



**Vol. 12 Issue 1 • January-March 2021**

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## **Pastor's Corner**

*The Rev. Dr. Jennifer S. Cook*

I think most of us are surprised that we are almost halfway through January 2021. It has been quite a year for all of us. So far for me, the New Year has been a carryover of last year. Still the same concerns, the same bills, the same virus, and on and on.

What did I think was going to change? Nothing will change unless my attitude about this situation changes. I have control of myself and how I respond, rather than react, to the world and circumstances around me.

With that being said, Happy New Year! I thought I might make a resolution or two, but why bother? They only last until about now anyway. I am much happier without those self-imposed commitments.

I hope you are doing well. I know this past year has been difficult, in one way or another, for everyone.

Advent and Christmas was quite a marathon. Each week I could say there were 2-1/2 worship projects. The Midweek Connections, the full Sunday services, and the brief services outdoor each week. During the week of Christmas, there was Advent 4, email and outdoor, The Service of Light, and a service for Christmas Eve that included readings, carols, Candle Sprites and, if permitted by traffic, a procession to the Nativity scene with the Christ Candle. Unfortunately, the weather didn't cooperate and that outdoor service was cancelled.

There is a Covid-19 cloud silver lining. During my time in Vermont, I have had the opportunity to talk with some of you on the phone with some regularity. For others, it has been a brief check-in, and some of you I have left phone messages and emails. During the summer and fall, I made home visits outdoors, masked and distanced.

Please remember that I have time constraints as your pastor and I try to uphold them. In the past year, it hasn't been easy. Nonetheless, it has been wonderful to share

in the joyful times and an honor to be with you in times of sorrow that, sadly, a good number of you have experienced. I have learned of your surgeries, illnesses and injuries, your hopes, dreams, and broken hearts. I have prayed for all of you and with some of you.

I want to thank you for all of the joy that you bring to me. This church is an amazing place to share in ministry. Although the services aren't ideal because we cannot gather, designing them is a spiritual activity for me. I enjoy everything about it.

I enjoy the challenge of worship design by searching for interesting music from around the world and introducing you to new styles, tunes, and words for worship, along with the "old chestnuts." I like the variety and I hope you do, too!

Although there isn't an opportunity for "preaching," I provide a shorter, more concise message called a homily. They are biblically based and prayerfully considered.

It has been wonderful getting to know Judie this past year. I learned that we share common joys and sorrows. I appreciate her diversity of music and the expertise in her leading the miraculous choir and instrumentalists. This church is blessed to have such talent in the worship staff as well as the volunteers who add so much to the services when we meet.

Kudos to Geoff as he schedules the emails that come his way and takes care of the financial side of ministry. If you know of someone, near or far, who would like to receive the emails from the church, please let him know.

Thank you all for what you do for the community and for the church in the name of Jesus. The decorations were beautiful, the effort, unmeasurable. I hope that the food shelves are stocked with a bit more food from the "Calendar of Kindness" during Advent.

This church has the heart of Christ. I guess it is now physically visible on our "Church Quilt" as well as radical welcome. We draw

the circle wide. I think in spite of all that is going on, the church is moving forward. Our email list is growing!

Just a quick word to let the Parish Council know how much I appreciate their support and leadership. When I interviewed, I mentioned tying up some loose ends. We are doing that little by little. It may not feel comfortable to some, but it really is necessary to do for a functioning church. Thank you for your patience, guidance, ideas, flexibility, and support through this seemingly mundane process. It can be frustrating and change is hard. Know, that I offer to you my education, experiences, vision, faithfulness, and hope for our wonderful church.

I keep repeating "thank you" over and over again. It is just a small portion of my gratitude to God and to all of you for welcoming me as your pastor at this very special place. I am most grateful for your support and appreciation expressed in emails, notes, phone calls, and especially by the Goodie Bag and giant banana bread! Maybe this is why I didn't make a particular resolution!

Remember that you and all of us in the church are supposed to be right where we are at this place in time, that you are God's beloved, you are nothing less than beautiful, whole, and enough.

