



The Bell Tower

First Baptist Church in Hope Valley
1059 Main Street, P.O. Box 326
Hope Valley, RI 02832
Tel: 401-539-7553 Fax: 401-539-2927
E-mail: fbhvsecretary@verizon.net
Web Site: FBHV.org

The Hope Valley First Baptist Church family makes followers of Christ and worships God through prayer, fellowship, service and the study of the Holy Bible, testifying to the glory of His Name.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER/ FBHV/ MAY 2022

Pastoral Search Committee Update

On behalf of the Pastoral Search Committee we would like to share with you the Pastor's Job Description and Church Profile. These are the things that have been developed by the search committee. They were done thoughtfully and prayerfully by the entire search committee.

We are moving forward in our church. We posted on several websites as well as the ABCORI website and have received at least 13 resumes as of this date which we are currently reviewing. Deadline for applications is June 1, 2022. At that point, we anticipate narrowing down the candidates by mid-June.

Please keep us in your prayers as we undertake this very important task of seeking and discerning the right person whom God called for our church First Baptist Church in Hope Valley, and our community.

Loren and Stephanie (co-chairs)
On behalf of the Pastoral Search Committee

Pastoral Job Description – First Baptist Church in Hope Valley

Title: Pastor

Location: Hope Valley, RI

Position Status: Full-Time

Objective:

The First Baptist Church in Hope Valley is seeking a Christ-centered & Holy Spirit-led leader who is committed and passionate about serving the Lord and our church family in a full-time pastoral position. This person will shepherd our congregation, helping to develop our spiritual gifts, and nurture a shared vision for serving our community.

Preferred Education requirements:

- Bachelor's Degree from a recognized bible college or seminary
- Theological Master's Degree (or working toward)
- Ordained Minister/Pastor

Required qualifications:

- Believes in the inerrancy of scripture.
- Demonstrates principles outlined in 1st Timothy.
- Ability to counsel and care for all members of the church body and community.
- Experience in a leadership role that demonstrates the ability to lead the church spiritually, organizationally and administratively.
- Model humility and servant-leadership.
- Understands and embraces Baptist tradition.
- Demonstrates strong communication skills throughout all pastoral responsibilities with compassion and understanding.

Preferred qualifications:

- Experienced with inter-generational ministry.
- Talented in administration and time management.
- Relatable preaching style.
- Commitment to initiate and participate in community events.
- Cooperative leadership style.

Job Responsibilities:

- Primary preacher and teacher of the church, preaching weekly sermons that are gospel driven, engaging, relevant to our congregation, and honoring the Lord.
- Effectively communicate the truth of scripture in all circumstances.
- Visit/counsel church members/shut-ins.
- Lead/host bible studies on a regular basis.
- Perform weddings and memorial services. Conduct premarital, family, bereavement, and other counseling sessions as needed.
- Work closely with the boards and committees of the church, providing spiritual guidance and team-work for the vision, purpose and priority of the church ministry.

First Baptist Church of Hope Valley, Rhode Island

Our Vision of Ministry

First Baptist Church of Hope Valley is a church with longevity and tradition founded in 1841. Our congregation is primarily made up of members who are over the age of 50. Many of our members have been members for 10 years or more. Presently, we have few young families. The majority of our members participate in ministries, programs, and other activities as well as Sunday worship services.

Reflecting on both our past and current strengths and needs, there has always been a strong sense of family accompanied by many supportive personal relationships as well as the practice of being inviting and inclusive of the community. In previous years, our church body provided events such as our Christmas Bazaar, the Swiss Steak Supper, Corn Beef and Cabbage Supper, and yard sales. Recently, we have enjoyed various picnics, family potluck suppers, family campouts, Christmas caroling, books sales, and soup and bread events. We strive to fit our activities to the strengths/talents of our members as well as the needs of those who we serve.

