

# The Federated Church of East Arlington



September 2020

## Meditation, Meanderings and Musings from Pastor Kathy

email: ksclark58@yahoo.com

Cell 733-2162

Parsonage phone: 375-2427

What are your memories of the first day of school? Was it wearing something new or carrying a new lunchbox? Being anxious about riding the school bus? The smells of chalk or mystery meat in the cafeteria? Whatever you remember of your first day of Kindergarten or high school or any grade in between, it did not involve a pandemic or the prospect of the balancing act of in-person learning with distance learning. 'Tis the season of school starting, and it is looking quite different for students, teachers, staff and parents. With school offered remotely for the final 3 months of the past academic year, the yearning for a building devoted to education and finding one's place within it is stronger than ever.

We, too, yearn to be able to meet in person for worship and yet we know that it may still be a while before that is safe and realistic. Our outdoor services were a treat – to be able to look each other in the eye and hear voices that weren't coming to us electronically and we have one final outdoor service scheduled for Sunday, September 20. Thank goodness for technology (and especially Scott Lang who co-hosts Sunday Zoom services and then edits them and gets them onto YouTube and GNAT-TV) and the fact that this is happening at a time in history when we can connect via phone or computer or television screen but that does not stop our wanting more face-to-face contact.

Our beloved buildings wait for us and we for them but that doesn't stop us from being church because church is so much more than a physical space. It is the mission and ministry of all of us, individually and collectively, that is church. The 8 angels who agreed back in March and continue to regularly have contact with folks so that no one would be forgotten. The many of you who contributed as a volunteer or with monetary gifts or snacks to help us feed 104 children from 37 families for 11 weeks through the Summer Lunch Program. The prayer shawls that continue to be knit and crocheted and distributed. Your Church Council which still acts as stewards of our resources, mindful of a future that will

look different. Those who bake and create items and staff our table at the Arlington Farmers Market that has helped us maintain a presence in the community and raised money for the work of this church and the Arlington Food Shelf. This is what church looks like!

Until we are able to safely meet in our church sanctuary, I share this "Blessing for the Still-Empty Pews" written by the Rev. Matt Laney, former Associate Pastor at First Congregational Church, Manchester for the UCC book of prayers titled, *Emerge*:

*The front row used to get teased  
by the other rows: "No one sits there!" But no more.  
Never have they all felt so neglected, so lonely.  
Now there is only the occasional spider. But,  
Spiders don't sit, linger, listen, and lounge.  
Spiders don't have children who kick and fidget.  
Spiders don't make seats creak with delight.  
Their hearts aren't quickened by meeting the Great  
Carpenter.*

*Blessed are the church pews, chairs, and benches  
welcoming butts, backs, thighs of every shape and  
size  
without judgment, without complaint, without any  
preferences  
yet still beaming to be claimed as someone's regular  
favorite spot!  
Blessed are all these mercy seats  
that wait for us  
but not  
alone.*

May we rally to welcome the wonder that is autumn in Vermont with a renewed commitment to being church to the world from each of our homes. God abides in us, wherever we are.

Peace and blessings,  
Kathy



# The Federated Church of East Arlington

Website: federatedchurchofeastarlington.org

Facebook: Federated Church of East Arlington

Email: federatedchurch05250@gmail.com

YouTube: Federated Church of East Arlington, Vt

Church office: 802-375-2548

## Report of the Financial Secretary, Sandra Grover

2020 Congregational Giving Budgeted:	\$ 60,000.00
Congregational Giving Received 1/1-8/31	\$ 32,097.45
Building Use 1/1- 8/31	\$ 991.35
Fundraising 1/1-8/31	\$ 655.00

**Thank You!**

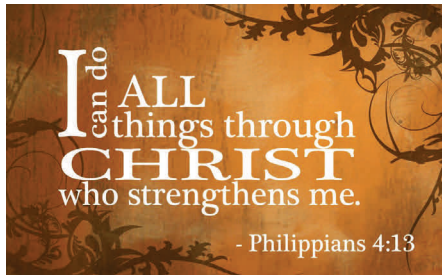


## Church attendance

Many via Zoom on computers,  
phones and tablets  
from many states.

