

GREEN STEEPLE MESSENGER
First Baptist Church
81 Saint Paul Street Ste. 1
Burlington, VT. 05401

VOLUME NO. 2

February 1, 2025

GREEN STEEPLE, GRATEFUL PEOPLE, GROWING IN FAITH, PROCLAIMING GOD'S LOVE

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

This past Sunday was our Annual Meeting and I was gratified by the willingness to look ahead with hope, wisdom, and discernment. 2025 will be an interesting year as we navigate rapid changes in society while holding true to our commitments, history, and calling. The world around us seems caught in fear and determined to divide us. Our witness as an inclusive, welcoming Baptist Church has never been more important.

New plans for 2025 include moving into our new relationship with ABC Rochester/Genesee. This will provide new opportunities for ministry and fellowship. In April, our Youth will take a Mission Trip to Boston to volunteer with an urban food program. This is our first Youth Mission Trip in more than a decade! It will be fun for the whole congregation to support the trip and to learn from the Youth when they return. This Spring we will also start the process of engaging a consultant who will help us discern our resources and call so that we can make sustainable plans for the future.

There is a lot to do as we continue and strengthen our existing ministries while also adding these new initiatives. This newsletter contains many opportunities for service, learning, and fellowship. In all that we do, we are empowered and sustained by the love of God, the grace of Christ, and the boldness of the Holy Spirit. It is a joy and a blessing to be in ministry with you.

Yours, in Christ,
~ Karen
Rev. Karen A. Mendes
Pastor

First Baptist Church Staff

Rev. Karen A. Mendes Pastor
Pastor Thee Say Karen Baptist Pastor
..... Interim CE Director
Adam Chamberlain Church Administrator
Evan Allen Organist
Anna Roy Chancel Choir Director
Brenda Perkins Youth Choir Director
The Karen Baptist Community Team Sexton
Daz Diadem Tech Support

Officers of First Baptist

Cindy Little Moderator
Mark Paulsen Assistant Moderator
..... Clerk
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

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE
FOR MARCH
IS FEBRUARY 15th**

GIFT OF TIME
VISITATION
AND
Caring

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!

**CHECK OUT OUR
UPDATED WEBSITE
fbc Burlingonvt.com**

Many thanks to Carrie Perkins and Elena Littlebug.

Sunday Morning Worship Service 10:00

Office Phone: (802) 864-6515
Conference/Kitchen Phone:
(802) 864-4721
Office Hours: M, W, F (9-1) T, Th (9-3)
Email address:
welcome@fbc Burlingonvt.com

Web Site Address:

www.fbc Burlingonvt.com

Visit us on Facebook

First Baptist Church, Burlington, Vt.



Feb. 01- Sacouya Jones
Feb. 02- Hto Lwee Wah
Feb. 04- Annie Field
Feb. 05- Erin Allard
Feb. 07- Adam Chamberlain
Feb. 08- Joshua Roy
 Peg Randall
Feb. 09- Mark Paulsen
 Chris Thompson
Feb. 12- Betty Button
Feb. 13- Stephanie Bergeron
Feb. 16- Peter Burroughs
Feb. 18- Larson Couture
 Virginia Girvan
Feb. 19- Mae Hanbridge
Feb. 21- Peggy Powell
Feb. 24- Debbie Landry
 Anne Marie Tsady
Feb. 26- Regan Atkins

Feb. 17- Mike & Lois Lynch 46yrs.

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

Feb 2 - Communion
 Luke 4:21-30
 Unrighteous Indignation

Feb 9 - Luke 5:1-11
 Overwhelmed

Feb 16 - Luke 6:17-26
 Blessed Be

Feb 23 - Pulpit Exchange
 Luke 6:27-38
 A Good Measure

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FELLOWSHIP AND LEARNING

**There is more to Church than
Sunday mornings!**

WINTER BOOK GROUP - We will read *The Divine Dance; The Trinity and Your Transformation* by Richard Rohr. We meet on Tuesdays at 7pm on Zoom. Books can be purchased from your favorite bookseller or we can order some as needed. The Zoom link is

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86392397962?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86392397962?pwd=ZEdnWXA5Y0NNNGFxK3d1b0IPd0JBdz09)
[pwd=ZEdnWXA5Y0NNNGFxK3d1b0IPd0JBdz09](#) Meeting ID: 863 9239 7962 Passcode: 972707

FAMILY GAME NIGHT - Save the date for our Intergenerational Dinner and Game night on Friday, February 28th. We will start with pizza followed by board/card type games for all ages. Bring your favorite game and be ready to learn some new ones!