All year long, I hope we continue to "repeat the sounding joy" in Tunbridge and that it is heard around the world.

May God continue to bless you and the ministries of our church.

Until we can safely gather again, Shalom.

*Jenny*

## Parish Council

*Kay Jorgensen*

Many in the church community have been thinking of others during Covid-19 restrictions. In addition to Jenny's and the Outreach Committee's work, these people provide rides, keep in touch by phone and mail, cook and bake, do errands, distance visit, and deliver food.

Here are some expressions of appreciation:

Just wanted to thank everyone for all their prayers and well wishes for Ruth this past year.

*Larry Mengedoh*

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Henry and I have many thanks to give this year to all those who made our move to Tunbridge so seamless. Here are a few people we'd like to thank: Jim, Rob, Rachel, Mariah, Devin, and you/the church, all for making us feel at home.

*Lauren Mabie*

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Thank you so much for the outstanding service the church is providing to me and the community, especially how beautifully the emails are put together. The technology part of putting together the service, with easy access to the music, is so well done and user friendly. Plus all the typing. Amazing. I'm so thankful for all of you. I feel blessed with angels.

*Linda Howe*

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A beautiful poinsettia, the gift of a woman who knocked at our door and introduced herself:

"I live just up the road from you on Brocklebank Hill. Your friends at The Tunbridge Church are wishing you a safe and healthy holiday."

She brought tea bags, a loaf of sweet bread, napkins and a note: "Take time, sit down with a cup of tea and a treat and enjoy the season."

As she turned to leave she said she'd be glad to shop for us and drive us to where we need to go.

At 84 and 88 years of age, what could be more appreciated than this Christmas cheer,

Many thanks. *Mel & Herbert Goertz*

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I just wanted to send a thank you to the Parish Council and the volunteers who have worked so hard to continue some old traditions and make new ones this year. Bunchie's barn quilt is so creative, the Christmas banners are so colorful, the outdoor tree is really festive and the Advent Candles are so welcoming to everyone in town. A huge thank you to everyone who worked so hard on these things.

Judie and her choir created an amazing CD as well. Sue and Nancy did an incredible job with the increased demands on the food shelf and providing assistance to needy families. And also to Nancy and Elaine for their work this summer with the Antique Hill services. All of you are simply inspiring and your work is greatly appreciated!! If I have left anyone out, my apologies.

*Maureen Moriarty*

## **News & Notes**

### **Upcoming Holy Days**

*From Pastor Jenny*

It is hard to believe in less than a month we will begin our long holy journey through the church season of Lent. Ash Wednesday is on Feb. 11. Lent ends on April 3 on Holy Saturday. Then, on the 4th of April, Easter will be upon us.

I have no idea what this season holds for us as far as worshiping together with the predictions of the new genetic drifts of Covid-19. There will be updates about where, when, or if we will meet during this Holy season.

### **Annual Meetings**

The church's Annual Meeting and potluck meal that is usually held on the first Sunday in February has been postponed. Plenty of notice will be given when it is rescheduled.

The United Church of Christ component of The Tunbridge Church will hold its annual meeting on Sunday, Jan. 31, in the Parish House at 11:15 a.m.

### **Advent To Epiphany**

The 2020 Advent season was one-of-a-kind due to Covid-19. We made the most of it and may have started some new traditions. When Parish Council members and Pastor Jenny knew the church would remain closed for the Christmas season, an outdoor Advent service decorating committee was formed with Rob Howe, Jerilyn Zaroogian and Janet Zug.

Jerilyn and Peter Guy designed and built an electrified display of Advent candles and the Christ Candle. It was installed on the church deck railing which was decorated with garlands. Janet produced colorful "Hope," "Joy," "Peace," "Love" and "Merry Christmas to All" banners that were added weekly to correspond with the new Advent candle.