8/16 (outside)      29 adults

***Church is who we are,  
Not where we go!***



## Our Church Council

Chair	Susan Congdon	Treasurer	Alyson Grzyb
Clerk		Ex Officio	Pastor Kathy Clark
Building & Grounds	Olavi Wirkki	1. Alyson Grzyb	2. Jeff McConnell
Christian Education	Tammy Lang	1. Scott Lang	2.
Finance	Brian Allen	1. Herb Taylor	2. Raebeth Hitchcock
Worship & Ministry	Ginny Wilkins	1. Linda McDevitt	2. Phyllis Warren
Missions	Sandy Grover	1. Wendy Bahan	2. Gail Rice

**September Birthdays**

- 2 – Savannah Cross
- 4 – Sandy Grover
- 15 – William Cross
- 17 – Pastor Kathy Clark
- 21 – Hunter King
- 22 – Marie Davies
- 27 – Kaitlyn Daniels  
Patti Cody
- 28 – Carole Finney
- 29 – Sherrill (Sue) Snow
- 30 – Jeff McConnell



**September Anniversaries**

- 1 – Diane and Jeff McConnell
- 10 – Linda & Andrew McKeever
- 24 – Kathy & John Frost

*Happy Anniversary*



Adult Book study is on Fridays at 9:00 a.m. beginning September 4 for four weeks via Zoom.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91377329294>

or

Dial on your phone 1-646-876- 9923

**Arlington Area Food Shelf**

**2020**

Our goal: 2,020 pounds  
Received to date: 166 pounds

**Southwest Association, UCC  
Prays for their Churches**

Each week one of the churches in the Southwest Association, UCC, will be prayed for by the other churches in the association.

- Sept 6:** Congregational Church of North Bennington
- Sept 13:** Pawlet Community Church
- Sept 20:** Peru Congregational Church
- Sept 27:** Pittsford Congregational Church

**Lectionary Readings for September**

- Sept 6:** Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 149  
Romans 13:8-14; Matthew 18:15-20
- Sept 13:** Exodus 14:19-31; Psalm 114  
Romans 14:1-12; Matthew 18:21-35
- Sept 20:** Exodus 16:2-15; Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45  
Philippians 1:21-30; Mathew 20:1-16
- Sept 27:** Exodus:17:1-7; Psalm 78:1-4,12-16  
Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32



Sunshine: Janet Wilson  
Lay Reader: Jeff McConnell

**Thank You**

As the financial secretary for our Federated Church, I am very thankful to all who continue to send in checks, cash and give online. The ministry and mission goes on even though we are unable to physically meet.

Please contact Kathy or the office if you know if anyone who needs assistance.

Sandy Grover, Financial Secretary

*thank you!*



Online Giving

Contact Sandy Grover: sandragrover@gmail.com;  
375-4982; church office 375-2548 or church email  
federatedchurch05250@gmail.com



## KNIT. CROCHET. PRAY.

Let's get together in person and outside!

Saturday, September 19th

1:00 p.m.

Bring your knitting or crocheting,  
chair, face mask and beverage.

What a blessing to be with everyone, at a distance.

We pray that God will continue to bless this ministry,  
it's participants and the shawl recipients.

Questions:

Raebeth Hitchcock

375-9294



## Worship With Us

Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom  
using this link:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89119439251>.

Or join by phone at 1-646-876-9923 and you will be  
asked for the Meeting ID and you should enter  
891 1943 9251 followed by the # sign.

Our services are on GNAT Sundays at  
9:30a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and Wednesdays at 6:30 a.m.  
and 5:00 p.m. on channels 1074, 1084 and 1094.

Also on our Youtube channel: the federated  
church of East Arlington.

Watch for an email from Kathy with the  
Sunday bulletin and link to join.



## Adventures in Reading

A.I.R. Books Now Available at the  
Martha Canfield Library

### Group I

Brown, Austin Channing. I'M STILL HERE: Black Digi-  
nity in a World Made for Whiteness (B Brown A)

Evans, Rachael Held. SEARCHING FOR SUNDAY:  
Loving, Leaving, and Finding Church (254 EVA)

### Group II

Clifford, M. Amos. YOUR GUIDE TO FOREST BATH-  
ING (615.8 CLI)

Draper, Sharon M. BLENDED (JF Draper)

Rhodes, Jewell Parker. BLACK BROTHER, BLACK  
BROTHER (JY Rhodes)

### Group III

Ball, Molly. PELOSI (B PELOSI)

Lee, Hyenonseo. THE GIRL WITH SEVEN NAMES  
(B LEE)

Revision: Change author's last name from Larson to  
Lester

Lester, Natasha. THE PARIS ORPHAN (Fic Lester) 2  
copies

Enjoy the autumn beauty all around.

Phyllis Warren and  
Janet Wilson,  
Co-ordinators



We all miss  
each other and  
the children.