We always have an eye for new opportunities for events that celebrate family and serve as outreach. We've sometimes raised money through these events that usually is directed to families in need. Our belief in community involvement is clearly demonstrated by our corporate support of numerous community groups who utilize our building on a weekly basis. Individual church members give their time and talents in the Hope Valley/Wyoming Fire District and various local boards. We are viewed by our community and our members as being a caring and giving church. Our church is a hub for numerous Bible studies, a Ladies Benevolent Society, smaller church ministries, and our community events such as Scouts and the local soccer association.

Our congregation gives generously for missions support both globally and locally. In the past few years, we've grown in our

understanding and practice of tithing and sacrificial giving. We would like to continue this teaching and practice moving forward with a shepherd who is comfortable preaching on stewardship as a spiritual discipline. We do not do an every member canvas, but work on a "faith" budget. We are administrators of an endowment restricted to serve the needy in Hopkinton called the Nichola Memorial Fund. Through this fund and our Deacon's Fund alongside other practical service ministries, we value taking care of those in need in our community.

Our music program is another strength we possess. We have an energetic and devoted Praise team utilizing many talented members in our church. Our congregation values hymns, historic traditional choir music, cantatas, and classical instrumentals. We also celebrate contemporary worship music in our regular service. We have utilized guitar, bass, drums, piano, and pipe organ when we have those talented to do so in our midst.

We have Sunday school for all ages. We have tried a variety of times and variations of organization for this, while taking into consideration the needs of current members and the gifts that God provides us at any time. We also enjoy fellowship following the Sunday service. Within our congregation, we have many members who are passionate about spirit-filled prayer. Together, we would like to grow in this area, expanding the practice and scope of what corporate prayer can be. Many other members are also passionate about maintaining private prayer lives, respecting those in our midst who prefer silent and pastoral prayer. We continue to work to foster a sense of unity overall in this regard.

Our church places a high value on our children and youth. Historically, this has been a strength of our church, but it waned for a time; not for a lack of continuing value, but due to decreased attendance of families with children. We are committed to providing children with the message that they are an important part of our congregation. We also aim to aid in developing their gifts. We strive to encourage their participation and inclusion in church services and church life through a

variety of methods.

We recognize that we are a small church and always want to maintain that close-knit spirit. We want to make every effort to reach everyone God is calling us to reach. Some of our church family have stopped attending for a variety of reasons including challenges from COVID. We would like a spiritual leader who is comfortable and skilled in assisting us through the ministry of reconnecting wherever that is possible, without compromising biblical truth. We also look forward to growing, as God leads, through individuals who make decisions for Christ and families returning to the Lord as they encounter a congregation with solid biblical teaching, engaging leadership, and caring members,

The Baptist church congregation in Hope Valley needs a pastor who seeks the guidance of the Holy Spirit, practices a deeply-held personal faith in Jesus Christ that is based on moral standards informed by a committed belief in the inerrancy of Scripture. We seek a shepherd to guide us who is interested in and excited about knowing us and helping us grow according to God's Word and our individual situations. We seek pastoral leadership with a biblical foundation according to the Baptist tradition by a person who respects our unique heritage and who has a relatable preaching style; a style that addresses and speaks to the needs of multiple generations, backgrounds and cultures.

We hope that such a person can bring strong pastoral experience to the church while still possessing a youthful attitude. We hope to find someone who is both merciful and non judgmental in counseling congregants and engaging the community. We seek a person willing to be rooted and visible in both our church family and the community.

Finally, the church family needs pastoral leadership that is cooperative in ways that demonstrate prayerful skill in administration and time management so that the work of the church is conducted in a spirit of humility, collaboration, and service to our Lord Jesus Christ.

We livestream our service and upload the content to our Facebook and church website. We have members and attendees with auditory challenges, so we make use of the microphones a priority while providing audio headsets in designated pews. We are accustomed to a service that runs 60 minutes on average. This is followed by a fellowship time with refreshments. We currently meet at 10:30 AM for three seasons of the year and switch to 9:30 AM during the summer months. The time of summer service is a decision we revisit annually.

We recently instituted a Worship support team, functioning under the deacons. This team assists the pastor in designing the service to reflect tradition, merging contemporary music and hymns, sensitivities of all congregants, and a smooth flow of the service that we hope will best facilitate worship for all.