After the first service, on Nov. 29, a Fraser fir tree that Jerilyn, Peter and Rob installed in the garden was decorated with lights and ornaments. Nancy and Randy Chapman led the setting up of the creche and Moravian star on the Parish House lawn. The tree, candles and star were lighted all day and night.

On those Sundays from Nov. 29-Jan. 3 short services were held in front of the church. In addition to Pastor Jenny, who led

all but one of the services with readings, prayers, participants included Margot Frost, Nan Frost, Don Hilts, Elaine Howe, Rob Howe, Marybeth Lang, Judie Lewis and Jerilyn Zaroogian.

Nancy Howe and Kay Jorgensen provided the wreaths for the South Tunbridge Methodist Church, North Tunbridge Baptist Church, the Parish House and the Village church.

### **Calendar of Kindness**

Jenny initiated a new tradition before Christmas, an Advent Calendar of Kindness, which benefitted our Tunbridge Community Food Shelf. Instead of the traditional calendar with gifts for each day before Christmas, participants gave gifts. The Food Shelf gratefully received donations of everything from dog food to cans, jars and boxes of staples, treats and snacks.

### **Christmas Music**

It wouldn't be Christmas without seasonal music. Choir director/organist Judie Lewis and choir members observed Covid-19 protocols and recorded solo and duet sessions at Judie's house where they sang in one room and she played the piano in another.

The songs were shared by email and also on a CD. The vocalists were Isabella Amodeo, Connie Button, Eve Ermer, Margot Frost, Rob Howe, Marybeth Lang, Sharon Mee, Dawna Neron, Rose Terami and Janet Zug and flutist Nan Frost.

### **Christmas Deliveries**

Outreach Committee banana bread, teas, and poinsettia plants were delivered to some 35 residents before Christmas. Judy Tucker picked up the plants from Dandelion Acres. She, Nancy Chapman, Kay Jorgensen, Dawna Neron and Margaret Rogers made the breads.

Margaret and Nancy packed everything for delivery by Luke Barnaby, Nancy and Randy Chapman, Elaine Howe, Kay Jorgensen, Dawna Neron, Margaret and Bob Rogers and Billie Smith.

### **Thanksgiving Bags**

Fruit, cocoa mix, cheese, crackers, and baked items were included in the holiday bags delivered to 59 people and Riverbend Residential Care Home. The shoppers, bakers and packers were Sue Barnaby, Shirley Boles, Nancy Chapman, Elaine Howe,

Kay Jorgensen, Margaret Rogers and Judy Tucker.

Bags were delivered by Sue Barnaby, Betty Brown, Nancy and Randy Chapman, Theresa Fitzgerald, Ellen Hosford, Elaine Howe, Pat and Alan Howe, Kay Jorgensen, Donna Nelson, Dawna Neron and Margaret and Bob Rogers.

### **Community Food Shelf**

Our Food Shelf filled Christmas dinner and breakfast boxes for two dozen families. They received boneless turkey, potatoes, crescent rolls, butter, cheese, oranges, cranberry sauce and pancake mix, sausage and eggs.

Food donations included potatoes from the Amodeo family, oranges given by the Zaroogian family and commodities from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Toys, hats, mittens, games and toiletries were among donated gift items. In addition to monetary gifts, Santa had some special helpers. They included the Bogardus family, Laura DeCapua and family, Carley Howe, Maureen Moriarty, Jean Parker and Jena Young and family.

Sue Barnaby is the food shelf manager and directs the annual Christmas box effort. Helping her with setup, cleanup and logistics were Gordie Barnaby, Nancy Chapman, Jean Parker and daughters Amy Bogardus and Melissa Lamson and Margaret Rogers.

The Food Shelf is open at the Parish House on Fridays from 4-6 p.m.

### **Church Quilt**

The church is showing off a burst of color thanks to the new Church Quilt on the south side of the building.

Pastor Jenny suggested creating such a 4x4 painted quilt during an August worship service at the fairgrounds. Ideas about design elements were suggested over a few weeks. Bunchie Angell, who had already created four barn quilts for her family and home, made a design and offered to paint the quilt. Jerilyn Zaroogian penciled the design freehand on the board for Bunchie to paint.

