



WHISTLER: Alison Latham 387-5711 aliemae@juno.com

CROSS

Langston Hughes (1902-1967)

My old man's a white old man
And my old mother's black.
If ever I cursed my white old man
I take my curses back.

If ever I cursed my black old mother
And wished she were in hell,
I'm sorry for that evil wish
And now I wish her well.

My old man died in a fine big house
My ma died in a shack.
I wonder where I'm gonna die,
Being neither white or black?

REFLECTIONS

"THE MYTH OF SEPARATENESS"

By Susie Webster-Toleno, Pastor

Greetings!

In downtown Louisville, Kentucky, there stands a rather unusual historical marker. Instead of marking the place as the site of an important battle, or the birth or death of a notable person, it marks a moment of clarity that burst into the heart of one of our country's great religious figures, Thomas Merton, who was a Trappist monk, theologian, mystic, poet, and social activist (among other things). In that very spot, the man's heart was changed, and it pleases me to know end to know that someone thought that warranted a historic marker. Here's what happened: in his book Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander, Merton described the moment that took his breath away:

"In Louisville, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut, in the center of the shopping district, I was suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all these people, that they were mine and I theirs, that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers. It was like waking from a dream of separateness, of spurious self-isolation in a special world. . . ."

This sense of liberation from an illusory difference was such a relief and such a joy to me that I almost laughed out loud. . . . I have the immense joy of being man, a member of a race in which God Himself became incarnate. As if the

sorrows and stupidities of the human condition could overwhelm me, now that I realize what we all are. And if only everybody could realize this! But it cannot be explained. There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun."

I've been thinking of this lately as I walk through our world which is so fractured, and particularly as we begin the liturgical season of Lent (which will have begun on Ash Wednesday, February 26). During Lent, Christians are reminded that we are called to walk humbly with our God, with our hearts open to the possibility of change, of repentance, and of newness of life. Throughout church history, this season has been marked by the Church's reminders of human sinfulness, and Christians have been taught that their only way to heal themselves of depravity is to repent, and to symbolize that repentance by "giving something up for Lent." (There have been times in my life when doing so was a meaningful form of self-discipline, so please do not hear this as a rant against taking Lent seriously as a time of personal repentance.)

I think Lent could be about so much more than that, though. What if the sins we're called to turn away from are not so much the typically noted individual sins (gluttony, anger, lust, greed, you name it)? What if our greatest shortcomings are not the sins of the flesh but rather the sin of division within humanity, and division between humankind and the rest of creation? As Merton put it, the thought that we are separate from one another is just a dream ~ and, I would say, it's a *bad* dream. What if instead of judging the sins of others or wallowing in our own sense of personal shame, we are called to try to mend divisions, to act from deep love even with people whose values are foreign to us?

Honestly, I cannot think of a harder task; especially during a contentious political season, it takes real effort to move from dualistic thinking to a deeper, transformed view of the world. For me, the thing that makes me most able to see people shining with that divine light Merton wrote of is time spent in prayer with others. If you're like me, feeling that you just can't get there alone, consider coming to church one of these Sundays ~ at 10 a.m. for our traditional worship service, or 5:30 p.m. for silent meditation! I believe you'll find healing, courage, and strength in practicing together through prayer, song, silence, and community connection.

So I ask you: where were *you* when your heart broke open wide enough to admit the possibility that we are all more alike than different? Where in your life should there be a marker to indicate to the world that, on that spot, Love broke in and changed you? I don't know what lies ahead for us in these tumultuous days. I do know that Love is powerful, and can transform hearts and lives, and maybe even the world. May it be so for you and for me.

In faith, Susie

THE WORK OF LOVE

by Pia Rabin

I am folding a thousand
paper cranes

I am washing a thousand
beautiful bowls

I am feeding a thousand
white tigers

I am dancing in the arms of God

THE GREEN AMENDMENT MOVEMENT

Maya van Rossum

Monday, March 30, 7pm, Westminster West Church

Maya Van Rossum, author of the Green Amendment will come to speak to The Living Earth Action Group and our community here in southeastern Vermont on Monday, March 30 at 7pm, at the Church. By donation. Maya has had considerable environmental success using the Green Amendment that her home state of Pennsylvania put in place in the 1970s. She has written a wonderful book about that and is actively promoting the Green Amendment around the USA. Maya's daughter Anneke van Rossum is at Vermont Law School in Royalton (about 90 minutes north of Westminster).

