



1 April 2025

Green Steeple Messenger



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

LIVING IN HOLY WEEK & EASTER

As we move through Lent and approach Holy Week and Easter, we recognize that the circumstances which surrounded Jesus and his followers are not so different from our own. We are living in a time of great upheaval, extreme income disparity, and tremendous suffering. Modern day Herods and Pilates, here and around the world, are doing all that they can to line their own pockets while refusing to feed the hungry and attempting to quash any dissent. We remember that it was the government of Rome who arrested and crucified Jesus because they were afraid of his influence among the people. It is easy to feel discouraged, dismayed, and disgusted by the state of our nation and the world today.

But we have something that the Herods and Pilates will never have - Hope and the confidence that love is stronger than fear and life is victorious over death. Every tyrant is just a frightened little man, whose only power is fear and bravado. We are Easter people who will not be defeated by lies, intimidation, and despair. We know that God calls us to love our neighbors (even our enemies), to feed the hungry, and stand with the vulnerable. We know that true peace only comes through love and justice. We know that "weeping may linger for the night but joy comes in the morning" (Psalm 30:5). We know that Good Friday is not the end of the story.

As we approach this most holy time, may we be encouraged and strengthened by the love and power of God which will never abandon us. May we journey with Jesus as he approaches the cross, not turning away even though it is difficult, and may we rejoice and celebrate with him in his glorious resurrection and victory over evil, suffering, and death.

This newsletter has many opportunities to learn, serve, and grow in faith and fellowship. It is a great blessing to be in ministry with you.

IN CHRIST,
Rev. Karen A. Mendes

In this newsletter you can expect:

Anniversaries
and Birthdays

Sunday
Worship
Services

Gifts of Caring,
Time and
Visitation

Opportunities
and Learning

Church School
News

Mission News

Church Staff
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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!



Happy Anniversary
April 18

- Evan & Priscilla Smith - 52 years

April's Birthdays

April 03

- Diane Babcock
- Lois D'Arcangelo
- Mark Harrington
- Celia Perkins

April 05

- Daniel Browne

April 07

- Michael Lynch
- Morgan Munn

April 10

- Daniel Paulsen

April 12

- Carrie Perkins

April 15

- Kyle Munn

April 17

- Elizabeth Carlson
- Adam Schneider

April 19

- "Pinky" LaCasse
- Jack Roy

April 23

- James Smith

April 27

- Esther Doh

April 30

- Bethany Munn
- Jessica Robair

Sunday WORSHIP SERVICES

April 6

Communion
Scripture: John 12:1-8
Sermon: *Costly Love*

April 13

Palm Sunday/Combined
Worship
Scripture: Luke 19:28-40
Sermon: *The Stones Would
Shout*

April 20

Easter/Combined Worship
Scripture: John 20:1-18
Sermon: *The Gardener*

April 27

Easter 2
Scripture: Psalm 150, John
20:19-31
Breakfast and Hymn Sing

Holy Week Worship Schedule at First Baptist

Palm Sunday, April 13 - 10:00 am - Join us as we celebrate Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and look ahead to the events of Holy Week.

Maundy Thursday, April 17 - 6:00 pm - Gather at the table with those who choose to be with Christ and his disciples.

RSVP for our simple soup supper.

Good Friday, April 18 - 12:00 pm - A quiet service of prayer and reflection as we honor Jesus' final hours on the cross.

Easter Sunrise Service, April 20 - 6:00 am - at Petersholm Farm, Williston - Join us on the hill to welcome the rising sun (and Son!). Be sure to wear your boots!

Easter Worship - 10:00am - A glorious celebration of Jesus' resurrection!

Sunday, April 27 at 9:15am - Continue the Easter Celebration with Breakfast and Worship with your family of Faith! If possible, please bring a breakfast item to share such as bagels, donuts, breakfast casserole. After breakfast, we will gather in the sanctuary for a hymn sing!

EASTER FLOWERS

It is our tradition to decorate the sanctuary on Easter Sunday with flowers in memory or in honor of loved ones. This year we are invited to bring tulips, daisies, daffodils, or other lightly scented flowers for our Easter celebration. Please avoid lilies or hyacinths which can cause headaches and breathing difficulties for some, including our pastor. Artificial flowers would be fine (as well as reusable!). Thank you for your understanding. Flowers can be brought to the church on Friday, April 18 or Easter Sunday morning. Please let the office know the names of those to be honored so that we can print them in the bulletin.