Children's Sunday School



## Christian Education

There are no Sunday School Classes or Girl Scout meet-  
ings at this time.

Stay strong, wash your hands., wear a mask.



## Making It Up As We Go

The Loss of Ritual and the Challenge of COVID

Diana Butler Bass

I picked up the peanut butter and jelly sandwich, pulled apart the bread and slid some potato chips into the gooey center, and took a big bite. My lunch today transported me back to elementary school. Suddenly, it was as if I was back in the school cafeteria, the first day after the summer, with a surprise note in my lunchbox: *Welcome back to school, Diana! Love, Mom.* There was always a note on that first day - a message in my mother's neat hand, little doodles on the page. Every year. One of her rituals.



Maybe it was the PB&J, or maybe Dr. Jill Biden standing in an empty classroom giving her speech at the Democratic National Convention, but I'm thinking about fall – and all the rituals associated with starting school.

*We've lost much this year, including the loss of ritual.*

Formal holiday rituals like Easter and Passover. Less overtly religious ones like baseball's opening day or July 4 parades. Other rituals, too: graduations, birthdays, anniversaries. There were no summer weddings or baby showers. No in-person church or synagogue or temple. Even with friends falling ill, and the deaths that have occurred, no hospital visits or funerals to attend.

We also lack informal rituals, the practiced regularity that made up daily life – coffee with friends, the neighborhood book club, the gripe session with co-workers at the bar near the office, working out at the gym, dinner at a favorite restaurant. These are rituals, too - routines that connected us to one another, how we offered friendship, forgiveness, advice, and care. Familiar, repeated acts that framed hours, days, weeks, and months – the habits that composed our lives – have vanished.

Ritual links us to others, shapes our memories, and marks our years. Even the least liturgical and non-religious among us understands ritual in these ways. My friend, Casper ter Kuile, who writes on "[soulful practices](#)" says, "rituals make the invisible connections (of) life meaningful, visible." COVID has robbed us of ritual.

This loss contributes to feeling isolated and sad. Without familiar rhythms and seasons, we have become disconnected from our own lives, other people, and traditions that mattered more than we knew. COVID has forced us to reconstruct our rituals – drive-by celebrations, Zoom calls, virtual happy hours, online birthdays. It isn't just priests or rabbis or yoga teachers creating new rituals for their communities. We're all rewriting daily rituals and important rites of passage in our lives and families. That's hard work. No wonder we're exhausted. It is one of the less-recognized challenges we're facing in the pandemic.

The school year is starting again, a time marked by rituals that make up childhood memories – shopping for school supplies, packing lunches, tearful send-offs, and lining up new books on our shelves. This is our culture's time of odd beginnings, just as the year winds toward winter. I loved it all so much that I stayed in school for three degrees and became a college professor! Fall brings it all back, every fear, every hope, every bad plaid dress.

I encourage you to mark the school year - this year like no other - with some sort of ritual, nothing difficult or complex (you've got enough to do!) but things that are familiar, life-giving, and comforting. Hard as this is, we will look back one day and remember – and the ways we mark this moment will remain for a lifetime.

(continued on page 6)

(continued from page 5)



**For those with children:**

Whether your children are in school or online, take those first day pictures and post them on social media to celebrate the rite of passage to a new grade. Take a few wearing their masks or in their home “classroom.”

**For parents facing in-person school opening:**

Make masks fun and important. Send small children off with masks depicting favorite characters (I’ve seen lots for sale online) maybe to match character lunchboxes, backpacks, or folders.

Teach them how to wear the masks correctly. Do a family mask blessing as part of the new school year preparations.

*God, bless our masks.*

*May they help protect us, our families, teachers, and friends from COVID-19.*

*Grant us peaceful hearts in these strange times.*

*Help us when we feel angry or afraid,  
and when it seems hard to be brave or kind.*

*Bless these masks and may they be a blessing.*

*Keep those we love safe, healthy, and well.*

**For parents of online learners:**

Of course, you’ll be creating structure and rituals for your children with guidance from schools and teachers. This is for *you*: Find Sabbath time in the week for yourself and take it. Give yourself that gift. You are doing so much. Make even a brief time for a quiet ritual to center, pray, and reflect. Please care for yourself. You’re a hero.

**For those who live alone, empty-nesters, or those who just love fall:**

Sharpen your pencils, tidy your workspace, and buy some new books you’ve wanted to read.

