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Pastor's Corner

Rev. Jo Shelnut, Interim Pastor

Now Is The Time!

Two months have flown by since I began as your Interim in Tunbridge. It has been a busy time, getting to know the church and the town in more detail and putting more faces and names together.

Lent and Easter came pretty early this year, but we were able to meet on top of Strafford Road on Easter Sunday morning without standing in either snow or mud. It was joyous to share the two Easter services with such enthusiastic worshippers. A mighty thanks to the many helping hands that made our celebrations possible; singers and players, dramatic readers and skit presenters, furniture movers and decorators, flower arrangers and breakfast makers, bulletin producers, ushers and greeters, communion set up and servers. Easter was a wonderful way to begin our time together and the hard work and joyful service were greatly appreciated.

Now is the time when we begin the Search and Call process in earnest. Step one is accomplished. [#1 Call an Interim Minister to be our Temporary Shepherd and to help guide us thru the process.] Now we move on to step two, which is of paramount importance — and very exciting, too.

#2 Form the Search Committee

For several months, church members and friends have been asked to suggest

names of potential members of the Pastor Search Committee. People were encouraged to suggest names of other people they feel would be great on the committee, or to put their own name forward. We are going thru this list of folks, talking with them to gauge their interest in serving and our goal is to have a Search Committee in place by the middle of May. So, if you have a person you wanted to add to the list for consideration, ***now is the time***. Tell me, or a member of Parish Council, or email the AA and let us have that name!

Choosing the right Search Committee is a vital step in the Search/Call process, and complicated. Let me describe some of the considerations that go into the formation of this team of people.

Numbers: The number of people of the team needs to be 'not too few, not too many' but (just like Goldilocks) just right. Ideally it should be 5 or 7 people. Enough to share the work, not so many that it's impossible to get together, or have time to share information and opinions.

Commitment: People chosen for this service will need to have a strong sense of commitment. It requires time, energy, and creativity. It also requires a deep respect for the other team members and a deep love for The Tunbridge Church.

Balance: The Search Committee should represent the congregation demographically. In other words, to reflect the congregation with a balance of women and men, a range of ages, a range of faith views and both long-time members and newer-comers.

Characteristics: In addition to the perfect blend of all of the above, there are a few vital characteristics that are important as well. First is **confidentiality**. The committee's work is divided between very public and very private. The private information must remain confidential. It can't be shared with buddies or bosses or even family. And because this group will be talking about many issues facing the church — hopes, expectations, strengths, weaknesses — they will need to be **respectful listeners**. The skills of having the last word, the loudest voice or always getting one's way...those skills are not helpful on a Search Committee. Telling the truth in love - that one is.

So, now is the time for the Parish Council to choose its Search Committee. We will be speaking with the people who have volunteered to be considered — and a few who have been 'volunteered' by others in the church. We will vote on the membership at our next meeting and present the committee to the church during worship soon after.

Then we'll be onto Step #3 where it will be the time for every friend and member of The Tunbridge Church to participate with the Search Committee to discern what hopes and aspirations they have for The Tunbridge Church and its future ministry.

Stay tuned.....and may God bless us on this journey,

Pastor Jo

Parish Council

Kay Jorgensen

After a busy fall and winter with almost four months of pulpit supply ministers, the calling of the Rev. Jo Shelnutt as Interim Pastor, the Anything Apple and Just Desserts painting fundraisers, the

Annual Meeting and Easter, church life seems to have quieted down.

But don't be deceived — behind the scenes the planning is beginning for a very important church undertaking. You will be hearing much more as we begin the process of self-examination that will lead to the creation of a Tunbridge Church profile. Everyone will be asked to be involved. The final step will be looking for a permanent pastor.

At its May 15 meeting the Parish Council will select the Search Committee members from volunteers and recruits who expressed interest and willingness to take on such an important job. The council will look for diversity in such things as age, sex and length of membership.