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?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84430309219?pwd=MFlvR2Rpem9qYi8vSVRoMndvMk1Sdz09)
[pwd=MFlvR2Rpem9qYi8vSVRoMndvMk1Sdz09](#) 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?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89855564406?pwd=R2FtbC9tRnoyU1R1cXJTRmRsY1VIdz09)
[pwd=R2FtbC9tRnoyU1R1cXJTRmRsY1VIdz09](#) Meeting ID: 898 5556 4406
Passcode: 993539
To Dial in +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

PULPIT EXCHANGE ON FEBRUARY 23

Back by popular demand, Rev. Mark A. Mendes will lead worship here on February 23, while Rev. Karen A. Mendes will preach at First Congregational Church of Essex Jct. Evan Allen and Bethany Blake, our two organists, will make the exchange as well.

LENTEN BOOK STUDY

We will read *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 will be available from the church office for \$22. Contact Rev.

Mendes for more information and to RSVP.

STAFF THANK YOU NOTE

Dear FBC Friends,

My heartfelt thanks for your generous and thoughtful Christmas gift. It is both a joy and a blessing to be part of this church family!

Blessings,
Marie

JANUARY UGB MEETING 1/13/25

We began the meeting by finalizing plans for the Annual Meeting. The board took a very close look at the proposed budget, cutting where we felt we could. This took quite a bit of time but we feel it is ready for the annual meeting. We were reminded that the ABCRGR Delegate Meeting is set for February 2nd at 4:00pm at which we will be welcomed into the region.

COMMITTEE/TEAM REPORTS:

1. Mission Outreach Team: See Mission News below.
2. Fellowship Team: Sweatshirts for new members have arrived and we will make sure they are distributed. Thanks was given to Saw Eh Wah for the help with changing the banners.
3. Education Team: A very successful Christmas pageant took place on 12/22/24. We thank Charlie Roy for writing it, Carrie Perkins for directing it and Brenda Perkins for assisting Carrie and leading the youth choir, as well as adult helpers who led the cast. On Epiphany Sunday, there was an Epiphany journey activity for students and teachers. Thank you to Bev Nichols for baking the King's Cake for all to enjoy. The students now return to their Bible story based curriculum. The team wants to discuss the possibility of a 10 hour week CE Director position. Some discussion has occurred to

combine this with a Mission Outreach position.

4. Property Team: The back outside railing is in disrepair. Contact has been made with someone to take a look at it. As for the furnace, boiler #1 has a motor problem which has been ordered. Boiler #2 keeps shutting itself down with an FSG (Flame Safety Guard) alarm. We believe it is something simple but will not work on it until #1 is working again. In #2, the gas supply burner is a problem. The ladies restroom stall doors have been fixed and a new soap dispenser has been installed. 2 warning strips on the north stairs have been replaced and 2 pew racks fixed.

5. 139 Bank Street - no report.

6. Fundraising Team: There was discussion about the youth group's trip to Boston and their fundraising efforts. They will meet in early February to discuss this. The trip is April 24-27.

7. Financial Secretary Report: All were in favor of approval.

8. Financial Treasurer Report: We ended the year in good shape with approximately \$5,000 remaining in local. All were in favor of approval.

