



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 June 2025

An Inclusive, Open & Affirming Church



As most of you know I was away all winter enjoying the beauty of the ocean and the slightly warmer temperatures of the Virgin Islands. I looked forward to each Sunday morning as I signed onto Zoom to do the soundcheck with Rob and the choir. As we know Zoom is not the same as being there in person but I loved seeing and knowing my church community is there on Sunday morning. It is still an important ministry to those who cannot get into the church.

As we left the island in mid-April we had an exciting three week adventure ahead of us with some friends visiting Greece, Turkey and the Lake District of England and finally the Isle of Man. I am sure I will reference something about these travels in a future sermon, but I wanted to share about one of the more spiritual experiences I had in Istanbul, Turkey.

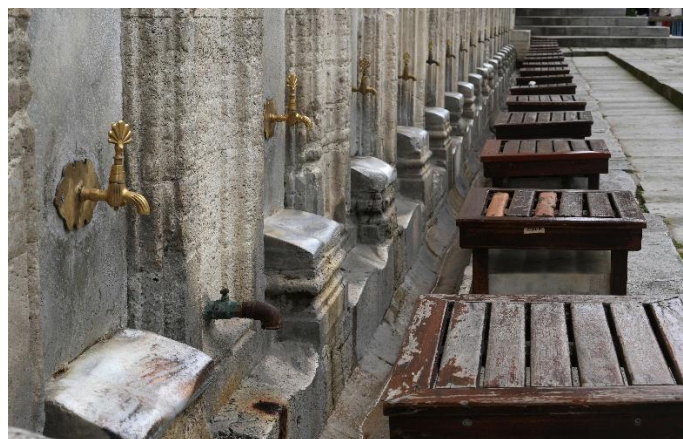
I did not know much about the Muslim religion before arriving in this huge city. I awoke the first morning at 5:00 am to a loud, chanting type sound I had never heard and soon learned it was the pre-dawn call to prayer coming from one minarets nearby. (it took me several days to get this word clear in my mind as I kept calling in a minuet). A minaret is a tall spire-like tower attached to a mosque. Some mosques have one and some have more, as in the Blue Mosque, which has six. I will share about the mosque another time. The call to prayer is also called adhan meaning "to listen." This happens five times in a day; at pre-dawn, noon, mid-day, sunset and night. A practicing Muslim must also wash their hands and feet before entering the mosque in an outside water trough. It all was so interesting and each time I heard a minaret, I did

pause and give thanks to God for all that I had at the moment. Listening to God can happen anytime but the sound from the minaret helps with the intention to listen for God. It made me reflect on how we as Christians could use a reminder to pray. June 8 is Pentecost Sunday where we are called to begin listening for the voice of God through the Holy Spirit and celebrate the birthday of the Christian church. Maybe this Pentecost can help remind us to pause and pray more often.

The call to the adhan prayer is translated as this;

The English translation of the adhan is:

God is Great! God is Great! God is Great! God is Great!
I bear witness that there is no god except the One God.
I bear witness that there is no god except the One God.
I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of God.
I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of God.
Hurry to the prayer. Hurry to the prayer.
Hurry to salvation. Hurry to salvation.
God is Great! God is Great!
There is no god except the One God.
For the pre-dawn (fajr) prayer, the following phrase is inserted before the final repetition of Allahu Akbar (God is Great): Prayer is better than sleep. Prayer is better than sleep.



Sunday Services for June:

June 01 - Rev. Marjorie MacNeill - communion

June 08 - Pondering Prayer - Bible Study Group

June 15 - Rev. Marjorie MacNeill

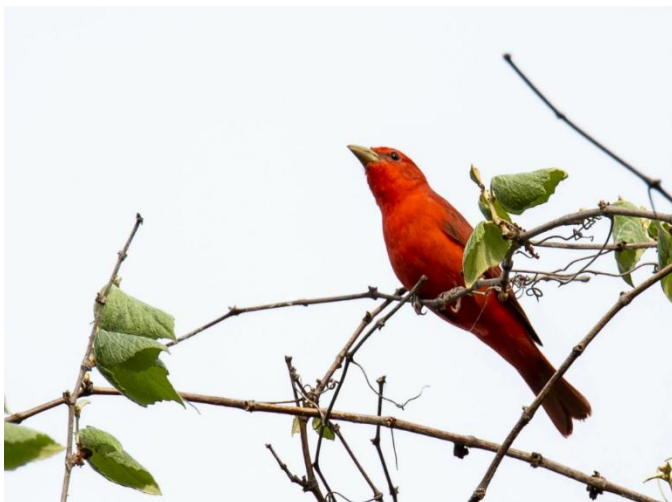
June 22 - Rev. Sami McRae

June 29 - Council: Message by Ginger

July 06 - Nancy Fowler - communion Laura C.



