

# Green Steeple

## Messenger

June 2026



### THRIVING CONGREGATIONS

First Baptist is embarking on an exciting and challenging time as we join the Thriving Congregations Initiative from ABC Rochester/Genesee. We are one of 8 churches in the third and final cohort of this Lilly Endowment funded program. This summer we will reflect on who we are and what we perceive to be the needs of our communities.

In August, we will be given a consultant who will help us refine our discernment. In September, a few members of our Steering Committee will go on retreat with the other cohort churches and consultants to choose a project that will strengthen us and help us to thrive into the future. In October, we will receive \$28,000 to make that project a reality. Our Steering Committee will meet monthly with our consultant and periodically with the cohort churches until the fall of 2027 in order to support the completion of our project.

What this project will be is yet to be determined. We were strongly encouraged to enter this process with prayerful openness to the leading of the Spirit. Our imagination practice in May will serve us well as we consider a wide array of possibilities. The opportunities for ministry are wide open and we are blessed with the ability to make a positive impact in our fellowship, our neighborhood, and wider communities. The Holy Spirit is moving at First Baptist and it is a great joy to be in ministry with you!

Yours in Christ,

~ Karen

Rev. Karen A. Mendes

Pastor

# WORSHIP SERVICE INFORMATION

Music Sunday, Communion, June 7<sup>th</sup>

**Sermon Title:** Mercy, Not Sacrifice

**Scripture:** Matthew 9:9-13

Church School Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>

**Sermon Title:** Freedom

**Scripture:** Galatians 5:13-14

Pentecost 4, June 21<sup>st</sup>

**Sermon Title:** Proclaim from the Housetops

**Scripture:** Matthew 10:24-39

Josh Sharp Guest Preacher, June 28<sup>th</sup>

**Sermon Title:** TBD

**Scripture:** TBD



## UPCOMING SPECIAL SUNDAYS IN MAY AND JUNE

*You won't want to miss any!*

- **June 7** - Music Appreciation Sunday
- **June 14** - Church School Sunday - The Youth will share a slide show from the Mission Trip.
- **June 21** - Fathers' Day
- **June 28** - Guest Preacher - Josh Sharp

# Opportunities for Fellowship and Learning

## There's more to Church than Sunday mornings!

**NOODLES FOR BURMA FUNDRAISER** – In February 2021 Myanmar's democratically elected government was overthrown by the Myanmar military. Since then thousands of people have been killed and many more have been injured in protests and resistance against the coup. Join us at First Baptist Church, 81 Saint Paul St., Burlington on Sat, June 6 for delicious takeout Burmese noodles. Noodle options are vegetarian or chicken with vegetables. All proceeds will go to help folks in Burma (Myanmar). RSVPs can be made at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F48ADAA2DA4FE3-63815040-noodles> for pickup between 4:30 and 7:30pm. For more information, please email [welcome@fbc Burlingtonvt.com](mailto:welcome@fbc Burlingtonvt.com).

**LAKE MONSTERS FELLOWSHIP EVENT** - We are coordinating to reserve a section at a Lake Monsters game on Sunday, June 21st. Please sign up to join us to celebrate fathers, our community, and the oncoming summer! Tickets are \$10, the game starts at 5:00pm.

**AN ECUMENICAL BOOK STUDY** with St. Paul's Cathedral. We will read *The Psychology of Christian Nationalism* by Pamela Cooper-White. The dates for the three sessions will be June 30, July 14 and July 28. For more information, contact Rev. Mendes.

**AUGUST BOOK GROUP** - In August we will join with other ABCRGR churches in a Summer Book Group on Thursdays, August 6, 13, 20, and 27 at 7pm on Zoom sponsored by the ABCRGR Anti-Racism Collaborative and co-led by Rev. Mendes. We will read *The Separation of Church and Hate* by John Fugelsang. With the rise of Christian Nationalism, people of faith often find themselves at odds with those who use Scriptural language to pursue and justify political power. With clarity, humor, deep faith, and occasional salty language, John Fugelsang responds to these distortions and lifts up a vision of Christianity that is vibrant and inclusive. Books can be purchased from your favorite bookseller. Contact Rev. Mendes for more information.

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL!** This year, VBS will run from Mon August 10<sup>th</sup> to Fri August 14<sup>th</sup>. Our theme is "What Every Living Thing Needs" based on Psalm 104. We are looking for adult and youth volunteers.