Opportunities for Fellowship and Learning

There is more to Church than Sunday mornings!

MONDAY BIBLE STUDY

Our Bible Study meets in Fellowship Hall and on Zoom each Monday at 11:30am. We are reading the Gospel of Luke. The zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84430309219?pwd=MFIVR2RpeM9qYi8vSVRoMndvMk1Sdz09>
Meeting ID: 844 3030 9219 Passcode: 303940 To Dial in +1 646 558 8656 US (New York) Meeting ID: 844 3030 9219
Passcode: 303940

FBC ZOOM COFFEE HOUR meets on Thursdays, from 10-10:30 a.m. All are welcome for informal chatting! The zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89855564406?pwd=R2FtbC9tRnoyU1R1cXJTRmRsY1VIdz09> Meeting ID: 898 5556 4406
Passcode: 993539
To Dial in +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

LENTEN BOOK STUDY

We are reading *How to End Christian Nationalism* by Amanda Tyler from the Baptist Joint Committee and discuss it on Sundays during Second Hour beginning on March 9. Books are available from the church office for \$22. Contact Rev. Mendes for more information and to RSVP.

THE SEASON OF LENT began on March 5 and we have a number of opportunities to explore and deepen our faith as we prepare for the celebration of Easter. The theme for the season is **We Journey with Jesus (and Jesus Journeys with Us!)**

Daily Devotionals - 2 options!

The Hardest Part - Hurt We Carry, Hope We Find

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rKArf4KNtxnX8yvkKGUac7rdRrDk0X73/view?usp=sharing>

Seeking Creation - https://drive.google.com/file/d/1A_8W66239VwKsF55BHCI4i_QCiGHYVgF/view?usp=sharing

Paper copies of either/ both are available by request.

Daily Scripture Readings from the Gospel of Luke - These are printed at the end of the newsletter.

Lenten Book Study - Sundays during 2nd Hour - *How to End Christian Nationalism* by Amanda Tyler.

Weekly Prayer in Sanctuary - Thursdays at 11:30am - This is an opportunity to step aside from our busyness for a time of silent prayer.

BELL RINGING FOR FREEDOM

April 19 will be the 250th anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord and the beginning of the American Revolution. In remembrance, we will join with other downtown faith communities in ringing our steeple bell. The exact time is to be determined.

March UGB Meeting 3/17/25

Discussion Question: What are positive ways to respond to changes in the US due to current events?

Suggestions offered: Pace ourselves and don't try to respond to everything at once, attend community events, practice good self care, be as kind and open to others as possible, join organizations and/or financially support organizations trying to make a positive difference, Be sensitive to those around us who may be afraid of deportation or other negative possibilities especially the Karen and Nepali communities.

Outreach Team: See the Mission news.

Fellowship Team: The pulpit and music exchange with First Congregational Church of Essex went well. Mark Paulsen of Fellowship was commended on his friendly welcome to all as they entered the Narthex.

Music Team: All groups are preparing for Lenten music and the choir has started preparing pieces for Music Sunday in June.

Education Team: See Church School news.

Property Team: Much work was done around the building including repairs and upgrades to pews, ice removal, ceiling tiles, locks on the sign out front, removal of the front door post for funerals and installation of Private signs. The policy of gently moving campers off our property has continued. There are more needles and trash lately. Thanks to Pastor Karen, Frank, Dave for their vigilance and pickup. A handicapped parking sign in the parking lot has been snapped off. A new one will be needed. Questions were asked and answered about the elevator and boilers (furnace). Both systems are in good working order.

139 Bank Street: Our Building Manager (specifically Katie in the office) has shared the January and February numbers. We're right on in the income side, the expenses are below expected budget levels. 2) Matt's been delayed vacating the second floor. He expects to be out by the end of the coming week (3/21) and VT Cares will take over the lease on (or by) 4/1. VT Cares is onboard with this change. 3) Have established communication with VT Cares. 4) The first quarter payment to FBC budget is scheduled to happen on 3/15.

Historian/Archives: Great thanks go to Mary Swasey who has spent hours every week going through the Archives collection. The rest of the team meets on Wednesdays doing their best to identify pictures and what should be kept and what can be shredded. UVM archives will be offered whatever historical materials they deem important.

Greensteeple Task Force: The church has requested an application from the Rochester Genesee Region for a planning grant. The Task Force members are Deb Holonitch, Bill Mason, Cindy Little and Pastor Karen.