Sunday June 22nd at 4 pm - Christopher McWilliams and the FCCB choir will present "A Summer Solstice" concert in the FCCB sanctuary. Joining Christopher and the choir for this concert celebrating birds and nature are Denise Ricker (flute), Kailea Silver (cello) and Lotta Suter (violin). The program celebrates Summer with music ranging from Franz Schubert to the Beatles, including Christopher's "Juin" for organ solo. Other composers whose music is featured in the concert include Debussy, Gerschwin, Grieg, Tchaikovsky and Herman Beeftink. Admission is free, with donations to benefit Capstone Community Action. The concert will be followed by a reception in the FCCB Community Room, including the opportunity to view the new exhibit of photographs from Israel and Palestine by Lotta Suter. For more information, see the FCCB website (fccbvt.org) or contact Rob Griffin at griffinsuter@hotmail.com



New Art Exhibit at FCCB:

Images from Israel and Palestine

In February 2020, just before COVID hit, my Jewish Friend Sibylle and I finally made our long-planned journey to Israel and Palestine - a land that is holy to many religions, cultures and peoples. The beauty of the historic buildings and the "biblical" landscape was breath-taking. But we were also deeply moved by how much the decades long conflict in the Middle East had affected the everyday life in Jerusalem, in the Westbank (Bethlehem) and the Jordan Valley. The pictures in this exhibition present a few of our impressions from our visit five years ago, before the current tragic round of conflict. - Lotta Suter

Mark your calendars with two special services:

Saturday, July 12, 2025 we will have our annual bonfire services behind the church. **Please note there will be no service in the church July 13.**

Sunday August 24, 2025 we will be meeting at the Waterbury Center State Park Beach at 1100 am for potluck picnic service. More details TBA for each. **Please note there will be no service in the church August 24.**



Lectionary Readings

Sun June 01: Seventh Sunday of Easter

Acts 16:16-34, Psalm 97, Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21, John 17:20-26

Sun June 08: Day of Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21 or Genesis 11:1-9, Psalm 104:24-34, 35b, Romans 8:14-17 or Acts 2:1-21, John 14:8-17, (25-27)

Sun June 15: Trinity Sunday

Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31, Psalm 8, Romans 5:1-5, John 16:12-15

Sun June 22: Second Sunday after Pentecost

1 Kings 19:1-4, (5-7), 8-15a, Psalm 42 and 43, Galatians 3:23-29, Luke 8:26-39

Sun June 29: Third Sunday after Pentecost

2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14, Psalm 77:1-2, 11-20, Galatians 5:1, 13-25, Luke 9:51-62



Worship Lay Readers and Ushers

June 01 - Reader - Thanna Adams

Usher - Ginger Anderson

Communion - Cheryl Poor

June 08 - Reader - Karen Foote

Usher - Blair Austin-Bradley

June 15 - Reader - Beth Cody

Usher - Joan Garcia

June 22 - Reader - Sue Hudson

Usher - Cheryl Poor

June 29 - Reader - Dan Hudson

Usher - Mary Ellen Hill



Birthdays

6/01 - Cindy Downs

6/01 - Dan Hudson

6/07 - Sam Staab

6/10 - Kaylyn Crompton

6/10 - Erica Gauthier

6/12 - Austin Bashaw

6/14 - Don Foote

6/16 - Carole Lacasse

6/19 - Jayden Hudson

6/20 - Sally Chartrand

6/20 - Tonya Hinchliffe

6/20 - Cathy Brimblecombe

6/28 - Sue Hudson

Anniversaries

6/29 - Tiana and Ryan Morse

6/30 - Brent and Carolyn Adams (1996)



God, hear our prayers,

For FCCB Family and Friends:

Aileen P., Doug D., Cindy, John K., Karen and Dan Hudson, Pastor Alison and Denis, Family of Mark Beaudet, Tom A, Pastor Doug's sister and niece, Arthur's wife, Nancy, Sally and Ellen's family, Peter as he heals, Mary and Cindy W. and their family, Tracy, Grayson, Dave T. (friend of Judy), Sally, Laura J., Kathleen (Gordon's wife), Jack, Laura J, Ron, Eli, Payton, Mason, Elizabeth, Scott, Sue D, Betsy, Jason and Jesse, Marcia, Jimmy B, Carol,

Andy and Ian L, Connie, Peter F, Sapphire, Leann, Jack.

