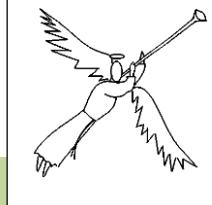




Westmore Community Church



Holiday Edition Newsletter 2018

**Westmore
Community
Church**
27 Hinton Hill Rd.
Westmore, VT
05860

*Westmore
Memorial Tree
lighting
ceremony -
December 2,
5:00 pm.* Bring an
ornament to tie on,
bring your voices for
caroling. Stop in at
Town Clerks office for
Hot cocoa, coffee and
cookies.

A Community Event!

Newsletters are published to keep members and friends of the church informed about our work in the church and in our community.

We accept any contributions. Please contact Carol Davis to submit news for publication.

Advent: a season with the season

Rev. Jay Sprout

It starts at Thanksgiving and runs through Christmas, with Hanukkah usually landing somewhere around the middle for our Jewish friends, and then on to New Year's Eve and Day. This is the time we often generically call "the holidays." The holidays are associated with celebration, gathering, feasting, and gift-giving.

And there's music, perhaps my favorite part of the holidays. Right now I'm rehearsing to sing in four concerts with two choruses. And I'm planning to attend as many other concerts as I can fit in. What joy!

But these weeks can be a bittersweet. For this is also the time of year with the longest nights. And for some of us much of the time, and for most of us some of the time, the long nights can be dark times of remembering, with deep longing, persons we have loved and events we have cherished that have been a part of our lives in the past, but that are now changed or gone. There is so much grief in this world that we can feel like we are drowning in it. Loss is everywhere, lost opportunities that will never come around again; loss of independence when we have to relinquish a driver's license or when we have to go on living without the help and care that a partner provided; loss of self when dementia robs us of memory and understanding; loss of expectations when our bodies begin to break down, when our health changes and we cannot do what we used to do; loss of the familiar when the usual patterns of life change through children leaving home, couples separating and divorcing, family members dying.

During one particularly difficult holiday season, after the death of my wife, I wrote a haiku, "Incarnation." These were the 17 syllables I found to express my feelings:

Alone at Christmas
I do long, more than ever,
for a Word made flesh.

So it is right and good that we recognize that Advent is a season within the holiday season. The four-week span of Advent calls us to take some time in the midst of it all to be quiet; to meditate on who and what we have lost; to remember and share our hurting places with God; to pray for ourselves and our families and friends who live with painful memories and ongoing experiences of loss. So we pray to God for relief, for a light that the darkness cannot overcome, for a peace and a joy beyond what we can ask or imagine.

Prayer

God of love and understanding, we come to you as we confront our feelings of deep hurt, sadness, anger, and exhaustion in the midst of the world's celebration, trusting that you hear our prayer. We know that your love is deep enough and profound enough to accept our fears and our longings that go beyond words. Help us to know that you are Emmanuel, God with us, present in all of the seasons of life, made manifest to us through the gift of your son, Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

Advent: light a candle

by Joanne Giannino

"If there were no advent, we would need to invent it. We human creatures, in spite of all that has happened to us and been done by us, are still hopeful. Something new, something vital, something promising is always coming, and we are always expecting. Thus in Advent, candles are lighted to mark the time of preparation, and with each new light our anticipation grows – as it should. We are, after all, a hopeful people, and that hopefulness deserves a festival."

"Advent is a time of anticipation and as long as we expect, as long as we hope, someone will light a candle ..." I really like these words from John A. Taylor, in the book Celebrating Christmas: an anthology edited by Carl Seaburg.

They remind me of times on Christmas Eve when I have stood in a dark sanctuary with others waiting for the light, anticipating the miracle of Christmas. When suddenly a light is struck and one by one, person to person, candle to candle, the light is passed and slowly the sanctuary is alight. Advent is a time of anticipation, as long as we expect, as long as we hope. Someone will light a candle.

Wherever we are this season, in a sanctuary or out and about in town or at home, may we light that candle for one another and expect that candle to be lit for us. If one near you seems a little down or scared about the future, bring some of your brightness near. If you feel a little lost or unsure, seek out a friend who can share some of their light. For all of us, anticipate the light. Expect it just around the corner. Welcome the festival of hope. It abides in, around and between us all.



A joyful heart celebrates
the love we are.

-Harold W. Becker/www.thelovefoundation.com



**Watch for more
news of a 125th
anniversary
celebration of the
Church**

WESTMORE COMMUNITY CHURCH HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS A STATE HISTORICAL BUILDING.

This designation is a very important one. It not only gives our building historic integrity but acknowledges the efforts of the many builders and parishioners who worked on it through the years, a sense of satisfaction.

