

GREEN STEEPEL MESSENGER

3 October 2025

GREEN STEEPEL, GRATEFUL PEOPLE,
GROWING IN FAITH, PROCLAIMING GOD'S LOVE,
SHARING CHRIST IN BURLINGTON AND BEYOND



TRAVELING WITH JESUS

This Fall we have been traveling with Jesus through the Gospel of Luke. He has shared challenging parables and teachings about how we use our resources, how we treat the vulnerable, and how we see ourselves as part of God's beloved creation. It has been fortifying to be reminded of our Scriptural foundations and our core identities as children of God. At times it has been uncomfortable as we recognize aspects of our secular culture which are at odds with our understanding of God's vision.

Last month, I proposed a lens for moving through these challenging times - Bearing Witness and Living Joy. Jesus calls us to pay attention to what is going on around us and to act accordingly with courage and conviction. Scripture insists that we care for the stranger. Our historic Baptist principles insist that we stand up for the freedom of speech and the freedom to worship for all faith traditions. This may put us at odds with our neighbors. Jesus also calls us to live with joy and gratitude for the incredible blessings that surround us each day. It is too easy to become overwhelmed by the suffering in this world. Our goal is to find a balance between caring for others and caring for ourselves, all while resting in the love and providence of God at all times and in all circumstances.

This newsletter contains opportunities for bearing witness and living joy through worship, fellowship, and service. It is a great blessing to be in ministry with you.

IN CHRIST,
Rev. Karen A. Mendes

Happy Anniversary

10/01 – Mark & Suzanne Paulsen 37 year
10/10 – Bill & Luana McCormick 43 year
10/13 – Jeff & Sandi Seaver 23 year



October Birthdays

10/4 - Gage Bergeron
10/6 - Gerry Danforth
10/6 - Shaun Chu
10/08 - Denise Rittwage
10/08 - Matthew Little
10/09 - Malcolm Severance
10/11 - Anne Tracy
10/15 - William Mason
10/18 - Carol Gaylord
10/26 - Eric Little
10/29 - Sandi Seaver
10/31 - Alexander Loomis

Sunday

WORSHIP SERVICES

10/5

World Communion Sunday

Luke 17:5-10

Increase Our Faith

10/12

Luke 17:11-19

The Good Samaritan

10/19

Luke 18:1-8

Persistence and Prayer

10/26

Reformation Sunday

Luke 18:9-14

Humbled or Exalted?

SECOND HOUR IN OCTOBER

10/5 - World Communion

Fellowship Time

10/12 - Sermon Talk Back

10/19 - Friends & Visitors' Gathering

10/26 - ANEW Place Lunch & Learn

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY on October 5 will be a wonderful opportunity to worship with the Karen Baptist Community and the New Namuna Nepali Church which worships in our sanctuary on Saturdays.

THERE WILL BE A CONGREGATIONAL MEETING on October 12 after worship to discuss and vote on using undesignated funds from the TPF to purchase and install a security camera system to keep track of happenings in our church yard and on the exterior of our church building. The UGB has reviewed the proposal from the Property Committee and voted in favor. Members unable to attend may vote via email to Cindy.little1955@gmail.com prior to the meeting.

NOV. 2 WILL BE ALL SAINTS SUNDAY when we remember and honor those of our community who died in the past year and lift up prayers for all of our loved ones who have died. Please make plans to join us for this meaningful Sunday morning worship service.

GIFT OF CARING, TIME & VISITATION

All of us are part of the First Baptist Visitation Team and can call or email our church friends or send a note or card. Please take some time to reach out to the church members and friends who live in your town. You can access the church directory through Instantchurchdirectory.com or through the Instant Church Directory App. Try phoning someone you might not otherwise call, but miss seeing in church.

MAKING YOUR FINANCIAL DONATION

If you are unable to attend worship in person, you may mail a check to the church office or give electronically through the donate button on our church website: <http://www.fbcburlingtonvt.com> or through the smartphone app called Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement. Our ministries depend on the generous gifts of our members and friends. You can also give using this QR code.



Thank you for your participation in sharing the love of God in our community and our world.

Opportunities for Fellowship and Learning

The Seekers' Book Group will read The Galapagos Islands - A Spiritual Journey by Brian McLaren. Our first meeting will be Monday, Oct. 6 at 7pm via Zoom. We will discuss the Preface through Chapter 3. Books can be purchased on Sunday or from the church office for \$5.

I-89 REST STOP FUNDRAISER – SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4

Look for the signup poster in the Narthex. Thank you to all who signed up! We still could use more “goodie providers”. This is an opportunity to spread the word about our church ministries and outreach, earn some money for our church, and have fun at the same time.

VISITORS AND FRIENDS OF FIRST BAPTIST, we invite you to a special gathering on Sunday, October 19, after worship, to learn more about our community of faith and what it would mean to become a member of this congregation. We will share faith stories and learn about the history and structure of the American Baptist Churches and First Baptist.