Joys- Cathy Brimblecombe and Danny's Wedding, Grace L. upcoming graduation.

For the loss of a loved one, the families of: Dave Burley, Jensen family, Craig Chartrand, Jason Swift, (Cindy W, son), Jim Gingras (Karen's uncle).

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

For our World: those in the path of tornadoes, President Biden, starvation in Gaza, Ukraine. our country, homeless community in VT, all those battling cancer, mental illness, domestic violence and substance abuse,

Please help to keep the prayer list relevant and up to date by emailing Nancy Fowler at fowler5vt@gmail.com with any names that can be removed from the prayer list.

Pastoral Care: If you are in need of a phone call, visit or prayers please contact me at 802-522-7728 or Ellenmoody777@gmail.com. If you are able to assist with giving others rides to church or to appointments during the week please let me know. We are trying to organize to help our members in need. I appreciate all everyone does to keep in contact with others.
Respectfully, Ellen Moody - Chair of Church Council

From the Chartrand family: We want to say thank you to our wonderful church family. Since the passing of our beloved Craig on April 19th we have felt extreme love and support from all of you. It has helped!

From Carole Lacasse:

I'm beginning to settle in on another reception - Funeral Reception for Craig Chartrand. It's scheduled for Sunday, June 15th (Father's Day) The service is scheduled for 3pm with the reception to follow in the Parish Hall. They do expect a good number of attendees, 200 maybe.

So with that said I'm asking folks what they would be willing to contribute and how you'd like to help. I know I don't have to worry, our church members are so gracious and open in helping out. They do plan on ordering a number of items from Shaw's, etc. but I'd like to get an idea of what all we can come up with. I know some of you have favorites you'd like

to contribute. I've also heard Craig had a favorite dessert - cherry pie --- so if several of you would like to provide some that would be great.

I have notified the Berlin Police of the funeral date at the church so they are aware of the possible traffic on Scott Hill Road. Cars will park only on the church side of the road. I am looking for a couple people to help direct parking in the church yard area - hopefully the lawn out back will be dry enough to park on.

For the reception we're planning to serve the following: appetizers, hot items, sandwiches, salads, meat platters, veggie and fruit platters, chips, dips, pickles and olives, and desserts

First of all, I'd like folks to let me know if you'll be able to help out in any way.... providing some food, set up, assisting in some way with the reception and breaking down i.e. cleaning up, doing dishes, etc.

If you could call me 802 839-0894 or 229-9504 or talk with me at church. Oh, and you could email me as well. calacasse@netscape.com

I know I have no doubt forgotten something in this list so don't hesitate to get back to me.



May 24, 2025

The members of the First Congregational Church of Berlin (FCCB) are hereby warned to meet on Sunday, June 8, 2025 after the morning worship service to hear and act on the following:

1. Trustee Team Leader Gary Isham moves that the congregation approve the expense of \$2,740.00 to Blanchard Excavating of Washington, VT for building/property repairs, maintenance and updates, including the addition of a pedestrian walkway along the north side of the sanctuary.

2. The members may also hear and act on any other items as may properly come before the congregation.

Respectfully submitted - Karen Foote, Clerk - First Congregational Church of Berlin

Finance, Stewardship & Trustees

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

Faith Formation

Bible study:

Missions & Outreach



We will continue to collect for Blanket Sunday and Tools of Hope (CWS missions) through Father's Day June 19.

Tatum's Totes - the collection for June is **HYGIENE ITEMS** - Needed for all ages and genders - lotion, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, hair brush and comb, hair accessories, deodorant, loofahs. No travel size or dental items please.

*****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

We continue to be in a very strong financial position, with no debt and greater income than expenses.

- Ordinary income: Our total income as of May 16, 2025 year-to-date is \$37,380. However, this total income includes \$6,525 in donations and matching grant to the Building Fund. So our ordinary income year-to-date is **\$29,254**. This is comparable to our ordinary income at this time in 2024 of \$30,939 (that is, total income of \$31,939 minus Building Fund income of \$1,000).
- Ordinary expense: Our total expense as of May 16, 2025 is \$31,103. However, this includes \$307 in interest on our Cornerstone Fund loan paid in January and the first half of February, and \$1,542 in one-time building expenses (basement cleaning, parish hall storage). So our ordinary expense year-to-date is **\$29,254**. This is significantly less than our ordinary expense of \$32,761 at this time in 2024 (\$34,039 in total expense minus \$1,278 in loan interest). The lower expense in 2025 year-to-date is largely due a decrease of \$5,552 in ministry expenses in 2025 year-to-date compared to 2024 year-to-date (substitute ministry expense of \$5,106 in 2025 versus total ministry expense of \$910,658 in 2024, including settled pastor and substitute ministry).