**ZOOM COFFEE HOUR** - Our Coffee hour happens on Tuesdays at 10am until June 16 before going on hiatus for the summer. Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89855564406?pwd=R2FtbC9tRnoyU1R1cXJTRmRsY1Vldz09>

**WEEKDAY BIBLE STUDY** - Mondays at 11:30am until June 15 before going on hiatus for the summer.. We are exploring the Gospel of Mark. Please join in person or remotely and feel free to bring your lunch. Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86024135383?pwd=b1pWcXRqZVo1Yjl2Zmh3Q2x5MXliZz09>

# Christian Education News

The Sunday School year is drawing to a close. Teaching teams are planning ways to celebrate Sunday School on June 14th. It is always a pleasure to watch the children and teens along with the Youth Choir give it their all to us. We have such wonderful teachers that spend hours of their time dedicated to spreading the love of God to our children. Please take the time to thank them! We will honor them on the 14th.

Karen Pope has moved from the area. Brenda Perkins will not be teaching the high school class next year as well deserved rest! We are so grateful to her! Jamie and Joe Burke will be moving next fall so Jamie will not be able to teach but she will sub, which is wonderful. We have not yet learned the plans of our other teachers.

If anyone feels the call to help teach next fall, it would be so deeply appreciated. We need to order a curriculum but that will be based on how many classes we can offer. Please pray for our program. It is vital to the growth of this church.

The team has not yet begun considering what to do about the CE Director position. At present, the team is fully occupied with planning for Vacation Bible Camp. We have leaders for each of the 5 days but still need volunteers to help in child support, transportation, recreation and food preparation roles. We are hoping that some of our youth may be available and are awaiting word from the First United Methodist Church to see if they are still interested in helping with food preparation or in some other way.

There is a lot on our plates.

Lois, Cindy and Bev



# Mission News

In June we give to our One Great Hour of Sharing (our love offering to the world). "Our gifts reach the ministries and people in need through a network of regional and international partnerships with American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (International Ministries), American Baptist Home Mission Societies, Baptist World Aid, and Church World Service."

In 2025, OGHS giving from churches and individuals totaled \$1,421,693. Members and friends of First Baptist Burlington gave a total of \$1,799.69. To know how the gifts were used in 2025, checkout the mission bulletin board in our church narthex.



## Updates from Adam Avery at Anew Place-

The program continues to be busy in early 2026 having housed 5 people thus far this year. One guest has signed a lease for June and a few guests are close to being housed just waiting for apartments to open up. An exciting time.

If you are interested in helping Anew Place by providing a Sunday evening meal signups are available for June, July and August.. Team up with someone to provide a Sunday evening meal for 12-15 people that needs to be delivered to Anew Place on lower North Street at 6:30pm. Please speak to Beth Gamache or email [bethng58@gmail.com](mailto:bethng58@gmail.com) with any questions and information regarding the sign-up.



## METHODISTS AND BAPTISTS

### "SHARE THE SHARE!"

~first in a series written by volunteers~

We are 6 months shy of closing in on our 3rd year of the Sunday night Share. It's hard to believe! We have been blessed with dedicated volunteers from both our Burlington First UMC and our siblings in Christ from the First Baptist Church. We have enjoyed one another's company so much and we have gotten along so well we want to continue with this ministry.

We have been blessed by each of you for your prayers, your financial gifts and gifts of soup and sandwich makings. We can't do it without you!

The community members have benefited from the churches combined knowledge and gifts around the housing and drug crisis we have in Burlington. We have also learned a great deal about the ways in which we are more effective. Through trial and error, we are having a clearer understanding of how we can be in community with these folks.

We moved slowly at first as to not scare the community members away. We have tried different reiterations of what it means to share: soup, sandwich and a story. We've attempted bible tables available for discussion. We have tried story tables for folks to share their personal stories. We have had an artist in residence (Noni Stewart from Grand Isle) drawing their portraits cumulating with an art show last summer. It was well attended by both those living rough and those who are housing and food secure. We actually sold some artwork and raised \$2,000.00!

We are currently setting up an art gallery of both Noni's portrait works and works by unhoused artists. We have plans in the near future to take the art show on the road beginning with the First Baptist Church, our first beloved partners.

