



**Where do you see our hands doing God's Work?**

**This is not a rhetorical question—please let us know your thoughts.**

**Contact: Valerie, Sherry B., Susan K., Kathy A., Judy H., or Janet W.**

The United Church of Newport welcomes:

Dr. John Weaver as he performs an Organ Concert

Sunday April 24th at 3:00 pm

*Mark your calendars now!*

## SPECIAL DATES



ASCENSION DAY /  
NATIONAL DAY of  
PRAYER

May 5

RUMAGE SALE

May 6-7

Mother's Day

May 8

Northsong

May 15

Car Wash

May 28

Yard Sale

June 3-4

Worship Service @  
Magoon Park &  
NACO Concert

June 5

Father's Day

June 17

Antique Tractor Show  
Magoon Park &  
NEK Relay for Life

June 25

How to make  
Sunday worship  
more meaningful:  
*Think of yourself as  
a participant rather  
than a spectator.*

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**United Church of Newport  
63 Third Street  
Newport, VT 05855**

**Non Profit Org  
US Postage Paid  
Permit no. 9  
Newport, VT  
05855**



## FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE

Will

have a 'work day' Tuesday April 26<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 AM to work on ornaments to sell at the Holiday Bazaar. Come to work on ornaments, bring a bag lunch, and stay for the meeting at 1:30. If you have any coordinating fabric solids and small prints you are willing to give up your donation would be greatly appreciated.

### Future Meetings:

April 26  
May 24  
June 28

### Future Events:

Rummage Sale  
Chicken Pie Supper  
Rummage Sale  
Holiday Bazaar  
Cookie Fare

Sept 27  
Oct 25  
Nov 29

May 6-7  
Sept 17  
Oct 7-8  
Nov 19  
Dec 10

Clothing of all sizes for men women and children accepted. Must be in clean and in good condition.



## RUMMAGE SALE

MAY 6<sup>TH</sup> & 7<sup>TH</sup>

### **KEEP ALL OF THE BELOW COMING!**

- HATS AND MITTENS FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN
- SOCKS AND UNDER GARMENTS FOR SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN
- CAMPBELL'S SOUP LABELS FOR EDUCATION
- CAN TABS FOR SHRINER'S HOSPITAL
- GENERAL MILLS BOX TOPS FOR EDUCATION
- LARGE GROCERY BAGS -PAPER AND PLASTIC
- CHILDREN'S BOOKS

### YOUTH ACTIVITIES FOR 2016

May 7<sup>th</sup> Participate in "VT Green Up Day"

9-12:30 with lunch meet at UCN

May 29<sup>th</sup> There is a CAR WASH to Support our Relay for Life Team

—volunteers requested

9-12:30 with lunch meet at UCN

Jun 12<sup>th</sup> Hike and picnic at Valerie's,

4-8 PM pot luck

### Youth Room

#### "Work Party"

Come in clothes ready to clean or paint.

Come when you can.

Bring a bag lunch/dinner.

This room is for YOU

Come take ownership!

Contact Valerie for a date and time

Arrive when you can.

All Youth from grades 6-12 invited.

# April-May 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
WL—Peg J			ChrisEd mtg 6:30pm Exec Bd 7pm	Community Meal		SPRING RING— handbell choir in Rutland
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
WL—James M  ORGAN CONCERT 3pm		Friendship Circle 1:30 pm  Valerie out of town>			UCC Conference	UCC Conference
1 MAY	2	3	4	5	6	7
WL—Janet W			B&G mtg 6pm  <Valerie returns	Food Truck Arrives  NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER	RUMMAGE SALE 9-5	RUMMAGE SALE 9-12
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
WL—Peg J  MOTHER'S DAY	Food Shelf	Food Shelf	Food Shelf  Exec Bd 7pm & Fin mtg 6pm			
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
WL—James M  NORTHSONG CONCERT 4pm		Sr Companion 9:30- 11:30 (library)	ChrisEd mtg 6:30	Community Meal		PROGRESSIVE DINNER
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
WL—Janet W		Friendship Circle 1:30p				Relay for Life  CAR WASH 9-12

**Spring is coming.** The frogs will be coming out, hopping across your path soon, & starting to 'sing' greetings. I offer this suggestion: When you ear or see a frog- -stop think about what is going on in your life and...

**F** OREVER  
**R** ELY  
**O** N  
**G** OD



## THE FEAST OF ASCENSION

On Easter Sunday we celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Though he was struck down and buried in a tomb that does not mark the end of the story. Jesus has risen and now he is loose in Galilee and Judea. Still preaching and teaching, still confounding and challenging his followers, and us, to carry his LOVE into the world. He could turn up just about anywhere, giving instruction and comfort much like he did during the earlier times of his ministry. It is certainly a great comfort to the disciples to have their leader back, just as wonderfully inspiring and cryptic as ever.