Demographics of the First Baptist Church of Hope Valley

Hope Valley is a growing community, while being one of the primary villages in the town of Hopkinton. The population of Hopkinton is approximately 8,000 and it covers a broad geographical area in Southern Rhode Island. Our town has a volunteer fire district, an ambulance squad, full-time police force, a federally-qualified health center, and affordable housing for use by the elderly and disabled. Most new housing is single family, with few rental properties available. (There are some rental apartments along our Main Street. This is a recent development.) It would be difficult to live in our community without owning a car considering the fact that transportation is one of the challenges of our residents. The school system is regionalized between the three towns of Charlestown, Richmond and Hopkinton (known as Chariho), which incorporates the first letters of each town. Our town is also close to several medical emergency facilities and hospitals.

In the not too distant past, Hope Valley had many working farms and mills on the Wood River. Today, new housing is being built on that farmland. Its proximity to Route 95 makes Hope Valley an attractive location for people working in the Northern part of the state and nearby Connecticut. We have a

growing arts community which is celebrated yearly in the HOParts festival where visitors are encouraged to tour the studios of resident artists. A recent addition has been the creation of Depot Square Park in the center of town. Music events are held as well as a community caroling and Christmas tree lighting. Chariho also has a thriving youth sports focus with baseball, softball, football, soccer and basketball.

Most daily needs can be found in downtown Hope Valley/Wyoming. There are several larger towns including Westerly, Warwick and Wakefield, all within a short drive. Providence and Newport can be reached in less than an hour. Hopkinton has many pristine open spaces, hiking trails, preserves, rivers, and ponds to explore and enjoy. The seacoast is less than thirty minutes away.

There are several churches of various denominations in our immediate area. Catholic and Episcopal churches are in our town. Presbyterian, Lutheran, Seventh Day Baptist, and Southern Baptist churches are within a half hour drive. We have traditionally maintained cordial relationships with our downtown community churches while sharing programs such as Vacation Bible School, Operation Christmas Child, and combined Thanksgiving, Good Friday, and Easter sunrise services.

First Baptist Church of Hope Valley is affiliated with ABCORI and ABCUSA. Our congregation has a strong history of support and participation in Christian camping at Camp Canonicus. We have been involved there in many ways including providing scholarships for children of members as well as children from the community who desire to attend.

Currently, there are between 30-50 active participating congregants of the church, with 110 listed as "active" on our roles. We currently have approximately 10 children attending regularly. 67% of the congregation is over the age of 50. 98% is European American. 52% are married with no children living at home. 20% are widowed and live alone. More than half of our members are retired. Our congregation is composed of nurses, engineers, clerical

workers, dentists, business owners, social workers, writers, production workers, salespeople, bankers, carpenters, teachers, and executives. 65% of the households have an annual income between \$45-90,000. We also have non-members who attend and give regularly. Most of our members share a deep sense of patriotism as we have several veterans in our church community. We work to display our respect at holidays and other worship opportunities.

Our Worship Life

Our aim is to have lay people assisting as worship leaders with announcements, invocation, readings and other aspects of the worship service. Our deacons rotate responsibilities as greeters and setting up for communion. We have ushers who receive the offering and handle the microphones during prayer time, during which the congregation is encouraged to share prayer praises and concerns followed by a pastoral prayer. In our pews, we have the NIV translation of the Bible and the Celebration Hymnal.

We celebrate communion on the first Sunday of each month. Communion is administered by the pastor who is assisted by the deacons who distribute the bread and the cup. Our Sunday morning service follows a traditional format of praise and worship utilizing both contemporary music and hymns as well as prayer, offering, Bible reading, and a message. Our worship team uses either piano or organ to play the preludes, offertories, postludes, and hymns. We enjoy when the children in our congregation occasionally play the prelude or special music. A team of singers, guitarists, and a drummer accompanied by the piano assist in leading contemporary songs and occasional special music.

Our pastor is responsible for the message and on occasion may provide the children's sermon considering the fact that lay leaders have also done a wonderful job at this ministry. The congregation highly values the children's sermon time.

