Clark

8/11 - Rev. Alison Young

8/14 - Nicole Verchereau

8/14 - Marilyn Bolles

8/16 - Toni Lopez

8/18 - Cindy Gauthier

8/25 - Morgan Arleth

Anniversaries

July

7/22 - Win and Marilyn Bolles (1961)

7/24 - Blair and Nancie Austin-Bradley

7/25 - Ricky and Monica Richardson (1981)

August

8/15 - Gary and Linda Isham (1964)

8/15 - Dalton and Lexi Cody (2025)

8/28 - Jim and Aileen Peake (1966)

PRAYER *list...*

Joys: Rosie B.'s 5th great granddaughter, Dads & Grads, Heather M. has a new job, Stewart C. encourages us to read scripture verses before and after the week's selected verses, as a way to expand the lessons

For FCCB family & friends: Colby H., Pastor Doug's sister struggling after surgery, school-age kids as the end of the year approaches, Vicky (Maggie's friend) with cancer, Dylan H. dealing with a difficult roommate, Donna T. (and Peter H.) as she hopes to transition to a Parkinson's facility, Joy (Rick T.'s daughter) and Hayden S. searching for new job, Stephanie J. with brain cancer diagnosis, Sue R., Andy L., Lou (Maggie S.'s brother), Paul and Jeff (Pastor Doug's golf buddies), Trina N., Matthew A-B, Ian L., Marilyn (Rick's sister), Lesley (friend of Tonya), Eli, Logan C., Ray and Cindy C., Jordan's son, Yolanda, Jeanine K.

For the loss of a loved one, the families of: Brenda Clark, Carol Day, young sisters Oliviah & Rylin, Janet Allen, Ferdy Leclair, John Pelkey, Ginger's cousin's son who died by suicide, Jordan's uncle in Ghana, husband of Johanna (lifelong friend of Barbara C.), Nancy Adams McLaney, Jim Clemons, husband of Lois Adams, Paul Irons, Nancy Zorn, Chad Duprey (Barb C.'s grandson), Marilyn (Linda I.'s sister)

For our members and friends in residential and independent care facilities: Chuck, Jamin, Elaine, Anita, Sandy, Ann, Renata, Marvie, Toni, Sue, Steve

For our World: people who lost horses in a harness track barn fire at Saratoga Springs, farm workers with no employment rights, families under economic stress from oil prices especially, innocent victims (children and their families), prayers for PEACE: in the Middle East, for our leaders, our country and Constitution, remember those who fought/still fight for racial justice, victims of 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.



“Meeting People Where They Are” Initiative at FCCB

In response to the “Reaching New People in Today’s Culture” seminar led by Paul Nickerson in March of this year, which Ellen Moody and Pastor Doug attended, the leadership team at FCCB put together an Action Plan for a “Meet People Where They Are” initiative for deeper engagement with the community this summer.

FCCB and the church family are already very active in the community. This has included formal participation in town organizations, such as the hospital, nursing homes, schools, fire department, conservation commission and planning board. It includes strong relationships with a number of volunteer organizations, particularly Shidaa Projects, the West African drumming and dance ensemble for which FCCB is the home venue. It includes strong connections with other churches in the community, including joint events such as the annual Christmas carol sing. But most importantly, the members of the church are very engaged with neighbors and friends throughout the community.

This summer, we are expanding on our engagement with the community. As Paul Nickerson suggested in his seminar and newsletters, we want to “Meet people where they are”. We will be doing some of our usual activities, including the bonfire service, the picnic at Waterbury Reservoir, the Pie-looza and the chicken pie supper. We already helped the Berlin Fire Department with their pie sale in May. But we will also introduce some new activities:

- The June concert by Christopher McWilliams and friends, including the FCCB choir, will be offered not only at FCCB on June 28th but was also presented as a free concert for the residents at the Chestnut Place facility in Berlin on June 24.
- Pastor Doug will lead a Sunday morning service at Chestnut Place on July 19th.
- We will have an Ice Cream Social and Bake Sale on July 25th 2-4 pm outdoors at FCCB,

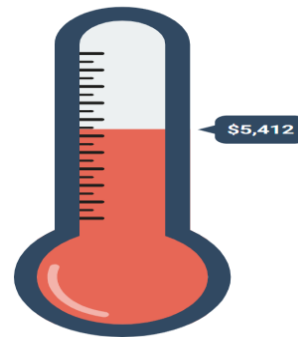
including live music and a reception for a new art exhibit in the community hall.