FIRST BAPTIST HIKES! We had a great time hiking in Williston in September so we are planning to do it again in October! This time to Rock Point in Burlington! Join us at 9:45am on Saturday Oct. 25 at the North Beach parking lot. Wear sturdy shoes and bring water. Contact Rev. Mendes for more information.

ANEW PLACE LUNCH AND LEARN - On Oct. 26, we will host the Rev. Adam Avery, the new Director of ANEW Place, to get updates on ANEW Place and share a meal provided by New Moon Cafe. A signup sheet for the lunch will be in the Narthex.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT VOLUNTEERS! Calling all angels, shepherds, magi, Holy Families, directors, and crew! We will soon be choosing our pageant for this year and finalizing practice times. The pageant cast will be composed of people of all ages. We hope to have the pageant be part of our Christmas Sunday worship on Dec. 21. Please speak with Rev. Mendes or Lois Lynch, if you are interested in participating in any capacity.

PAST WORSHIP SERVICES are available on our website and our YouTube Channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0vIptkSAyIRbAifDbGFIw>

FLOWERS FOR WORSHIP: All are invited to provide flowers for a worship service. This can be a meaningful way to memorialize a loved one or commemorate an important event and bring God's beautiful creations into the sanctuary to enhance our spirit of praise and joy in worship. Please call the church office to sign up for a particular Sunday.

OPPORTUNITY TO FEED THE HUNGRY ON SUNDAY EVENINGS This is called 'The Share' and is a simple meal of soup, sandwich, and beverage. The event begins at 4:30 and is done by 6. For more information or to volunteer, please speak to Lois D'Arcangelo, or Beth Gamache. There are sign-up sheets on the round table.

CARDS FOR MEMBERS IN NEED. We have a number of church members who are ill, homebound, or in a nursing home setting. Please use the directory or contact the church office for their mailing addresses.

PRAYER REQUESTS can be shared via a Google doc entitled FBC Prayer List.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1P6XXpslNHj07qeDvdD_UXVykFmaFDQuu2lYnW-ppjh0/edit?usp=sharing (This is the updated link.) The Prayer List is an opportunity for us to strengthen our connections and care for each other through prayer. These prayers will be lifted up by name during Sunday worship. They can also be added to our Prayer Chain if requested. If you have trouble opening the Prayer List link, please email welcome@fbc Burlingonvt.com.

LAY READERS AND PROVIDERS OF REFRESHMENTS AND FLOWERS are needed for Sunday worship. If interested please call or email the church office at welcome@fbc Burlingonvt.com.

SUNDAY WORSHIP ON ZOOM

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86024135383?pwd=b1pWcXRqZVo1YjI2Zmh3Q2x5MXIiZz09>

Meeting ID: 860 2413 5383

Passcode: 676074

To call in +1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 860 2413 5383

Passcode: 676074

September UGB Meeting 09/15/25

Outreach - We discussed the details of the I89 Rest Stop Fundraiser. The team's budget for next year will be done by Sept. 20. We the need to address the CE/Mission Director's hourly rate and advertising costs. A meeting with other key members to discuss raising the salary rate was planned..

Fellowship - It is great to have the choir back and several new attendees, including one who indicated interest in joining the church and two students. The first weekend in October is World Communion Sunday and Ushers are needed. Communion servers are all set.

Education - The opening of Church School was a good kickoff for the year. The youth class has requested another fall retreat at Inselheim. There is \$533.43 left over from the backpack collection. We will buy more backpacks.

Property - Increased police presence and Chocolate Thunder's patrols have helped reduce drug activity and other action in the area. A plan was presented to use \$10,111.55 from undesignated TPF funds for 7 cameras covering various exterior areas, a monitor and desk to put the NVR on. After extensive discussion by the group, a motion was made to ask the congregation for approval of that use of the undesignated TPF funds with a vote on October 12. The motion passed with 8 votes in favor and 1 abstention. The potential fence installation was deferred for the time being. Regarding Bank St property, VT CARES has renewed their lease. The committee has concerns about increased snow plowing and landscaping costs.

Financial Reports - The Financial Secretary's report showed we are under budget for income in both local and mission funds, but lower expenses were balancing things out. In discussion of the Treasurers report, there was some further discussion about expenses for the CE position, which had been split between the local fund and mission fund. The TPF Report including updates on the portfolio. We are receiving acceptable growth. The team is watching purchasing power. We are planning now for the stewardship campaign later in the Fall.

Pastor's Report - Karen updated events coming up: resumption of coffee hours, Bible study, Book group, an all church hike, Dopp organ recital Oct 12, All Saints Day, Pledge Sunday, Thanksgiving Sunday Nov 23 and First Sunday of Advent Nov 30 and other events noted in previous reports. She will join the Generosity Project (ABC) Sept 23, an informational webinar about stewardship and generosity in our churches. The Thriving Program Team (an enlarged group from the earlier Task Force) will reconvene to work on an application for the Thriving Congregations Initiative.