For the time being the new Jesus movement is a people without a mission. There is all kinds of enthusiasm and optimism, but as yet no mission, and no vision for the future. It will be a full fifty days until the Pentecost, which is the coming of the fire and spirit and when the wandering disciples are finally loosed upon the world. They will spread the good news to every nation and all the peoples who make up the tremendous diversity of groups making up the Christian Church of the present day. The newly minted apostles have a big step to take before even beginning any of that. Jesus won't be there to help and direct anymore and they still have to realize that the responsibility for the tremendous thing that Jesus started is now passed on to his followers.

The Feast of the Ascension, the fortieth day after Easter, is the training wheels coming off. Jesus' departure leaves his work and ministry in our hands. Though it's

another ten days before we learn just what our mission is to be, the Ascension leaves it to us. These ten days give us a time to reflect on the spiritual element of uncertainty.

The Feast of the Ascension is a time to come together in wonderment and find strength in one another, for the road ahead. It is the departure of our leader while at the same time the clearest promise that our leader is with us in all things and at all times. Our service at UCN will be outside in the yard, with the focus turned towards the city and the world around us. We will share snacks as a reminder that the fellowship we share with each other and with those first disciples is both a spiritual and a physical one. Who knows who might join us at the table? We welcome strangers, knowing that they may be angels in disguise, and knowing that Jesus returns to us in the ordinary people in everyday life and at the times when we least expect.

I hope you can join me on Thursday May 5th, at 6:00 p.m. to watch both the sky and the city in the wonderment both dearly deserve.

forever yours in wonder  
 ~James



**This year we have the opportunity to recognize both the Feast of Ascension and the National Day of Prayer on May 5<sup>th</sup>. Please join us as we combine the services beginning at 6pm on the front lawn of UCN.**

### The First Thursday of May

The National Day of Prayer is an annual observance held on the first Thursday of May, inviting people of all faiths to pray for the nation. It was created in 1952 by a joint resolution of the United States Congress, and signed into law by President Harry S. Truman. Our Task Force is a privately funded organization whose purpose is to encourage participation on the National Day of Prayer. It exists to communicate with every individual the need for personal repentance and prayer, to create appropriate materials, and to mobilize the Christian community to intercede for America's leaders and its families. The Task Force represents a Judeo-Christian expression of the national observance, based on our understanding that this country was birthed in prayer and in reverence for the God of the Bible.

*"Fasting and prayer are religious exercises; the enjoining them an act of discipline. Every religious society has a right to determine for itself the time for these exercises, and the objects proper for them, according to their own particular tenets; and right can never be safer than in their hands, where the Constitution has deposited it."*

—Thomas Jefferson, 1808

### First Call of Prayer in 1775

Because of the faith of many of our founding fathers, public prayer and national days of prayer have a long-standing and significant history in American tradition. The Supreme Court affirmed the right of state legislatures to open their sessions with prayer in Marsh vs. Chambers (1983).

The National Day of Prayer is a vital part of our heritage. Since the first call to prayer in 1775, when the Continental Congress asked the colonies to pray for wisdom in forming a nation, the call to prayer has continued through our history, including President Lincoln's proclamation of a day of "humiliation, fasting, and prayer" in 1863. In 1952, a joint resolution by Congress, signed by President Truman, declared an annual national day of prayer. In 1988, the law was amended and signed by President Reagan, permanently setting the day as the first Thursday of every May. Each year, the president signs a proclamation, encouraging all Americans to pray on this day. Last year, all 50 state governors plus the governors of several U.S. territories signed similar proclamations.

### Significance of the National Day of Prayer

The National Day of Prayer has great significance for us as a nation as it enables us to recall and to teach the way in which our founding fathers sought the wisdom of God when faced with critical decisions. It stands as a call for us to humbly come before God, seeking His guidance for our leaders and His grace upon us as a people. The unanimous passage of the bill establishing the National Day of Prayer as an annual event, signifies that prayer is as important to our nation today as it was in the beginning.

Like Thanksgiving or Christmas, this day has become a national observance placed on all Hallmark calendars and observed annually across the nation and in Washington, D.C. Every year, local, state, and federal observances were held from sunrise in Maine to sunset in Hawaii, uniting Americans from all socio-economic, political and ethnic backgrounds in prayer for our nation. It is estimated that over two million people attended more than 30,000 observances – organized by approximately 40,000 volunteers. At state capitols, county court houses, on the steps of city halls, and in schools, businesses, churches and homes, people stopped their activities and gathered for prayer.