Our net total income year-to-date is \$6,277. Our net ordinary income year-to-date is **\$1,849**. We currently have total assets (excluding building, property, etc) of **\$36,388**, including Primary Checking of \$8,569, Building Fund of \$1,251 and

Vanguard portfolio of (as of March 31, 2025 \$26,559. Our positive cash flow is enabling us to move toward the \$45,515 in assets we had at the end of 2024, before we paid back \$15,000 on our Cornerstone Fund loan.

The value of our Vanguard portfolio decreased by \$834 in Q1, excluding the \$15,000 withdrawal to repay the Cornerstone Fund loan. We had dividends of \$118 in Q1, but the value of the portfolio decreased by \$952. Given the volatility of the market, we are not making any changes to the portfolio at this time.

Regards - Rob Griffin - Treasurer

Income summary:

In the period from April 18 through May 16, 2025, FCCB received the following income:

Pledge payments: \$3,218
Loose offering: \$263
Donations to general fund: \$729
Donations to Tatum's Totes: \$65
Donations to Deacons Fund: \$40
Donations to Music Fund: \$25
Donations to Blanket Sunday: \$62.50
Donations to Tools of Hope: \$62.50
Income from bake sale: \$851
Income from raffle: \$295
Income from rentals: \$385

Total income during this period was \$5,996

Not reported in the income summary above is a donation of \$100 to the bake sale received prior to April 18. Total income for the bake sale was therefore \$951.

Council Members 2025

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,
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, 802-477-2715

FCCB email address:
firstcongregationalchurchberlin@yahoo.com

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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*

Thoughts for Father's Day



A careful man I ought to be; a little fellow follows me;
I do not dare to go astray, for fear he'll go the self-
same way.

I cannot once escape his eyes; whate'er he sees me
do, he tries —
Like me, he says, he's going to be, the little chap
who follows me.

He thinks that I am good and fine, believes in every
word of mine:

The base in me he must not see, the little chap who follows me.

I must remember as I go, through summer's sun and winter's snow,
I'm building for the years to be, for a little fellow follows me.

—Author unknown

From Dalton Cody

Dear Baseball,

I never thought the day would come when I would be saying goodbye to the thing in my life that I've put the most work into. The countless hours of trying to perfect my swing, all of the swings off of the tee, the thousands and thousands of batting practice swings, the endless reps of ground-balls. It definitely will take some time to stop thinking about this game in a playing way, but I will never take for granted the life lessons that this beautiful game has to offer. Thank you to the wonderful teams I've been a part of, and thank you to the incredible brothers I've found because of this game. Thank you to all of my wonderful coaches/ mentors, that have not only made me a better baseball player but a better man. Thank you to my mom for always going the extra mile, whether it was taking me to my practices and games even if they were far away. Thank you for all of the guidance, both physically and mentally, thank you for helping me find some amazing teams to be part of, and most of all, thank you for always being my number 1 fan! To my dad, thank you for always throwing batting practice to me no matter if you had a long day at work. Thank you for being my favorite throwing partner. Thank you for the words of wisdom that you gave me before every game; I'll always keep them with me... "Do your best, breathe (In through the nose, out through the mouth), and always have fun!" To my wonderful fiancé, thank you for being such an amazing support system. I've loved every game where I see you in the stands, and for always being someone to decompress with after the rough games when I needed it most. I know you'd never thought you'd be engaged to a baseball player, but the amount of baseball knowledge you have learned has been astounding, I feel like I'm talking to someone who has known the game for all of their life. (6+4+3=2) Last but not least, thanks to my Heavenly Father for blessing me with the ability to play this wonderful game (healthy) for my entire career. I give all the glory to Him! I hope that every time I had the chance to put my cleats on I was able to be a Christlike example to everyone I played this game with/ against. Thank you baseball! -DC



Constant and unchanging

Summer's arrival feels positive to many people but may not be smooth for all. Families who rely on regular school meals for their children must stretch grocery dollars further. Heat poses risks for elderly people who lack air conditioning. Work can be difficult to find in the summer months, and uncertainty looms for recent graduates. Meanwhile, concerns such as wars, natural disasters and health problems don't take a summer break.

St. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) prayed, "May you be blessed forever, Lord, for being constant and unchanging, amidst all the changes of the world." Her prayer is as appropriate today as nearly 500 years ago. When all around us is unstable and unreliable, God's love and faithfulness are constant and trustworthy.