TPF: Tocher Mitchell has completed the paperwork necessary to enable him to fully serve as a Trustee of the Permanent Funds. The market is down since the most recent report of our assets.

Pastor's Report: Upcoming events include on Sunday March 23rd an opportunity for letter writing about political issues which concern individuals. The second hour book study How to End Christian Nationalism resumes on March 30th with chapters 4-6. Palm Sunday is April 13th and Easter-April 20.

Region update: We are now officially part of ABCRGR. An email was sent to the pastors of ABCVNH letting them know of our new alignment. Three pastors indicated their churches are considering a similar move.

Youth Mission Trip: Nine youth and leaders, Pastor Karen, Steve Lewis and Sarah Wright, will travel to Newton MA on Thursday April 24. They will stay at the First Baptist Church of Newton Center. The group will work at the Food Hub of the First Baptist Church of Jamaica Plain on Friday and Saturday. Worship will be shared with FBC Newton on Sunday and then the group will travel home. A cost estimate shows that its cost is about \$100.00 each person. The youth are preparing a presentation about the trip and will be encouraging financial support perhaps in the nature of sponsorships. Other fundraising opportunities may be in the future.

Staff: A new Office Administrator has been hired, Justice Elijah. Office hours will remain as usual until mid April when Justice's hours may need to change. Please welcome her.

New Business: Delegates to the Biennial Meeting of American Baptists USA were nominated and are Deb Holonitch, Sarah Wright and Pastor Karen. The motion passed. The Biennial will be held in Omaha Nebraska July 3-6.

Next meeting: April 21 at 7pm on Zoom.

Church School News

Sunday School continues classes with teachers Karen Pope, Carrie Perkins, Bev Nichols and Brenda Perkins. Substitutes Sarah Wright and Lois Lynch have filled in occasionally, as needed. Some classes are studying parables Jesus told and will be moving on to events leading up to Easter.

Please join us in thanking our volunteer teachers for their ministry to our FBC kids. The youth class is excitedly anticipating their Mission Trip to Boston April 24-27. The group is seeking fundraising opportunities including donations that could include sponsoring a youth for a donation of \$100.00. They will be accompanied by adult leaders Pastor Karen Mendes, Steve Lewis and Sarah Wright. The Youth Choir is practicing for an Easter anthem with leader Brenda Perkins and Anna Roy, accompanist.

The CE team is beginning research into the curriculum for next year. We already know that we will need to purchase new materials and recruit one or more new teachers for next year. If you would like to have the joy of supporting FBC kids by teaching Sunday School part time, please let Lois Lynch, Bev Nichols, Cindy Little or Pastor Karen know.

Looking toward the future, the CE team is meeting with the Outreach/Missions Team to develop a job description for a part time joint staff position. Both teams hope to present a job description to the Unified Governing Board in the near future. Hopefully, that will lead to hiring. Look for more information in the future.

Mission News

OGHS Emergency Relief Funds to Goma, DR Congo; More Help Urgently Needed.

International Ministries has sent an initial grant of \$25, 000 in One Great Hour of Sharing. We continue to hear regularly from Ann and Bill Clemmer who serve with IM partner HEAL Africa. The Clemmers continue to serve in GOMA on a daily basis but relocate nightly for their own safety. IM calls for ongoing urgent support for all those affected by violence. Donations can be made through First Baptist. Please designate your contributions OGHS-Goma Relief in the memo line of your check.

The International Ministries Report for 2024 is on the large square table in the back of the narthex.

THANK YOU!

We thank Sarah Wright and Beth Gamache for preparing Sunday evening dinner March 9 for ANEW Place. We are looking for a volunteer for June 1. Please contact Betty Capponi or speak to Joan Taylor or Beth Gamache.

LOCAL MISSIONS: The annual COTS walk is May 4. It is a 3.6-mile route through Burlington. Registration is at 1pm at Battery Park. Their theme this year is "Building a Better Future". If you are interested in forming a walking team from First Baptist or contributing, you can contact COTS/register online at cotsonline.org or contact them at 802-864-7402.

The JUMP online auction is April 27-May 9. This is an excellent way to support the increased needs of people in Burlington. We received updates from Matt Van Wagner that auction item donations are welcome. No item too small, too big is accepted. Contact Matt Van Wagner, director at 603-557-7504.