Members of this small committee will be the only ones to read pastor applicants' resumes, hear their services and interview them. Church members will vote on the chosen candidate, so if you would like to have a role in the church's future and are not yet a member, you can send or give the Parish Council a note requesting membership through any member.

Church members also choose Parish Council members and approve bylaws. A Special Meeting for bylaws will be held in a few months.

May/June Events

Regular Events:

Sunday Services & Sunday School:
10 a.m., Tunbridge Village Church

Making Change: Wednesdays,
Parish House, 5:30 p.m.

Youth Choir: Rehearsals Thursdays, 6:15 p.m.

Adult Choir: Rehearsals Thursdays, 7:15 p.m.

Community Food Shelf: Fridays, Parish House, 4-6 p.m.

Special May-June Events:

May 8 – Youth Sunday

May 15 – Parish Council meeting

June 5 – Youth/Children's Day service and celebration to conclude the Sunday School season. A potluck picnic will follow the service.

News and Notes

The Tunbridge Church Community Food Shelf is partnering with Tunbridge Central School to fill backpacks with a couple of meals for weekends when the Hot Lunch Program is not available to students. The food costs about \$10 per backpack per week. Right now six backpacks are being sent home. If you would like to help, please send a donation noted for the backpack program to Food Shelf Treasurer Euclid Farnham, 24 The Crossroad, Tunbridge, VT 05077, or put an envelope for Euclid in the offering plate. Thank you.

Spring brings the resumption of the popular Super Seniors Luncheons for community residents. This year's first lunch was April 30. The Outreach Committee does all the work of invitations, arranging rides, setup, food preparation and cleanup. When the committee says it welcomes help for the June lunch, please consider offering to provide a salad, bread, main or side dish or dessert. Thanks.

The church's youth singers have been out and about singing in public. Isabella Amodeo, Margot Frost, Abby Gross,

Olivia Swayze, Rose Terami and Hannah Young provided opening devotions at the State House on April 28. They sang for almost 4 minutes with Judie Lewis accompanying them and Janet Zug directing. On May 1 Isabella Amodeo and Margot Frost participated in the Second Annual Children's Choir Festival. The all-day event for young singers from area churches culminated in an evening concert at Norwich Congregational Church. Amy Frost coordinated for the Tunbridge choristers.

Olivia Swayze sang the solo in "My Lord, What a Morning" at the April 24 Randolph Singers concert. Tunbridge Church singers Bunchie Angell, Rob Howe, Dawna Neron and Sue Rogers were in the chorus.

Young people will plan and lead the annual Youth Sunday service on May 8, Mother's Day. The Youth/Children's Day service on June 5 will be followed by a potluck picnic on the Parish House lawn.

Church members had roles in the Tunbridge Civic Club's 64th Annual Show. Club president Elaine Howe was the music director. Pianist Judie Lewis accompanied the chorus and several performers. She and Janet Zug wowed the crowd with their four-handed "Opus I Redone." Marybeth Lang sang her compositions "I'm A Little Rooster" and "Oh Patsy Cline." Choir member Sue Rogers joined Elaine, Janet, Judie and Marybeth in the chorus.

The village church front door was recently repaired. George White fixed the style for a hinge and the lower rail, painted the new wood portions and then rehung and fitted the door. He will be building a picture frame casing approximately 15 feet by 15 feet on the sanctuary back wall to dress up that large space and highlight church seasons with hangings.

Alexis Vincelette, RN, appreciated church members' contributions of hygiene and other products for her March medical mission trip to Honduras. Her thank-you letter and photos from the mission are displayed on the church vestibule bulletin board.

It's not too early to think of donating Christmas items and better wares to the church's tables at the Community Yard Sale to be held July 9 on the Parish House lawn. Rental space will be available from Nancy Howe for anyone who wants to sell crafts and stuff. Watch for more news about the yard sale.