- Shidaa will again have their summer camp at FCCB during the week of August 10th.
- Our Pie-looza pie sale, café and live music will be Aug. 29th 11 am - 1 pm, also outdoors if possible.
- We hope to have a concert by Christopher and friends in September.
- The Chicken Pie Supper will be Oct. 10th.

We’re also working on the FCCB labyrinth and grounds to make them attractive for visitors.

Please see the additional information about these upcoming events in this and future Chronicles. We hope everyone can join us for these events, contributing in whatever way you can. There will be sign-up sheets prior to each event and posters etc to spread the word! For more information on the “Meeting People Where They Are” initiative at FCCB, contact Ellen Moody, Pastor Doug or Rob Griffin.

Finance, Stewardship & Trustees



New Ramp

Our new ramp will give accessibility to all. It will ensure the ability to participate in the events and gatherings that enrich the lives of the family we have made here through Christ. We have a chance to show our love for this little church and our care for its community with a pledge of support.

If you would like to donate to FCCB to help cover the cost of the ramp for the upstairs parish hall (and potentially a roof for the ramp), please write a check to “FCCB” and put “Ramp” on the memo line. You can put it in the Sunday collection or mail it to FCCB, PO Box 1157, Montpelier VT 05602. If you prefer to give cash, please put the cash in a pew envelope, write “For FCCB ramp” on the envelope and put it in the Sunday collection.

THANK YOU!

A Note from the Music Director

Worship & Church Life

Is your flower garden bursting with blooms? Consider sharing some with FCCB and bring some cuttings on a Sunday for altar flowers. Of course, a lovely house plant also can be enjoyed by all!

Sign up for a Sunday (or more than one) on the sheet posted on the FCCB kitchen fridge.

Also on the fridge is a sign-up sheet for hosting coffee hours after worship - we have many great cooks!

Thank you from the Worship & Church Life Team

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

Faith Formation

Missions & Outreach



Tatum's Totes - the collection for July and August is back to school supplies. GMUW will give us a list of needed supplies. More info to come!

Thank you to all who donated goods or money toward the June collection of hygiene 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.

Admin and Communication

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

<http://www.fccbvt.org>

From the Treasurer



FCCB Pastor Contact information

Pastor Doug Cameron

Email: dougc9927@gmail.com

Home: 802-276-3404

Cell: 802-356-0578

Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:00a - 2:00p

Council Members 2026

COUNCIL CHAIR & MODERATOR ~ Ellen Moody,
ellenmoody777@gmail.com, 802-522-7728

VICE CHAIR ~ Ginger Anderson,
quedaV06@gmail.com, 802-229-1665

TREASURER ~ Rob Griffin, griffinsuter@hotmail.com,
802-272-2376

ADMINISTRATION & COMMUNICATION and CLERK ~
Karen Foote, kbf789@aol.com, 802-223-7286

MISSIONS & OUTREACH ~ Heather Mensah,
withheather@yahoo.com, 617-780-2458

FINANCE, STEWARDSHIP & TRUSTEES ~ Rob Griffin,
griffinsuter@hotmail.com, 802-272-2376 and Gary
Isham, glisham@yahoo.com, 802-917-8027

WORSHIP & CHURCH LIFE ~ Carole Lacasse,
calacasse@netscape.com, 802-229-9504

FAITH FORMATION ~ Beth Cody,
codyscastle@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, 802-477-2715

FCCB email address:
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*