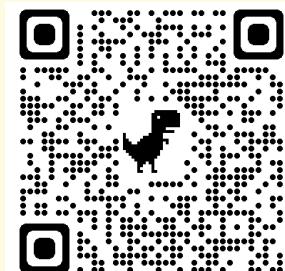
On March 21st a Joint CE/Mission Position Meeting was held at church. With members of CE, we completed a first draft of a Job Description. Our next meeting is Wednesday April 2, 10:30 am.

THE SHARE: We at First Baptist would like to thank all of our loyal soup makers: Cindy and Dave Little, Lois D'Archangelo and Pat Reasoner, Deb Holonitch, Jamie Burke and Jill Soter, Ginger Calder and Beth Gamache. Lois and Beth continue to help to serve the homeless and those with food insecurity at FUMC on Sunday evenings. The Share committee Lois and Beth continue to seek additional volunteers to serve from 4-5:30 on Sundays and for soup makers. First Baptist missions will reimburse soup makers for their expenses if you bring receipts to Joan Taylor, Lois or Beth.

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.

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.

Lenten Daily Readings 2025

We will journey with Jesus through the Gospel of Luke. We can share our reflections on our church Facebook page, First Baptist Church, Burlington, VT.

Wed 3/5 - Ash Wednesday	Sun 3/30 – 4th Sunday of Lent
Thurs 3/6 - Luke 1:1 - 1:38	Mon 3/31 - Luke 12:35 - 12:59
Fri 3/7 - Luke 1:39 - 1:80	Tues 4/1 - Luke 13:1 - 13:21
Sat 3/8 - Luke 2:1 - 2:40	Wed 4/2 - Luke 13:22 - 14:14
Sun 3/9 - 1st Sunday of Lent	Thurs 4/3 - Luke 14:15 - 14:35
Mon 3/10 - Luke 2:41 - 2:52	Fri 4/4 - Luke 15:1 - 15:32
Tues 3/11 - Luke 3:1 - 3:20	Sat 4/5 - Luke 16:1 - 16:18
Wed 3/12 - Luke 3:21 - 4:13	Sun 4/6 – 5th Sunday of Lent
Thurs 3/13 - Luke 4:14 - 4:37	Mon 4/7 - Luke 16:19 - 16:31
Fri 3/14 - Luke 4:38 - 4:44	Tues 4/8 - Luke 17:1 - 17:37
Sat 3/15 - Luke 5:1 - 5:39	Wed 4/9 - Luke 18:1 - 18:17
Sun 3/16 – 2nd Sunday of Lent	Thurs 4/10 - Luke 18:18 - 18:43
Mon 3/17 - Luke 6:1 - 6:26	Fri 4/11- Luke 19:1 - 19:27
Tues 3/18 - Luke 6:27 - 6:49	Sat 4/12 - Luke 19:28 - 19:48
Wed 3/19 - Luke 7:1 - 7:35	Sun 4/13 – Palm Sunday
Thurs 3/20 - Luke 7:36 - 7:50	Mon 4/14 - Luke 20:1 - 20:19
Fri 3/21 - Luke 8:1 - 8:25	Tues 4/15 - Luke 20:20 - 21:4
Sat 3/22 - Luke 8:26 - 8:56	Wed 4/16 - Luke 21:5 - 21:38
Sun 3/23 – 3rd Sunday of Lent	Thurs 4/17 - Luke 22:1 - 23:25
Mon 3/24 - Luke 9:1 - 9:56	Fri 4/18 - Luke 23:26 - 23:56
Tues 3/25 - Luke 9:57 - 10:24	Sat 4/19 – No reading
Wed 3/26 - Luke 10:25 - 10:42	Sun 4/20 – Easter, Luke 24:1 - 24:35
Thurs 3/27 - Luke 11:1 - 11:28	Mon 4/21 - Luke 24:36- 24:53
Fri 3/28 - Luke 11:29 - 11:54	
Sat 3/29 - Luke 12:1 - 12:34	

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 HOURS

Monday:	9 AM - 1 PM
Tuesday:	9 AM - 3 PM
Wednesday:	9 AM - 1 PM
Thursday:	9 AM - 3 PM
Friday:	9 AM - 1 PM

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.](https://www.facebook.com/FirstBaptistChurchBurlingtonVT)

PAST WORSHIP SERVICES...

are available on our website and our YouTube Channel.

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

JUSTICE FUN NOTE:

We'd love to hear from you—send me an email at welcome@fbcburlingtonvt.com and let me know your favorite song to play on a beautiful Vermont day and why. I can't wait to hear your picks!