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Our Congregational Style at the First Baptist Church of Hope Valley

Our church expects the pastor to lead the church and within our organizational structure work collaboratively with leadership. We would welcome someone who is involved in community affairs. We feel this is important to both the community and the ongoing life of the church being a catalyst to bringing in new people and serving those who do not know Christ. While we tend to be strongly influenced by tradition, we are open to embracing biblically-informed contemporary ideas and trends to serve the needs of our congregation and to follow the Lord's leading.

In making decisions, our church is governed by the boards to which our ideas and plans are made by the responsible board or committee. Decisions are communicated formally through announcements during the service, in the bulletin, and our newsletter: The Bell Tower. Regarding social and political issues, we respect individual members' right of action, as long as it is according to their biblically-informed conscience. We do seek, however, a pastor who speaks with wisdom and compassion to the biblical principles around these social and political issues.

In closing, we would like to note that for a small congregation, we have weathered myriad challenges, differences, and changes over the years. In light of this, we have gained wisdom, maturity, a deep appreciation for and commitment to one another. We know who we are. We remain open to growing more embracing and serving new people, and attempting new ministries as God leads. We are excited about finding a shepherd to guide us into the next chapter of our life as a church that loves and follows Jesus Christ.

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

April 17, 2022





May HELLO birthday

- 1 – Robert Krogg
- 6 – Pamela Thomas
- 7 – Debbie Hull
- 15 – Irene Oguoma
- 16 – Roderick Dair
- 17 – Thomas Bressette
- 28 – Louise Kent
- 28 – Neil Spencer
- 31 – Jayne Scorpio

Monday, May 30th, 2022



MEMORIAL DAY

REMEMBER AND HONOR



A graphic featuring a laptop, a coffee cup with steam, a notepad with a pencil, and a small icon of a person. Below the icons, the words "BOARD MEETINGS" are written in a bold, sans-serif font.

2nd Tuesday — May 10, 2022

4:30 PM — Missions

6:00 PM — Deacons & Trustees

6:30 PM — Christian Ed.

7:30 PM — General Board

2nd Wednesday — May 11, 2022

10:00 AM — Nichols Board



NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

THURSDAY, MAY 5, 2022

EXALT ^{THE} LORD
WHO HAS
ESTABLISHED US

COLOSSIANS 2:6-7



A graphic featuring a white cup of coffee with a heart-shaped foam design on a saucer. The background is a wooden surface with pink roses and a red ribbon. The text "HAPPY Mother's Day" is written in a large, elegant script font.

Sunday, May 8th,

A graphic of a forest scene with sunlight filtering through the trees. Overlaid on the image is a block of text in white and gold script.

TEACH ME YOUR WAY, LORD, THAT I MAY
RELY ON YOUR FAITHFULNESS; GIVE ME AN
UNDIVIDED HEART, THAT I MAY FEAR
YOUR NAME.

(PSALM 86:11)

iBelieve.com



From the Executive Director -

Having moved to Rhode Island less than a week ago, I joke that my life presently consists of cardboard boxes. Boxes of books, clothes, household items, and office supplies are shoved into a bedroom or a corner of my office, still waiting to be unpacked. Empty boxes are congregating on the porch, waiting to be stored or recycled. And the things that did not make the move to Rhode Island with me and Nate are packed in boxes in Philadelphia, waiting to go into storage until we buy a house here. Cardboard boxes seem to be the defining feature of my life at the moment.

Those cardboard boxes do more than remind me of everything waiting to be done, though. Those cardboard boxes signify the extent to which my life presently consists of newness. Less than a week ago, I moved to a new town, in a new state and started a new job. Every day, I meet new people, visit new places, and shop in new stores. Both by necessity and by choice I am establishing new routines, a new schedule, new friendships. My life presently consists not of cardboard boxes, but of newness.