#### Pulpit Supply:

Apr 24	10:00 James Merriam
May 1	10:00 Janet Wiseman
May 5	6:00 James Merriam Ascension Day / National Day of Prayer
May 8	10:00 Peg Jordan
May 15	10:00 James Merriam Pentecost Sunday
May 22	10:00 Janet Wiseman
May 29	10:00 James Merriam

The Magoon Park Committee is looking into having Potable water available in the park as well as having a Port-a-Pot up there for the summer.

Many small improvements are being made towards the upkeep of our building and grounds some noticeable some not. An example is the lights in the library and music rooms are being converted to more efficient ballasts as the old lights burn out.

Outside **Spring Clean Up** is scheduled for **Saturday May 7th from 9 to lunch**. Coffee and munchies available in the morning with lunch of hot dogs and fixings for lunch provided.

VOLUNTEERS are requested for any or all of the allotted time.

Signage will be forthcoming but there has been a request to keep people from parking on the grass and from in front of the garage.



**JUNE 3<sup>RD</sup> & 4<sup>TH</sup>**



Time to start spring cleaning! Our annual yard sale will be the first weekend in June. Donations will be accepted starting May 1<sup>st</sup>. We can pick up large items or large quantities. Call the Church office at 334-6033. Want to volunteer? Our Yard Sale is always a fun event. (Good Snacks !!) All volunteers are welcome. Call the Church and leave your name and phone number. This event is being chaired by Doug Spates and Judy Hurd.

## MISSION AND HOSPITALITY

April Third's Pot Luck Lunch / Birthday Party was well attended with good food and lots of cake. A Fellowship Dinner "Night Out" was held on Saturday, April 9th at the Eastside. There was a wonderful turnout of church members who gathered for fun and fellowship. We learned a lot of new things about each other and caught up with what's been going on with our families.

A "Progressive Dinner" is planned for **Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup> starting at 5 PM**. One more host home is needed for appetizers. People will be able to sign up to assist hosts by providing appetizers, desserts, parts of the main entrée (per set menu) or donate to the cost of the meat for

the main course. The main course will be a set menu—to be decided. Sign-Up Sheets will be created and appearing shortly. *There will surely be some delicious food to enjoy and great company to spend time with and or get to know better.* Look for more information in the Sunday Bulletins or call the church office. Car pooling is encouraged. Marvelene Richards is chairing this event. Feel free to contact her at 334-1254 for more information or to volunteer.

## Food Shelf News

We are happy to report that Gary Robinson has joined the Food Shelf Crew as a delivery Driver. He and his wife Joyce began April 11 to deliver bags of food to eight of his Meals-On-Wheels clients in Newport. We thank him for this and also thanks to Gary and Joyce for the large quantity of fresh vegetables grown by them and donated to the Food Shelf throughout the summer.



Happy Birthday to You! And You! And You!

April birthdays were celebrated on the first Sunday, April 3rd.



Each month we will celebrate birthdays. The next party is May 29th. Come join the fun!

## April Birthdays

Kathy Aiken  
Olivia Boucher  
Joyce Brigham  
Hannah Chitambar  
Anne Hamilton  
Ruth Marquette  
Nancy Newton  
Faith Olsen  
Sharon Pare  
Paul Rittershausen  
Brandon Szych-Brown  
Gary Thomas  
Shirley Turner  
Helen Thompson

## UNITED ANGELS AGAINST CANCER



### CURRENT TEAM MEMBERS ARE:

SUSAN KUZMA, VALERIE RITTERSHAUSEN, JUDY HURD, SHERRY BRADLEY, CAROL SHELTRA, & KATHY AIKEN.

### SOME FUNDRAISING PROJECTS IN THE PLANNING STAGES:

**CAR WASH SATURDAY, MAY 28<sup>TH</sup> 9-12**  
**@ UCN PARKING LOT \$5/CAR**  
**EXTRA VOLUNTEERS APPRECIATED!**

**SHOPPING BAGS MADE FROM OLD RELAY T-SHIRTS AND A BAKE SALE**



THE OFFICIAL SPONSOR OF BIRTHDAYS!

by bringing them together in this slightly unorthodox way. Currently the situation is that James will not be licensed for at least six months. Even though he has done all the preliminary work necessary there appears to be a couple of areas where the UCC wants him to receive additional preparation. What a better way to learn than on the job training and we are praying that the end result will be that James will become our full-time licensed and ordained pastor.

