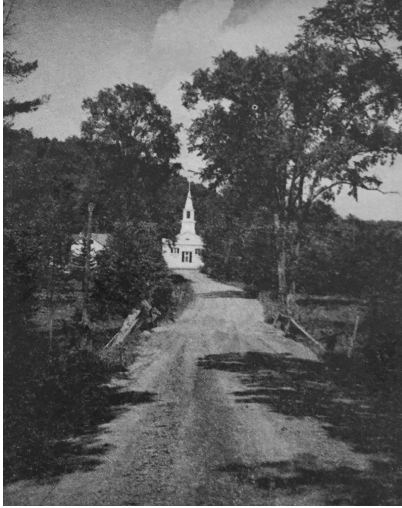


Newsletter - Summer 2018



West Fairlee Center Congregational Church

PO Box 431
Fairlee, VT 05045

www.wfcenterchurch.org

church.wfc@gmail.com

Annual Meeting

The membership held its Annual Meeting on June 13, 2018 at 6:00 in the Church.

A revised Constitution was reviewed and approved. This new version streamlines the previous one approved in 2008. Both the new Constitution and a copy of 1854 Constitution are on the website.

The following were elected the Board of Directors:

Larry Russ, Moderator

Cleo Kearns, Assistant Moderator

Katherine Adams, Clerk

Jon Sanborn, Treasurer

JoAnn Sanborn, Outreach Coordinator

August 12, 2018

Ice Cream Social – 3:30-4:30

Blessing of the Animals – 4:00

This will be the third year that the Church and the Community Club have joined together for an old fashion Ice Cream Social and the Church's Blessing of the Animals. The Blessing of the Animals has been an annual summer tradition since 2002. The Club member's special ice cream sundaes and the affection folks have for their pets made last year made for a very well attended. The Valley News did a wonderful article. Violetta Faulkner provided some lovely photos for the website that captured the spirit of the moment.

August 19, 2018

Summer Concert – 4:00

Serenata: Damaris Tyler, Cat Spalding, and Peggy Burden

Serenata is a trio of singers who also play soprano, alto, and tenor recorders, harp, and piano. The endless different combinations of our various instruments provide a variety of sounds: light classical tunes, mellow folksongs, and light-hearted popular favorites. Serenata provides the music for both the Blessing of the Animals and the Service of Gratitude.

November 25, 2018

Service of Gratitude – 3:30-5:00

Cleo Kearns

The annual service of prayer and music led by members of the many religious faiths and spiritual perspectives represented in our area has become a unique tradition through Cleo's vision. Last year, the service was followed by a potluck and fire ceremony next door which was well received.

One person said that it felt like a congregation and another that it showed the most important lesson of being a Christian, inclusiveness of all.

Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr: “**plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose**” was a favorite quote of Henry Graves. The translation, “The more things change, the more they remain the same” rings so true when it come to the West Fairlee Center community. Henry, always the French teacher, was a very active Friend of the Church.

Partly because of its position and the beauty of its simple white facade, which seems to look southward down the road through the Middlebrook Valley, the Church has been a point of interest and a refuge not only for those who live here but for those who walk, ride and drive through this valley. The positioning of the Church was not without heated debate.

Some wanted the Church on the east side of the road leading through the valley and some where it now stands, on the west side. Those for the east were asked to move to the east side of the meeting house and those for the west to the west. Six moved their seats easterly and twelve to the westward. As a result, in 1855 the new Church rose on its current site.

So today the view of the church is the same as it was when travel was much slower. The cover photo was taken in the 1950s when the road was dirt and the bridge wooden.

Except for a few brief periods of time, the size of congregation has been small since founded in 1809 by six people. However, friends and neighbors have been extraordinary in their generosity in preserving this picturesque New England Church building throughout the years.

There have been three major undertakings to preserve this building with the most recent finished in 2013 under the stewardship of Deecie Denison. In 1974, Rick Eaton spearheaded the replacement of the steeple. In the late 1940s, the floor was rotting and the community came together to raise the funds to have the floor repaired.

The bottom line is that these projects could not have been done without the help of the community.

Today, a huge thanks goes out to:

- Don Phoenix who has kept the grounds mowed for many years.
- The Community Club for providing the use of the clubhouse and the many willing hands that have always been there to help for the past 100 years.
- The many people who have given small and large donations over the years. They have all counted in “keeping the lights lit.”
- And lastly with deep gratitude those who have given their time and skills over the years.

At the Annual Meeting, it was reported that the wood lot has been sold and a preservation trust has been established within the stipulations of the original gift. The long term goal is to add to this trust and reach a level where the throw off will be used for general maintenance and yearly operating costs. Understanding that the building is now over 160 years old and has undergone three major restorations, it is expected that at some point in time that the principal will be needed for preservation.

Fun Stuff

Below is a picture of Summer Sunday School. How many can be identified? Many more photos are posted on the website and would love to have the people in these photos identified. If you can help or want to post some photos, send an email to church.wfc@gmail.com

