



Vol. 9 Issue 5 • September-October 2018

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Parish Council

Kay Jorgensen

September brings our return to Tunbridge Village for Sunday worship services. During the summer, we celebrated the Methodist Church building's 185th anniversary and continued the tradition of an outdoor service on the first Sunday in August. Now we are getting ready for another tradition – the 50th annual Festival of Worship Fair Service on Sept. 16. Details about the participants and program follow this column.

On Oct. 6 our fourth annual Anything Apple Harvest Fest will be held from 11-2 at the Tunbridge Town Hall and Parish House lawn. It will feature soup and sandwiches, apple foods for eat-in and take-out, silent auction of goods and services and apple pie judging.

Community groups and farm, crafts and exhibitor participants are invited to be on the lawn and upstairs (as space allows). We welcome promotional help as well as donations of items for auction baskets and food sales and cleanup help. Proceeds will go to the capital fund for Parish House improvements.

No 5K Harvest Fun Run/Walk will be held this year. The Outreach Committee will discuss some new ideas for a Community Food Shelf fundraiser. Suggestions are welcomed by Nancy Chapman and Sue Barnaby.

Two repair projects will be undertaken this fall. Rob Howe and the buildings and grounds committee recommended the work to which Parish Council agreed. Water has damaged the

Congregational Church chimney. Bricks at the top and bottom are loose and mortar falls down the chimney into the cleanout box. A steel chimney liner will be installed and loose bricks will be repointed.

The Parish House front doorway will be rebuilt. The door swells and is difficult to open during wet and humid summer weather. In the winter, cold air comes in. The work will include insulating the front wall. The new doorway will replicate the circa 1830 original, which was identical to that on the brick house at the Tunbridge Library.

This year is The Tunbridge Church's 40th anniversary. While the Congregational and Methodist churches have historical records and display materials, many Baptist items were lost in a January 1995 fire. Nancy Howe is collecting recollections, photos and other materials that can be copied and used for display. She would appreciate information about where was the Baptist parsonage was and when the Grange hall burned.

The Fair Service

The 50th annual Festival of Worship Fair Service, an informal musical service held on the Sunday of the Tunbridge World's Fair, Sept. 16, will begin at 9:30 a.m. This year's theme is "Singing for the Love of God."

Church music director Judie Lewis chose music that is accessible and fun for singers of all levels. She says there will be songs from past services including the one responsible for

breaking the church floor: "We Are Singing for the Lord is Light."

"Folks were clapping and stomping, happily moving with the song's rhythm, when suddenly the floor dropped," she says. It was later discovered that a shim had slipped out from one of the basement posts and the floor fell only about a quarter of an inch, "but it felt like it dropped a foot."

Soloists for the service are: Janet Zug, "Come, People of the Risen King"; Scott Terami and Rose Terami, "O God Forgive Us"; Bob Crino, "Take My Life (Holiness)"; Olivia Swayze, "We Are Singing for the Lord Is My Light"; Dawna Neron, "Shine, Jesus, Shine"; Isabella Amodeo, "Sanctuary"; Bruce Post, "Go, Light Your World (Candle Song)"; and Eve Ermer, soloist, and Nan Frost, flute, "Blessing."

Debbie Thomas on the accordion, Connie Button singing "Take Your Shoes Off, Moses" and The Joyful Hearts will provide special music.

Playing in the band will be Norm Labrecque, acoustic guitar; Corey Unger, electric guitar; David Indenbaum, bass; Scott Paulson, drums; and Dale Post, keyboard.

News and Notes

The church made a donation in memory of longtime Parish House neighbor and Community Food Shelf volunteer Susan Zeifinger who died April 25. Royalton Memorial Library trustees sent thanks for our contribution.

The annual July Community Yard Sale raised \$433 for the capital fund for Parish House improvements. Thanks to all who donated items for the church tables, were vendors on the lawn and who bought things. Setup, cleanup and sale workers were Elaine Howe, Nancy

Howe, John Holder, Kay Jorgensen, Jacque Norris, Sherri Ware and Portia and Barry Wampler. Proceeds went to

The Outreach Committee hosted a well-attended Super Senior Luncheon in August. Eight of the guests were over age 90. Three varieties of sandwiches, salads, mixed fruit, ice cream and cookies were served. The year's last lunch will be Oct. 27. We appreciate the food donors and workers who set up, decorate the tables, serve and clean up.

Town Clerk Betsy Sponable reports that many people who went to her office this summer admired our garden between the church and town offices. The flower bed in front of the Parish House looked beautiful thanks to Lenora Kimball's weeding, digging, planting and transplanting.

If you've wondered how well Easter lilies would grow outside, two that were planted a few days after Easter are flowering near the back door of the Parish House.

Habitat for Humanity

In August the church became a lunch provider for volunteers building the new Upper Valley Habitat for Humanity house just over the South Royalton line in Sharon, off Howe Hill Road. The Valley News has run a couple of stories about the project. One of them can be found on the Parish House bulletin board.