God has continued to call us out of our comfort zones and this primary focus and into more challenging pathways. One being some of us (from both churches) joined the New England Methodist Foundation for their program, "ACTIVATE." This 8-month program taught us how to Discern, Define, Design, and Deploy a ministry program that utilizes the strengths and assets of the church to identify and meet a need in the community.

God has been speaking of late, and we are turning a corner. I'll let someone else continue with this story but know that there will be all sorts of opportunities for many volunteers in the future. We will continue to update and share with you in our monthly newsletters. Some articles will be our new visions, some will be testimonies from changed lives, and some may be asking for your help. Until next time...may God guide us in ways that seem impossible, all the while knowing the impossible is possible with God!



Pastor Kerry

# An Updated Update from the Office

Hello Friends,

Thank you for bearing with me as I navigate what feels like a rollercoaster of a spring. Last month, I shared with you that I would be beginning a summer intensive unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at the UVM Medical Center to continue my training towards Chaplaincy Board Certification.

Since that time, a job opportunity arose at UVM Home Health and Hospice for a Per Diem Chaplain. With the support of Karen and the UVM Medical Center, I applied and have been offered the job.

What does this mean for the church? I will **not** be changing my office hours to the scheduled outlined last week. Accepting this job means that I will not be going ahead with the summer intensive CPE Unit. Broadly speaking, Office Hours will remain constant throughout the summer: Mondays 9a - 2p, Tuesdays 8a - 12p, Thursdays 8a - 12p, and Fridays 9a - 2p.

That said, as a per diem at Home Health and Hospice, there may be days where I am requested to support the chaplains. If ever these requests would interfere with my Office Hours, I will first check with Karen, then announce updated hours for the upcoming week in the Green Steeple Weekly. As I communicated in my interview, it's important to me that both the Church and Home Health and Hospice feel well-supported and well-served. To that end, your feedback is welcome and invited.

I apologize for the confusion, and am deeply grateful to each of you for working with me as I continue the work of getting settled, serving my community, and continuing my training. Working at the First Baptist Church and Home Health and Hospice feels like a beautiful and balanced way to participate in and be of service to this city that I love.

We are in it together. Thank you!

Best,

Pierre



THE  
University of Vermont  
HEALTH NETWORK  
Home Health & Hospice

# Community News

## June Birthdays!

- Evelyn Hser 06/03
- Beverly Klandl 06/05
- Dawnaly Dax 06/06
- Catherine Paulsen 06/07
- Karen Hall 06/14
- Morgan Smith 06/18
- Anna Roy 06/19
- Joshua Perkins 06/19
- Larry Smith 06/20
- Lerder Star 06/22
- Beth DuRona 06/23
- Virginia Mitchell 06/24
- Patricia Brown 06/24
- Tocher Mitchell 6/25
- Sarah Wright 06/27
- Stuart Burroughs 06/28
- Keegan Smith 06/28
- Joshua Swasey 06/29

## June Anniversaries!

June 16 – Steve & Brenda Perkins

June 18 – David & Cindy Little

June 30 – Thomas & Jill Couture



## Make 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.fbc Burlingtonvt.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.



# UGB MEETING

United Governing Board - May 18th meeting summary

The board met and the focus was on upcoming events to close out the church year prior to summer. The Noodles for Burma fundraiser takes place on June 6th. Sign up for takeout meals is in progress now. We will celebrate the music program on June 7th and the Sunday School on June 14th. Dads will be honored on June 21st and all are welcome to attend the Lake Monsters baseball game, with more information regarding tickets available for purchase. Karen's vacation runs from June 28 through July 25th. She has lined up guest pastors to sub in for her. Vacation Bible Camp will run August 10-14, at the church. Anyone who would like to help is welcome.

We have been awarded a Lilly Thriving Congregations Grant and we have a team working on how best to go forth with planning for it. An important congregational survey will be done in June and Karen has begun inviting comments and thoughts from the pulpit. It is hoped that lots of people will take the time to fill it out.

Cindy Little, Moderator



# Contact Us!

## Church Staff Directory

Rev. Karen A. Mendes - Pastor  
Pastor Thee Say - Karen Baptist Pastor  
Pierre Compere - 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@fbc Burlingtonvt.com](mailto:welcome@fbc Burlingtonvt.com)  
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**PAST WORSHIP SERVICES...**

**are available on our website and our YouTube Channel.**

**<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0vlptkSAyIRbAilfDb>**

**GFlw**