Next Meeting: October 20, 2025 at 7pm

Church School News

Sunday school is progressing. You may occasionally hear thumps during worship. The Early Education Classroom is directly above the narthex and the class frequently has physical movement activities as part of the lesson. Movement is important for this age group and some noise is unavoidable. It's the sign of energy, life and spirit.

Jointly with Outreach Team members we have been reviewing the part-time staff position we are now calling Director of Family Ministries and Outreach. Last Winter/Spring we created a job description approved by the Unified Governing Board. We made an unsuccessful recruitment effort at that time. The joint committee is reviewing the job description and salary and have discussed funding issues. We plan to present a proposal to the UGB at the next meeting. Meanwhile the Education team, Cindy L, Lois L and Bev N. and Pastor Karen are working on programming and providing other support for the fall and winter.

Mission News

OCTOBER IS “IM’S WORLD MISSION OFFERING MONTH AT FIRST BAPTIST”:

Here are some reflections from Rev. Dr. Sharon Koh, Executive Minister/CEO of International Ministries using Luke 24:32-34 “were not our hearts burning within us”. Sharon says “sometimes, one of the most critical ministries is the ministry of returning. One important distinction about International Ministries is that we prioritize partnership. Our global servants go at the invitation of international partners, and many of you, our ministry partners, not only go but go back (not only give, but give again and again). Our Lord Jesus exemplifies this kind of dedication to incarnational ministry.”

Through the World Mission Offering, I invite you to participate in God’s mission—one where people commit to going back and, when possible, commit to staying.”

(We have 120+ global servants, volunteers, home staff, and 250+ international partners in 70 countries.) In 2024, First Baptist gave \$443.00 to the World Mission Offering.

ANEW Place...

Thank you to Jamie Burke and Jill Soter for providing a meal for ANEW Place on September 7th.

The Share...

We thank our August and September soup makers and volunteers: Cindy and Dave Little, Deb Holonitch, Fern Sparks, Lois D’Arcangelo, and Beth Gamache. We are looking for more volunteers to come to the First United Methodist Church on Sundays from 4 pm to 6 pm to serve, chat with our visitors and assist with clean up.

Admin's Corner

Verse Scramble 1

“Eth droL si ym ghtrsiteh dan ym noitasavli; ohw llahs I raef?”
(Hint: Psalm)

Verse Scramble 2

“Eht tipruis htirwgi, hreew eht iprusi fo eht droL si, tereh si omfderee.”
(Hint: Paul’s letters)

Verse Scramble 3

“Eht rufti fo eht riSpit si eolv, yjo, eecpa, naitseapc, iednskns, sgasdneo, afith, nelgtseenn, dan f-sel ntrcotl.”
(Hint: Fruits of Spirit)

Verse Scramble 4

“Eht drol si ym eepserdh, I llahs ton want.”
(Hint: A favorite psalm)

Email me your answers at welcome@fbcburlingtonvt.com
(no prizes - just bragging rights)

SOCIAL MEDIA: PLEASE FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

Facebook: First Baptist Church, Burlington, VT

Instagram: @firstbaptistbtv

 Got photos from church events or hangouts?

Don’t forget to send them my way! You just might see them featured on our social media or in an upcoming newsletter.

We love sharing the joy, love, and community that make First Baptist Church so special. 

Church Staff Directory

Rev. Karen A. Mendes - Pastor
Pastor Thee Say - Karen Baptist Pastor
Justice Elijah - Church Administrator
Evan Allen - Organist
Anna Roy - Chancel Choir Director
Brenda Perkins - Youth Choir Director
The Karen Baptist Community - Sexton Team
Dazzling Diadem - Tech Support

Officers of First Baptist

Cindy Little - Moderator
Mark Paulsen - Assistant Moderator
Beth Gamache - Assistant Clerk
Frank Swasey - Treasurer
Daz Diadem - Assistant Treasurer
Marilyn Siple - Financial Secretary
Marie Morton - Assistant Financial Secretary
Pat Reasoner - Historian
Mark Paulsen - Parliamentarian

CHURCH EMAIL ADDRESSES

The church office - welcome@fbcburlingtonvt.com
Karen Mendes - revkamendes@fbcburlingtonvt.com
Evan Allen - eallen@fbcburlingtonvt.com
Anna Roy - aroy@fbcburlingtonvt.com
Treasurer - treasurer@fbcburlingtonvt.com
Financial Secretary - financialsecretary@fbcburlingtonvt.com
Karen Baptist Community - KBC@fbcburlingtonvt.com

CHURCH CONTACT

Office: 802-864-6515
Conference: 802-864-4721
Email: welcome@fbcburlingtonvt.com
Website: www.fbcburlingtonvt.com
Visit Us On Facebook: *First Baptist Church, Burlington, VT.*

PAST WORSHIP SERVICES...

are available on our website and our YouTube Channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0vIptkSAyIRbAifDbGFIw>