9. TPF: The portfolio balance as of Dec. 31, 2024 was \$2,193,986.90. More details are available in the Annual Report.

10. **PASTOR'S REPORT:**
Advent/Christmas reflections - All the services were lovely. There was low attendance at the Advent workshop. Better communication with Church School would have helped. The Longest Night also had low attendance but it was very powerful and hopefully helpful. The Pageant was great and Christmas Sunday had wonderful energy. The Early Christmas Eve service was accompanied by Law Doh on the guitar, Frank Swasey sang a solo and the Karen choir sang two songs. The Candlelight service was lovely with music from the Chancel Choir, Karen Choir, and Evan on the organ.

Attendance at both services was good. Bell Sunday was a late addition to the programming but was fun and meaningful with special music from the Sacred Harp Singers and Don Spawn. Epiphany Sunday was delightful with special music from Bill Mason, Peter Burroughs, and Carlos Rodriguez in addition to the Chancel Choir. Caroling happened on Jan. 5. Next year we will need to find a better day and more people to do this. Thank you to everyone who participated in all these special events.

Region update – This Spring we will have the opportunity to apply for a consultant and grant through an RGR program called Thriving in a 21st Century Church Post-Pandemic World.

<https://www.abcrgr.org/thriving> This would be very helpful in discerning a sustainable future.

ADJOURNMENT: Our next meeting is 2/17/25, 7pm on Zoom. Respectfully Submitted,
Cindy Little, Church Clerk

CHURCH SCHOOL NEWS

YOUTH MISSION TRIP TO BOSTON

On April 24-27 our Youth (with some adults!) will travel to Boston to serve at the First Baptist Church of Jamaica Plain's Food Justice Program. We will be boxing up groceries and helping with a community meal. We will sleep at the First Baptist Church of Newton (where Rev. Mendes worked from 1996-2001). We will also have an opportunity to go into downtown Boston and learn about the history and the needs of the city. If you would like to participate, please contact Rev. Mendes.

MISSION NEWS

OGHS FOR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WILDFIRE DISASTER

We at First Baptist have an opportunity to help the people affected by the disastrous California wildfires. “Churches far beyond the evacuation zones have opened their doors to shelter

those fleeing the flames, providing critical care and comfort.”

Our contributions will be sent to American Baptist Home Mission Societies in King of Prussia, PA. The World Relief Committee of the Board of General Ministries of ABC USA administers and facilitates AB emergency relief, working closely with leaders in Southern California to ensure that donations are distributed where they are most needed.

To give, make checks out to First Baptist Church with OGHS Southern California Wildfires in the memo or put your offering in church envelope in pew and check off OGHS designating for California Wildfires. So far, members and friends at First Baptist have contributed \$740 toward this cause.

For more information, go to ABCHMS OGHS offering benefits.

THE SHARE

We at First Baptist would like to thank all of our loyal soup makers: Dave and Cindy Little, Lois D.

and Pat Reasoner, Jamie Burke and her mom, Jill Soter, Beth Gamache. Karen Pope for cookies and Lois D. and Beth for helping to serve the homeless at FUMC most every Sunday evening. The Share committee (Lois D. and Beth Gamache) are in need of two more people to help coordinate and feed the homeless on Sunday evenings from 4 – 5:30. A commitment of once a month is recommended. There is also a need for more soup makers. First Baptist missions will reimburse soup makers for their expenses if you bring receipts for food purchases.

COATS FOR OUR CHURCH YARD VISITORS

Eighteen coats were contributed in December to benefit our church yard visitors, to be given out as needed. Joe and Jamie Burke will take fifteen of the coats to a thrift store run by HOPE (Helping Other People Everyday) in Lyndonville, Vermont.

Check out the mission bulletin board. First Baptist received the Friends of Burma Annual Report for 2024.

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.

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.

PAST WORSHIP SERVICES...

are available on our website and our YouTube Channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0vIptkSAyIRbAilfDbGFIw>

THE CHURCH OFFICE HOURS FOR FEBRUARY ARE -

M/W/F 9-1 T/TH 9-3
Monday, February 17th, the office will be closed in observance of Presidents Day.

CHURCH EMAIL ADDRESSES

The church office (Adam Chamberlain)- 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