Trustees Report -

Bruce Tanner, Trustee Chair

The Church got a new look this past July, a standing-seam metal roof! This roof should protect our church for several decades to come. Along with the improvement to the bell tower, completed last year by Darryl Davis and crew, the church is beginning to look better than it has in a while. Unfortunately, strong winds recently topped part of the old maple tree on the corner in front of the church and we had to cut the tree down. It had been around well before the church and it was showing its age. The next big project will be to paint the exterior, and bids to accomplish this next spring have been submitted and are under review. Also in need of immediate attention is the continued water intrusion through the foundation under the main church entrance during heavy rains. It is hoped that some re-landscaping to redirect flow will help solve this problem.

This past summer, Tom Streeter painted the railings outside the Fellowship Hall Main entrance with paint and materials donated by Evelina Busby. Thank you Tom and Evelina. The Westmore Association has offered to paint the interior of the Fellowship Hall and the Trustees are considering their offer. The WA also would like to establish, in partnership with the church, a community garden in the small meadow north of the church. The Trustees are OK with this plan, but cannot contribute any funds nor much muscle power towards this project. It will be up to the WA to bear the load for this project.

After hiring a new consulting forester, Samuel Perron, (who works at Northwoods Stewardship Center), and several more visits to the woods this Summer and Fall to establish a better skid route right-of-way over Myer's two lots, we are ready to sign deeds with both the Town of Westmore and the Myers. This should take place in the coming week or next. Upon recording the deeds in the town records we can commence actively managing the church's woodlot, with an eye to establishing a sugarbush.

On November 4th we bid a fond, but sad, farewell to Gail Brown, who has decided to move permanently to Connecticut to live near her children. Gail has served ably and with great dedication on the Board of Trustees for many years and her departure leaves a big hole to fill on the board. Her myriad services to the church and sunny presence will be sorely missed. Thank you Gail for all you have done!

The Davis Family wishes to thank all friends and family for attending the special Bell Tower Designation in August. We appreciate our friend Rev. Bob Leibold for conducting the service. The bell is now open for all to view day or night. The special funds given to the church will be used towards the next maintenance project of painting the exterior of the church. Blessings to all – from the Mildred Davis family.



TO:

**Westmore Community
Church**

27 Hinton Hill Rd
Westmore, VT 05860
Church phone – 802-525-1108

We welcome All.

Calendar of Events in Westmore
Sponsored by the Church and Ladies Aid

Preachers for December and January

Dec. 2.. Rev. Jay Sprout – A Communion service.
 Dec. 9.. .Mary Hoadley -
 Dec. 16...Rev. Martha Peck, retired
 Dec. 23...NO Morning Service
 Dec. 24 5:00 pm with Rev. Jay Sprout. Christmas Eve service, Choir members arrive at 4:00 pm.
 Dec. 30...Janet Wiseman
 Jan. 6... Rev. Jay Sprout – A Communion service
 Jan. 13...Mary Hoadley

Special Events for the Holiday Season

December 2, Westmore Memorial Park Tree lighting ceremony. Join us at 5:00 PM to start the Christmas Season with lighting the tree and placing ornaments on it in memory of a loved one. The Town Clerk's office will be open for Hot Chocolate, Coffee and Cookies. Bring an ornament to tie on.

December 2, Advent season begins in the Church at 9:00 a.m.

December 6 at noon – Ladies Aid sponsors a Christmas lunch out. Please join them at the Gap Restaurant. Dutch Treat. All are welcome with a guest (spouse or friend)

December 16 – Fellowship Brunch – our annual Christmas Brunch will be held for all attending. Please bring a dish to share after our church service.

December 23, No morning Church service

December 24 – CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT SERVICE, 5:00 pm. Special music, scripture and Silent Night. Pastor – Rev. Jay Sprout of St. Johnsbury. Special Music arranged by Mark Violette.

The Little Treasure Shop –

Joan Wood, once again, oversaw the running of the Treasure Shop for the Ladies Aid this year. This project is so very well received by the community and outlining area that we continue to find a way to keep it open. With the many volunteers organized by the day and time to man the shop, we have been able to raise \$ 602 this year. It has been requested that these funds be used to help maintain the flowers in the memorial park, specifically around the flag pole.



Kathleen Vito and Nancy Tanner at the Bake Sale Table in front of the Treasure Shop.

THIS HANDMADE QUILT



Raised over \$ 600 for the Ladies Aid and was won by Susan Lynn St. John of St. Johnsbury. She is known through her wonderful sermons at the church. A friend of the church, Eleanor Sperry from NH has made four quilts for a fundraiser. Thank you to all who have bought tickets for this very special fund raiser.

Ladies Aid:

Carol Davis, Secretary

The Westmore Ladies were honored by the Westmore Association at the association's annual meeting with a collection of individual flower bouquets, and a large cake recognizing our Society's continued work in the community to serve others. The Associations President, Daniel Ian Smith, read some of the history to the audience. Thank you to the members who help us keep this tradition going. I recently found old news article in the Orleans County Monitor that supports our history starting in the late 1890's. Any woman who wishes to join us in our ongoing endeavors is welcome.

One of those endeavors which seems to be very popular is The Bake Sale held mostly on Wednesdays and at other larger events. We raised over \$ 1,037 for the general fund. Help us continue this popular sale, which will start again in July.