The quilt tells everyone that "In the midst of Covid-19 our ministries continue to be strong," says Jenny. The design represents love, hospitality and faith in Christ. The rainbow colors radiate radical welcome and the circle, eternity and the

everlasting covenant between God and all of creation.

### **Care for the Caregivers**

When we are over virus restrictions, Jenny will again offer Care for the Caregivers. It was several hours long and included healthy snacks on arrival and a short time of fellowship after the worship that included a light lunch.

"The day was to be a break from the stresses of giving care to a loved one. There were gift bags and special exercises about praying, focusing thoughts on a simple activity, a bit of yoga, restful music, pain management, letting go, talking, fellowship, and chocolate," says Jenny. Attendees enjoyed the first session, but then Covid-19 cancelled the following meeting.

### **Recent Deaths**

#### **Ruth Mengedoht**

Ceramic artist Ruth Mengedoht passed away at the Jack Byrne Center for Palliative and Hospice Care at Dartmouth-Hitchcock on Nov. 12 at age 78. She and her husband Larry retired to Tunbridge in 1999.

Ruth, a native of Ireland, met Larry in Bahrain and lived in Indonesia, London and Kazakhstan as well as visiting many countries in Asia-Pacific, Europe and Africa. Ruth became proficient in Chinese brush painting, studied art in London and developed a passion for ceramics.

Ruth is survived by Larry, five children and 11 grandchildren. A celebration of her life will be held this year if the Covid-19 pandemic is controlled.

Memorial donations may be made to First Branch Ambulance, PO Box 74, Chelsea, VT 05038 or Vermont Woodlands for Wildlife, PO Box 328, Vergennes, VT 05491.

The full obituary can be seen at [www.boardwayandcille.com](http://www.boardwayandcille.com).

#### **Anne Peters**

Anne Peters died Dec. 8 at the Jack Byrne Center after a period of failing health. She hadn't been able to attend church in person, even before Covid-19, but she was busy, as she reported in our April-May Coronavirus newsletter:

"I have been calling two people a day to check on well-being; doing two household tasks long put off; doing weekly prep for

outside helpers; doing gifts handmade; re-reading the Constitution with study plan; reading one Rachel Maddow blog; listening to the governor of New York daily; researching how well Vermont extended care/ nursing home facilities are being serviced; trying new recipes; ordering out with friends/ we eat separately and talk by phone during. I am so busy I don't get to bed till after midnight."

### **Contacting Jenny**

If you would like to speak to Jenny, please call her during business hours at 401-263-5812 unless there is an emergency. Her pastoral visits and in-person communion have been limited because of Covid-19.

## **The Tunbridge Church**

### **Minister**

The Rev. Dr. Jennifer S. Cook

### **Parish Council**

Kay Jorgensen, President  
Rob Howe, Vice President  
Dawna Neron, Secretary  
Jerilyn Zaroogian, Treasurer  
Bunchie Angell  
Sue Barnaby  
Nancy Chapman  
Judy Tucker



Jerilyn and Judie decorate the tree



Bunchie designed and painted the quilt

## **Birthdays**

### **January**

28 – Carley Howe  
– Lorraine Withington  
30 – Margaret Rogers

### **February**

02 – Marybeth Lang  
04 – Judy Tucker  
14 – Bunchie Angell

### **March**

04 – Sharon Mee  
07 – David Wolfe  
Eve Ermer  
09 – David Smith  
18 – Jacque Norris  
21 – Shelia Mitchinson  
30 – Lisa Amodeo

To receive email announcements  
contact [thetunbridgechurch@gmail.com](mailto:thetunbridgechurch@gmail.com)

Donations may be mailed to  
Recording Treasurer Elsie Farnham at  
425 VT RT 110, Tunbridge VT 05077

Food Shelf donations may be sent to  
Treasurer Mary Fisk at PO Box 12,  
Tunbridge VT 05077