Donate supplies to your local school (if it is meeting in-person): masks, hand sanitizer, soap, paper towels. Many children depend on school for meals, find a local food pantry or organization and contribute to their efforts in feeding schoolchildren. If your school district is online, reach out to neighborhood parents and ask how you might support them (socially distant, of course!). Make doing good a regular part of your life this autumn.

Bless your masks, too.

Find an online community or a safe, socially-distanced outdoor group, that offers some sort of spiritual development and ritual – a book study, a learning community, a yoga class, a gratitude group, a meditation circle. Lots of congregations and organizations are providing free classes and welcoming strangers to their online liturgies. Write a new rule of life – no matter your age. Open your eyes to see the world around you in new ways. Host an online dinner party, make a date of it with others. Try something different – be intentional, turn it into a ritual. It is the season for that.

We can grow. We can connect. We can make memories even in these hard times.

**Silent Prayer Vigil and Witness in Response to Racism**

Every Sunday in front of St. James Episcopal Church on Route 7A, Arlington **from 1:00—1:30 p.m.**

Please bring a sign to hold focused on peace and change based on our deep faith.

For safety, attendees will be spaced 10 feet apart (family groups may stand together).

Please wear a mask.



Thank you for your generous Federated Church Scholarship. I am very happy and appreciative to learn that I was selected as a recipient of your scholarship.

Erin Murphy

**Church World Service Kits**

We at FCEA have always been very generous when your Mission Team has had the Mother’s Day “Blankets of Love” appeal. You have also been ready and willing to contribute when we have had the “kits” appeals— school kits, hygiene kits and cleanup buckets. Thank you so much. We have made a difference in God’s name.

We will **not** be collecting items but we are requesting donations for these items to go where they are needed. Checks can be made out to Federated Church with CWS in the memo; cash or online. Questions? Sandy Grover, 375-4982; sandragrover@gmail.com; church office 375-2548.

**Notes from CWS**

**“CWS Kits provide hope. Without adequate kits to respond to the fall hurricane season, we would have one less spark to light the way for those facing the struggle.”**

- Rev. David Mallory, CWS Kits Coordinator (Raleigh, NC)

“Just in the last four months, I’ve heard incredibly moving testimonies from people who received kits and felt the spark of hope in their lives. From neighbors living without shelter to school children who are absolutely devastated by the uncertainty of what “back to school” means this year, to communities who are fighting storms on top of this pandemic...let us continue to bless our neighbors with light in the darkness.

May you also experience the hope you offer so generously to others,

Matthew Stevens

Director of Congregational Giving, CWS

**Blankets, \$10**

**School kits, \$15**

**Hygiene kits, \$15**

**Cleanup buckets, \$75**



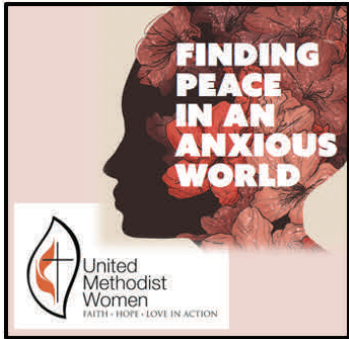
**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**



**WE'RE RESPONDING. WILL YOU HELP?**



# Green Mtn District UMW Fall Gathering - Zoom



### WHEN

Saturday, September 19, 2020 at 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

[Add to my calendar](#)

### WHERE

Virtual Meeting via Zoom

### Email

[gingerp46@comcast.net](mailto:gingerp46@comcast.net)

### Contact

Ginger Phelps

Today, more than ever, we need help finding our way through anxiety, worry, and fear to move towards God’s peace that surpasses all understanding.

The Green Mountain District United Methodist Women' mission team is making plans for a 2-hour Zoom gathering for women in the District.

A short program on Anxiety will be facilitated by District UMW President, Marie MacDougall. She will give us a taste of the mission study she would have led at *Mission u* this summer had it been held, [Finding Peace in an Anxious World](#). Participants will receive a study guide. Folks who would like to have a deeper experience can purchase the study book ([paper version](#), [Kindle](#)).

*This is also the District UMW's annual meeting so a brief time will be used for necessary business (election of officers and acceptance of budget).*

Please register early and no later than Monday, September 14. Contact Ginger Phelps, [gingerp46@comcast.net](mailto:gingerp46@comcast.net), 802.879.7484. Zoom connection information will be sent (via email or mail) before the meeting. If you leave a voice message, please provide your email or mailing address. You can participate via internet/video on a laptop, tablet, smartphone (or the like) or dial in by telephone.

Wash your hands!



Wear a face mask!

