

ROXBURY UNION CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, U.C.C.
NEWSLETTER:
November - December 2021



LIGHTING THE CHURCH

The church is lighted in December by Rich Smith in honor of Ed Dickenson and Jeanette Fernald and by Nancy Snow and Paul Littlefield in memory of his mother, Olga.

If you would like to light the church, please contact Claire Chomentowski at 485-7779

YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER BY EMAIL, PLEASE SEND YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS TO PASTOR SUE AT sue.church43@gmail.com.

ANNUAL MEETING

The church will hold its Annual Meeting on Sunday, December 19 following worship.



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CHRISTMAS EVE

This year we will once again hold our service of candles and carols on Christmas Eve at 7:00 PM. We will worship in the sanctuary. Please plan to wear a mask. Jane Sevi will be there to accompany our singing. We will, as always, continue to be advised by recommendations concerning Covid and will cancel if that is the recommendation. If you want to confirm whether or not the service will happen, please Pastor Sue at 802-233-5198.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

We continue to worship in person at 11:00 Sunday mornings. Lately we have been worshipping around the table enjoying coffee and goodies. It is an intimate setting and allows us to share our thoughts during the service. We will continue to be guided by the recommendations of Governor Scott and the Vermont Department of health about how to be safe in the face of Covid.

WEDNESDAY VIDEO SERIES

Our video series has resumed. We will gather on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. Rich Smith is coordinating our search for videos that will stimulate our hearts, minds and spirits. If you have a suggestion, please contact Rich. We have recently watched *Harriet*, the 2019 movie about the life of Harriet Tubman, and *Nomadland*, the 2021 best movie of the year.

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

We begin the season of Advent this year with a bit more freedom to be physically present to one another. That feels like one of the best gifts we have received in a long time!

“Advent symbolizes the present situation of the church in these “last days” (Acts 2:17, Hebrews 1:2), as God’s people wait for the return of Christ in glory to consummate his eternal kingdom. The church is in a similar situation to Israel at the end of the Old Testament: in exile, waiting and hoping in prayerful expectation for the coming of the Messiah. Israel looked back to God’s past gracious actions on their behalf in leading them out of Egypt in the Exodus, and on this basis, they called for God once again to act for them. In the same way, the church, during Advent, looks back upon Christ’s coming in celebration while at the same time looking forward in eager anticipation to the coming of Christ’s kingdom when he returns for his people. In this light, the Advent hymn “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” perfectly represents the church’s cry during the Advent season. While Israel would have sung the song in expectation of Christ’s first coming, the church now sings the song in commemoration of that first coming and in expectation of the second coming in the future. (from *Christianity.com*)”

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Now is the season of both anticipation and remembrance. Looking both back to the past and forward to the future, we may find that time is circular rather than linear. It reminds me of our concept of the trinity. God has no beginning and no ending. God is and was and is to come. God is always Creator, Christ, and Spirit – ONE.

I am particularly fond of the Old Testament reading for the first Sunday in Advent, Jeremiah 33:14-16 -

“The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: ‘The LORD is our righteousness.’”

This section of Jeremiah is known as the Book of Comfort. It comes between the story of the disaster of the Babylonian invasion and the Chaldean invasion which had yet to happen. Jeremiah wrote to a people in exile speaking to them a word of hope. We live God’s promise to Jeremiah as we live our lives both in that hope and even as though that hope has been fulfilled. We live in the world, but we are not of the world. When we join the struggles for justice, human rights, peace both for our earth and its inhabitants, we plant seeds of hope.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Pastor Sue can be reached at 802-233-5198 or at sue.church43@gmail.com.