I have had nothing but positive feedback about the approach we have taken and feel confident that it can be a win-win situation for everyone involved. James and his wife Kendall will move to Newport as of May 1, 2016 and we hope that you will welcome them warmly into our church family. Janet has done a wonderful job working diligently to assist with all the church affairs trying to balance her present job until she hits that happy day of retirement which, I understand, is in August. Strictly from my own personal observations, I think that our congregation has done a fabulous job in keeping together and remaining positive in spite of all the uncertainty. I could not be more pleased with those who have stepped up to assist with Sunday preaching, specifically Peg Jordan and Janet Wiseman and to the

entire congregation who have been faithful and strong supporters of the United Church of Newport. I believe this is the beginning of a new and vital era for the United Church of Newport. Sincerely,  
Doug Spates



## ORGAN CONCERT

Our church has invested in the updating, maintenance, and special servicing of our historic organ, and it is only proper that we celebrate this wonderful source of pride.

Dr John Weaver, nationally known organist, will give a concert, at United Church of Newport, on Sunday, April 24th at 3pm. He lives in Craftsbury and is well acquainted with our organ, as he has serviced it over the years.

This is a unique opportunity to celebrate our updated organ. It is an important part of our cherished musical worship. We hope you will all come and enjoy.

As I am putting this newsletter together my husband forwards this email that he received from one of our curling club members:  
*Dear Friends,*

*This may be something that you are all interested in. It is an Organ Concert to be held at the United Church of Newport on Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. The organist will be John Weaver. John would disagree with me, but to me and many other experts, he is equivalent to the great concert organist and recording artist, E Power Biggs. To have John play the organ at the United Church in Newport is a big deal! I believe that the concert is free and I hope to see you there. Don't miss this opportunity to see one of America's greatest organists. You may want to do your own search of John and his music on the web.*

~Woodman Page

*I've included a brief bio of John below:*

*John Weaver served as Organist and Director of Music at the [Madison](#)*

*[Avenue Presbyterian Church](#) from 1970-2005. He also headed the Organ Department of the [Curtis Institute of Music](#) in Philadelphia from 1972-2003 and chaired the [Juilliard School's](#) Organ Department from 1987-2004. John's wife Marianne Weaver, flute teacher and performer, has played with many orchestral groups including the Holy Trinity Bach Orchestra in NYC, the American Wind Symphony, the Canterbury Chorale Orchestra, Musica Sacra and several light opera groups. She regularly plays in concert with John including performing a number of pieces for flute and organ that John has written over the years. Prior to coming to Madison Avenue Church, John was organist and Director of Music at the [Holy Trinity Lutheran Church](#) on 65th Street and Central Park West from 1959 - 1970. While there, John and his wife, Marianne, started the famous Bach Cantata Series in 1968 - performing over 20 Bach cantatas each year in the context of evening Vesper services on the appropriate Sundays for those specific*

*cantatas. Still running today, this is the oldest continuing series of its kind in the western hemisphere. For more information, see: [the Cantata website](#) at Holy Trinity.*

Now that is a nice plug for our Organ Concert that, to me, just came out of left field. ~Valerie



## UCC & UMC DELEGATES

James Merriam is looking for others to join him for this event, possibly car pool. It's a great experience to see and get to know what is happening in the wider church. **Vermont Conference of the UCC Conference** will be held Fri-Sat **April 29-30** at Lake Morey in Fairlee, VT.

**The New England Conference of the UMC Annual Conference** will be Thu-Sat **June 16-18** at Radisson Hotel in Manchester, NH. James and Janet plan to attend and invite anyone who is willing and available to join

them. Contact the office for more information.

## Handbells

On Saturday, April 23rd the Bell Choir will be playing at the 35th Annual Spring Ring in West Rutland. After a day of practices and classes there will be a concert open to the public at 4PM where over 200 ringers from 25 Handbell Ensembles will join together to perform 3 musical pieces. The concert will also include performances by individual handbell choirs.

On Sunday June 12th the United Church of Newport Hand Bell Choir will perform in concert to 'show off' the newly refurbished bells. This concert is in appreciation of your support and gifts that enabled us to refurbish the bells. The concert will be held at 3pm at the UCN and is open to the public. Please spread the word.

## BUILDING & GROUNDS COMMITTEE

There will be a Vintage Tractor Show at Magoon Park again this summer, on Saturday June 25th.