The very popular and welcome Ham and Bean supper was very successful again and helps keep our Scholarship Fund going. What would we do without our special Ham and Bean Supper? Friends, chef Joe Salomon, sister Judy Giglio, and Gail and Pete Bertellitti have a big week of preparation and a busy Saturday for the dinner. Such a worthwhile event, (raising \$921 for the fund), that we appreciate so much. Thank you all who make wonderful desserts and come eat.

The 5K Walk/Run, annual event, successfully run by Gail and Robin Robitaille, also raised \$ 1,099 for the Scholarship Fund. They started this event, because the Society helped their own sons in college and they have certainly helped many other Westmore students continue their education.

Recipients were: Ryan Streeter, Ian Strange and Emma Strange.

We have had some official positions filled in by gracious volunteers. Evelina Busby now fills the very large shoes of Millie Davis, as leader. Carmen Anderson volunteered to be the Treasurer as well as myself, Carol, as Secretary. We have also added several new members and see some past members returning. We so appreciate all the women who want to help us fulfill the statement of mission – "to seek peace and pursue it through participation in serving the Westmore church, the Westmore Community, family, friends and neighbors. We strive towards Peace, Love and Fellowship, not only in our small circle, but by reaching out a helping hand as far as we are able".

Gail Brown would like to receive Christmas cards from her church friends. Gail also donated all the paper products for use by the church and Fellowship Hall. Her new address is: 226 Hillside Ave., Torrington, Conn. 06790.

Don't forget, if you haven't completed your pledge for next year, please send your pledge card to: WCC, 27 Hinton Hill Road, Orleans, VT 05860. If you need a pledge card, please send request to Carmen at andersoncd@ymail.com.



We had so many musical friends join us for a fund raising event with our organist Mark Violette bringing them altogether. We raised over \$ 400 for the church renovations. Thank you to all who participated and those who attended. Look for another one next year.



**Blessing of the Animals- in the Park
With Mary Hoadley**

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL
OF YOU. BLESSINGS FROM
THE WESTMORE
COMMUNITY CHURCH.

These brothers, Nick and Ted Page, had just a fun time with the audience and their antics this last summer. They helped the church raise over \$ 700 for the renovations.

Ted's book can be found in local stores and Nick is now traveling worldwide putting on concerts with audience participation. We have been so privileged to have them with us in our community and participate for the needs of our church. Thank you.



Deacons Report – Gail Robitaille, chair

The Deacons of WCC had another wonderful and busy summer. It was good to see old friends and welcome a few new ones as well.

August 12 was our 1st Blessing of the Animals held in conjunction with Sunday service in the Park with 5 well behaved dogs. Mary Hoadley led us in a wonderful service on a beautiful summer day. We hope to continue the event every year and will be sure to bless the ducks that waddle up from the lake!!

We have had a nice variety of talented supply pastors this summer/year, all delivering meaningful messages.

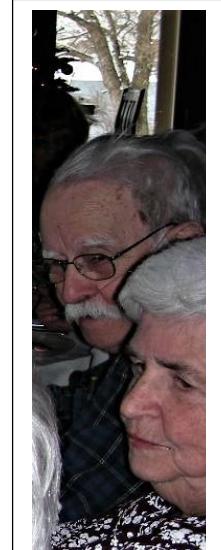
Topics that are under ongoing discussions are; a Maundy Thursday service at Easter time and a Sunday school of some sort.

The biggest and most exciting topic however, is in 2019, WCC will celebrate its 125th church completion anniversary. We have lots of ideas but if anyone has past pictures of the church and/or congregations, please contact one of us as a WCC timeline is being considered.

We look forward to a joyous and happy Advent season.

Gail Brown – so much can be said about Gail's contributions to the Westmore Church, as well as to the Town of Westmore. Moving here in the 1980's after retirement, she and her husband Art were very active. Gail had been on the Board of Trustees as long as I remember and we worked together on many projects. Later on with Mark Stevens and Betty Blair, they all worked tirelessly on the Westmore Day Fair, the Farmer's Market and other fund raising events for the church. As a member of the Westmore Ladies Aid, she contributed wonderful dishes of food and baked goods. She also kept the Ladies Aid well informed of what was going on in the church. Gail will be sorely missed and hard to replace. We wish you restful and healthy days living near your children. - Carol

Mary French, a steady fixture in all church events, who had a position on many church boards and an outspoken advocate of the Westmore Community church, joined her husband Art, in heaven in August. It was sudden for all and we are missing her presence. A beautiful funeral was held in the church and the Ladies Aid along with other church members held a well-attended reception afterwards. We all miss her but she is at peace.



Win Wright - recently passed away. Many of us knew Win during the days he gave his homestead and land to the State. We now know it as Sentinel Park. Located on Hinton Hill just up for the church, the land will be used for walks, winter hiking and snowshoeing. Win and his wife Florence were seen at many events in town and attended the church.