It seems fitting to take note of all the newness in my life as Easter approaches. Easter itself is a season of newness, of new life, because of the Resurrection. Resurrection means new life has begun. And new life is, well...new. It is different. It is changed. It is not simply a return to the life that came before.^[1]

When faced with upheavals or uncertainties, when weary from change, or when dissatisfied with the present situation, many people will long for what used to be. Some will even try to recreate or recapture what used to be. But as followers of Jesus, as people of the Resurrection, we are called to *new life*, not to the life that came before. We cannot return to life as it was "before"—before our knowledge of Christ, or before the pandemic, or before a move, or before a leadership transition, or any other "before time." We are called to new life, just as we are also called to go forth in faith and faithfulness, proclaiming with Mary Magdalene that "We have seen the Lord!" and living lives that bear witness to that testimony.

As Easter approaches, I cannot help but wonder: What does new life mean for ABCORI? Who is God calling ABCORI to be in this season of its existence? How might new life manifest itself in the way we minister together, relate to one another, and engage our communities? How will we as a region move faithfully into the future? I don't pretend to have answers to those questions any more than I pretend to know when all of my cardboard boxes will be unpacked. But I look forward to exploring those questions and together discerning the new life into which we are being called.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Courtney Davis Olds, PhD
Executive Minister

[1] Beverly Roberts Gaventa, "Easter Day: Exegetical Perspective on John 20:1-18" (*Feasting on the Word: Year B*, Vol. 2, 381).



JENI PEDZINSKI
- THAILAND
Abolishing Global Slavery.



CORENNE & PHILIP SMITH
National Baptist Convention of Brazil.
Rescue homeless street children and youth ranging in age from 8 to 18.



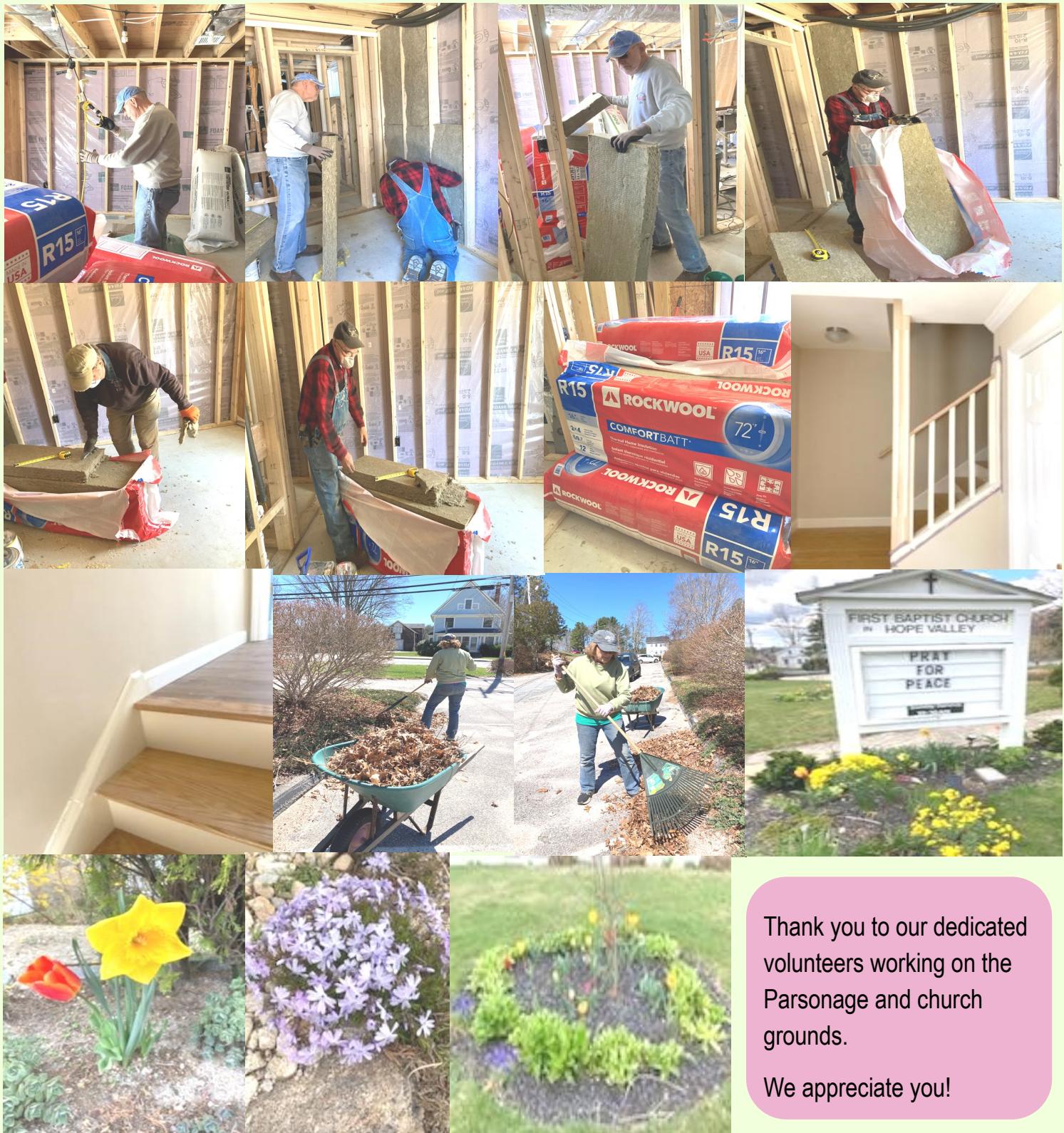
DAVID & DEBORAH KREYSSIG
They are directors of the Espere Kay (Hope House) Program for young adult orphans in Haiti.