# United Church Herald

Spring

April 2016

## Special points of interest:

- ◇ Search Committee
- ◇ National Day of Prayer
- ◇ Yard Sale
- ◇ Monthly celebrations
- ◇ Organ Concert
- ◇ Relay for Life

UCN Team

## Office Hours & Staffing

Normal office hours are from 9-12 Mon, Tues, Thurs., and Fri. with additional hours before or after dependent on scheduling requests.

**802-334-6033 office**  
**802-324-0659 cell**

**Special NOTE: Valerie will be out of the office**

**APR 26—May 4.**

## CHRIST IS RISEN! CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED!

Does the resurrection shake the foundation of your faith? OR Is it the foundation of your faith? Do you need to see to believe? OR Do you believe what you have not seen?

As we move through this Easter season and approach the birthday of the church we are reminded of the struggles the disciples faced during the time of transitioning from being a "follower of Christ" to being a leader in developing Christ's church. It wasn't easy..... change rarely is.... But Jesus continued to remind them of his love for them, appearing to them and encourage them, always with a friendly, familiar greeting of Peace. He also reminded them of their love for him. "*Peter do you love me*" ..... "*Feed my sheep*" (John 21:17)

During this season of change Jesus invites us to come to him with a teachable spirit, eager to be changed. A close walk with Jesus

is a life of continual newness. Do not cling to old ways as we step into new opportunities. Instead, seek Jesus with an open mind and heart. Jesus knows you and understands you completely. His thoughts embrace you in everlasting Love. "*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future"*. (Jeremiah 29:11)

**Our God is a God of love!  
We are never alone.**

**A BIG Thank You** to our visitation team! During Lent a group of 6 to 8 of us joined in pairs of two and set out to visit. We were welcomed into 14 homes and visited with 21 people! Thank you all who welcomed us into your homes! We so enjoyed your hospitality and fellowship and the opportunity to hear your stories.

After our visits we returned to the church for soup, bread, cookies and more fellowship. Our hearts were warmed by those we visited.

James and I plan to make visiting an important part of our

ministry. We look forward to many more visits.

~Janet

## Dear Friends of UCN,

I am very grateful for the warm welcome my wife Kendall and I have received these last few weeks, and you have all made the ongoing transition into this new and wonderful community very easy. Of course, for two born and bred Vermonters there is something wonderfully familiar about Newport and the greater North Country community. I'm from Peacham originally, the NEK town that always makes several appearances in any foliage calendar, and Kendall is from North Hero so setting ourselves up on the shores of Lake Memphremagog feels very much like home. We'll be moving to the city's west side, just half a mile from the church, around May 1<sup>st</sup>. I'm looking forward to the pleasant stroll down West Main St and preparing for Sunday worship services in the upstairs office I'm told was last used by Rev. Martha Peck (I've been sorting the books and starting to make myself comfortable there).

As we begin this journey together I want to start by saying that I am still learning, I have come to Newport to learn, grow,

and develop as a pastor and as a person. I do hope that I'll never stop seeking to learn and never think I know everything coming into a new community. My time in Newport is open-ended, I'm in the process of becoming Ordained in the United Church of Christ, and I hope we can look forward to throwing an Ordination party sometime in late 2017. Between now and then my first priority is to serve and to minister to this community. The United Church of Newport has a great opportunity, and a great abundance of spirit, to grow and work and minister to the broader community and to one another. It will take each and every one of us each serving in our own way, each ministering in our own way. As St Paul told the Church in Corinth: "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it".

This is the time for discerning our way forward as a community, and with that comes experimentation, and the great challenge of honestly assessing and accepting those things that work and those that do not. We'll certainly have both and I hope we can all learn from and about each other and our community, but also about ourselves. So that is what I propose to you, join me in these two efforts, first and foremost to minister, for as the bulletin says each Sunday, we

are all ministers in the Church of Jesus Christ, and also to make every effort to learn. This includes new skills, new perspectives, and the tenacity to dig and struggle with Scripture and each-other to enrich our faith and our community, both In the LOVE of Jesus Christ. We can be sure that Christ is with us in this.

Faithfully Yours  
-James

## THE SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

After extensive exploration by the Pastoral Search Committee which resulted in not one single interested licensed and ordained pastor, the light came on for us and we made a final recommendation to the Executive and Pastoral Relations Boards. Our recommendation is for the United Church of Newport to hire Janet Wiseman on a part-time basis and James Merriam on a full-time basis with the following thoughts. We feel that Janet has a wonderful feel for the parishioners in our church and connects well with them and James has a wonderful delivery and an inspiring sense of excitement and enthusiasm. We believe that if we can merge their talents for one year, we, as a congregation, will benefit greatly