Sue Barnaby, Carley Howe, Kay Jorgensen, Jacque Norris, Anne Peters and Judy Tucker provided food and/or sandwich-making talents for the lunch which included a big fresh fruit platter, cookies, chips and iced tea. We will make lunch again on Friday, Sept. 21. Contact Kay if you would like to help.

Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Andrew Grimson, who was on site, sent the following note:

"Thank you very much for the fabulous lunch yesterday. Amazingly, our crew consumed the bulk of it in a very short time. We must have worked them pretty hard in the morning. The fruit platter was very popular, and the chicken salad sandwiches were excellent.

"We really appreciate The Tunbridge Church putting together the lunch and you taking the time to bring it out to the worksite. Please pass along our thanks to everyone involved."

September/October Calendar

Regular Events:

Sunday Worship: 10 a.m.
Congregational Church, Tunbridge Village

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

Community Food Shelf: Fridays,
Parish House, 4-6 p.m. *Closed Sept. 14*

Al-Anon, Parish House, Sundays, 5 p.m.

AA: Sundays, Parish House, 7 p.m.

Special Events:

Sept. 16, Festival of Worship Fair
Service, 9:30 a.m., Village church

Sept. 27, Outreach Committee, 4:30

Sept. 30, Parish Council, after church

Oct. 6, Anything Apple Harvest Fest, 11-2,
Tunbridge Town Hall and Parish House lawn.

Oct 27, Super Senior Luncheon, Town Hall, 12 p.m.

Thanks

Sadie and Ernest Kennedy gave a lovely pair of brass candlesticks to the South Tunbridge Methodist Church in memory of Arlene Stockwell who grew up in that church. They held the lighted candles during the worship services.

Pam Dietz and Maureen Moriarty organized the annual Ice Cream Social. A beautifully decorated cake celebrating The Tunbridge Church's 40th year was also served. The social was held at the Town Hall since rain was forecast.

Judie Lewis and her family welcomed everyone to their pond for the annual August outdoor worship service and potluck, a tradition that goes back decades. In addition to food and fellowship, a highlight was a great blue heron flying low over congregants during the 40th anniversary readings and then flying by again several minutes later.

Geoff Hansen keeps our website going, while Janet Zug does the Facebook updates. Thanks to both of them.

We appreciate Ed Howe mowing in Tunbridge Village and South Tunbridge and Shirley Boles and her family who mow around the North Tunbridge Baptist Church.

Summer Worship

Thanks to the following who provided special music during the summer when the choir was on vacation: Nan Frost, flute; Bunchie Angell, Connie Button, Marybeth Lang, Scott and Rose Terami, and Theresa Lever with singing sisters Kathy Cowens and Amy Papineau.

And thanks to readers who shared church history at the 185th anniversary service at South Tunbridge Methodist Church and the August mini-history of the years leading to The Tunbridge Church's formation: Elaine Howe,

Nancy Howe, Rob Howe, Hannah Rogers McClain, Nancy Howe Rogers, Portia Wampler and Susan Howe Wood. The Revs. Claire Bamberg and Gordon Mitchinson also took part in the Methodist service.

Remembering Our Roots

The Tunbridge Church's roots go back to 1786 when the town was officially organized. Most citizens were Congregationalists. They formed a congregation in 1792, when the town had about 500 residents, and initiated building a meetinghouse in 1797.

Tunbridge grew to 2,000 people by 1820. They included members of several denominations. The Methodists built a church in 1833. The Congregationalists built a church in 1837. It burned and was replaced by the present church in 1839. The North Tunbridge Baptists and Universalists built a Union Meetinghouse in 1838, sharing it until the Baptists built a church in 1870. A second Baptist congregation built a church on East Hill, Strafford Road, in 1854.

Census figures show why the town had trouble supporting five churches. Population steadily dropped to 885 in 1900 and a low of 743 in 1960. The North Tunbridge Baptist, Congregational and Methodist churches hung on, providing many services to the community, despite diminished memberships and finances.

For decades they cooperated, sharing ministers (some of whom led three services every Sunday) and facilities, joining for Vacation Bible School and Sunday School, and holding union services for Memorial Day and religious holidays and during the summer.

The three ladies aids hosted town meeting dinners, a fall chicken pie supper and other events. The churches

had joint committees, such as for pulpit supply and the fundraising canvass. They formed a parish council. Meanwhile, each congregation continued with its own officers, meetings, mission obligations and treasury.

And in 1978 they voted to unite for a three-year trial period. The Rev. David Wolfe became the pastor in 1979. The services schedule was set: July at the South Tunbridge Methodist Church; an August outdoor service and North Tunbridge Baptist Church services; and special and regular services at the Congregational Church.

Birthdays

September

- 17 – Ben Wolfe
- 18 – Alison Gravel
Samantha Fraser
- 20 – Elaine Cilley

October

- 03 – Randy Chapman
- 04 - Byron Angell
Mertie Clark
- 14 - Warren Baldwin
- 20 - Tom Swahn
- 30 – Joey Serviss

Anniversaries

September

- 04 – Bob & Linda Lazaroff
- 24 – Edward & Nancy Howe

Parish Council

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