Thanks

Our Holy Week and Easter season observances were spiritual, musical and colorful.

Thanks to Interim Pastor Jo Shelnutt, Adult and Youth Choir members, Music Director Judie Lewis and Youth Choir Director Janet Zug for the season's special music. Josh and Isabella Amodeo, Olivia Swayze, Priscilla and Euclid Farnham, Margot Frost, Elaine Howe and Ben Wolfe provided readings and dramatizations.

The solemn Good Friday service included special music, communion and the Tenebrae Service before people quietly left the darkened sanctuary. Some 40 people attended the Easter Sunrise Service on a frosty morning and more than 40 enjoyed the breakfast at Town Hall.

Almost 100 adults and children celebrated Easter at the 10 a.m. service. Highlights included the Youth Choir's singing of Marybeth Lang's "I Love You, Jesus," which Marybeth directed; music by the 15-voice adult choir; and the front of the sanctuary decorated with pots of lilies, tulips and colorful spring flowers. Thanks to Judie Lewis

for handling the flowers and the 20 people and families who donated plants in memory of loved ones.

The breakfast crew worked Saturday and Sunday to set up, cook and clean up. We appreciate the help of Kevin Barnaby, who got the stove ready, people who gave some of the food items and cash donations, and workers Sue Barnaby, Kate Caldwell, Nancy Chapman, Laura Gillen, Rob Howe, Kay Jorgensen, Larry Rasmussen, Margaret Rogers and Jean Wolfe.

Christian Education

Ben Wolfe

Sunday School is coming to a wonderful conclusion this year with the welcome support of our newest teacher, Ashley Amodeo Armstrong. The finale is our celebration of Youth/Children's Day on June 5 with a potluck picnic for all ages following the service.

Looking forward we are especially seeking new ways the youth can be served and involved in the life of the church as they grow in their faith and their understanding of our identity within the Church, the very Body of Christ.

Christian Ed has most recently been focused on activities, study and reflection in Sunday School, but we believe there are wonderful opportunities for all ages. Our activities for enrichment and reflection as God's people can be what we want it to become.

As the search for a new pastor gets under way, we will be partnering with the Pastor Search Committee to help hear **you** (members of our congregation) talk about what you value and hope for in terms of ideas, groups and activities in Christian Education in the coming months and years.

New Church Member

The Parish Council is pleased to welcome Connie Button as a member of The Tunbridge Church. Anyone wishing to join The Tunbridge Church, or its Baptist, Methodist or United Church of Christ components, is invited to send the Parish Council a brief letter of interest.



Margot Frost and Rose Terami were among the church children and youths who led the procession of palms at the opening of the Palm Sunday service.



Sunday School students express their praise with "splashes of joy" for God's love to us.

Happy Birthday

May

09 - Jed Putney
10 - Lyn Baldwin
13 - Kathi Terami
17 - Olivia Swayze
19 - Lorelai Putney
19 - Sue Barnaby
21 - Sadie Kennedy
22 - Nancy Chapman
24 - Isabella Amodeo

June

12 - Janet Zug

Happy Anniversary

May

08 - Warren & Lyn Baldwin
26 - Bob & Margaret Rogers

June

12 - Ernest & Sadie Kennedy
21 - Randy & Nancy Chapman

Church Positions

Parish Council

Kay Jorgensen, President
Dawna Neron, Vice President
Sue Barnaby, Secretary
Townsend Swayze, Treasurer
Nancy Chapman
Rob Howe
Jim Sweeney
Judy Tucker
Ben Wolfe

Staff

Rev. Jo Shelnutt, Interim Pastor
Judie Lewis, Director of Music
Janet Zug, Youth Choir Director
Hoyt Bingham, Administrative Asst.
Euclid Farnham, Sexton
Rev. David Wolfe, Pastor Emeritus
Rev. Gordon Mitchinson, Parish Assoc.

Elsie Farnham, Recording Treasurer