REIGNE AND JUN
(MARIA GILL'S SISTER AND BROTHER-IN-LAW)
Currently serving as missionaries in Nepal.



PARSONAGE & GROUNDS



Thank you to our dedicated volunteers working on the Parsonage and church grounds.

We appreciate you!

Judy Toy

At the back of The Sanctuary, each Sunday you will see
This bundle of energy and busy as a bee
Though small and petite, she's quick on her feet

She starts by handling to all who come in,
A weekly Sunday bulletin
Never missing a chance to welcome and greet
Then helps new guests to find a seat
She offers the guest book if they wish to sign
To keep in touch, by address, phone or online

For those who may be hearing impaired
There are pews with headphones to be shared
When the Bell Tower bulletins each month appear
She distributes them to those who are here

She keeps tabs on the booklets with daily
devotions
As well as the bottles of hand sanitizer lotions
She makes sure there's offering plates at the front and the back
And Bibles and hymnals in their place in the rack
She puts offering envelopes in the pockets of the pews
Along with sharpened pencils for people to use
She has a knack for knowing what goes where
And when to close the back doors to keep out the cold air

The front of the church has a long set of stairs
They're a challenge for some; so then Judy
prepares
Our special stair chair, to get into position
So those needing a lift can safely transition
From top to bottom, or bottom to top, when to turn and
when to stop
She operates it and handles it like a pro
And knows which buttons to push to make it go
She has this very special gift, to smoothly run this tricky lift

The church candles, she also helps handle
The ones on the altar need special fuel fills
And batteries for those on the window sills
With matches handy for the fuse, keeps the
lighter/snuffers ready to use
Twists the window bulbs for services at night
And prepares for worship with candle light

Each Sunday service right from the start
Her ushering duties she takes to heart
Even makes sure the time is correct on the clock
In so many ways; takes care of this flock
She helps keep track of weekly attendance
Also has keen sense of worshipful presence
She tries to keep pre-service chatter down to a hum
To help provide a place when people come
To be renewed, unwind; leave worries behind
Feel God's love and forgiveness; and receive peace of mind

Her musical ear helps discern what we hear
She sometimes asks questions or offers suggestions
Supporting the worship team's important work
To manage the sound each Sunday in church

With so many things on her to do list
Still always ready to offer assist
On Communion Sundays she helps the deacon's retrieve
The Communion cups as the parishioners leave
Has finance remember each deacon's box
Turns off the lights and checks the door locks
at the end of the year and for bylaw compliance
She helps audit the records and books for the finance

Though she prefers to worship and be discreet
To sit in the back, her and Pete
She has a spark that she can't hide
An exuberance that comes from deep inside
We are so blessed to have Judy toy
Who brings this church so much joy!

Thank you, Judy!

By Elaine Kenney