Maya says: "I am happy to come speak about the power and importance of Green Amendments and how citizens can become part of our Vermont Green Amendment movement – i.e. our movement to advance passage of a Green Amendment in the state that will give constitutional recognition and protection of the rights of present and future generations to pure water, clean air, a stable climate and healthy environments. Anneke is already heading up an effort in the state and one of her commitments is to help identify and advance speaking engagements in communities and at organizations where there is interest. She also is working on strategy on the ground with student colleagues and professors at the VT Law School."

Here in the U.S. people have rights to free speech and religion, the right to bear arms and to freely assemble, but they do not have the right to clean water and air, a stable climate and healthy environments. Because environmental rights are not recognized across the U.S., government decision makers are often free to disregard them in favor of other political or economic priorities. *Green Amendments For The Generations* is working to transform this legal paradigm by seeking the passage of Green Amendments, i.e. constitutional amendments added to the bill of rights section of every state constitution which recognize and protect the inalienable right of all people to clean water and air, a stable climate and healthy environments.

Only Pennsylvania and Montana have Green Amendments today, but since 2013 Maya van Rossum and her Green Amendment movement have inspired Green Amendment proposals in New Jersey, New York, West Virginia and Maryland, with growing movements taking place in even more states including New Mexico, Maine, Delaware, Connecticut and now the great state of Vermont. You can learn more about the Green Amendment For The Generations movement at www.ForTheGenerations.org

MY PENCIL

Christopher Leary (age 14)

As I hold my pencil I wonder how old it is
I wonder how many hands have touched it
I wonder how long it took to make my pencil
I wonder if the eraser still works
I wonder if it will ever write something famous

I wonder if used again and again or if it will be
Forgotten left under a couch
I wonder if it will be lost or chewed on by toddler
I wonder if it will be eaten by goat or burnt in a fire
I wonder what will happen to my pencil

COMMUNICATING WITH NATURE SPIRITS

Reverend Mary Francis Drake

Friday, March 6, 5pm, Westminster West Church

"The magical Irish countryside and the Hazelwood have restored me to a deep relationship with the natural world. Having grown up on a farm in the woods of rural New Hampshire, I had many such experiences as a child, but the busy life of work and family drew my attentions away for a few decades. The Nature Spirits are available to us and awaiting our return. They need us to honor and protect the natural world. We need them to reclaim our natural selves and our rich spiritual nature. I'm happy to share stories of my experiences with the spirits of the Hazelwood and how I've brought home a new way of relating to the spirit of nature in each place I visit. Through story, guided meditation, and music, we will endeavor to reignite the wonders of relating to the Nature Spirits."

Mary Francis Drake, MA, MSW, is an author, poet, counselor, minister, UMASS Psychology faculty, hospice worker, and spirit medium. She is the mother of three wonderful young adults and lives with family in central New Hampshire. She is currently working on a purposeful memoir entitled, 'Dancing in the Doorway: A Life's Journey Between Worlds.' which will be published in May of 2020.

NATIVE FOODS AND SEEDS

Friday, March 20, 6:30-8pm at the West West Church

Roger Longtoe Sheehan of the Abenaki Elnu Tribe will tell us about Native food plants and medicine plants. What our First Peoples ate, how they prepared some of their food, what we can grow in our gardens that they grew long ago.

Linda Longtoe Sheehan will bring her wonderful Native-style jewelry made of porcupine quills, shells and other beauties from Nature.

Toni Kessler from Townshend will tell us about her project **West River Seeds**. www.westriverseeds.com "West River Seeds is a collective of farmers focused on adapting vegetables and cut-flowers to the climate of the West River Watershed. All of our seed is open-pollinated allowing for a diverse population of plants that can adapt to our changing climate. We strive to bring adaptable, hardy, productive plants to local growers." She will bring a small selection of seeds to sell. Her full display can be seen at the Brattleboro Winter Farmers Market.

The Living Earth Action Group has been meeting in Westminster West since Feb. 2017 to inspire people to do what they can to heal our Earth. LEAG will have a website soon! Meantime, to be on the mailing list for newsletters, contact pcadair@sover.net.

SOUP-ER TUESDAYS

If you want a break from cooking during the week, come to the church any Tuesday until April 28th. This tradition began to help the Mary Cay Brass singers on Tuesdays who needed a quick meal before rehearsals. It has now expanded to include the public. Members of the church serve soup and bread (\$6) and salad (\$3) to not only the singers but anyone who stops by between 5:30 and 6:30pm. Come on in any Tuesday whether the soup sign is up at the corner of the road or not.

THE WHISTLE BLOWER

NEED A RIDE TO THE POLLS ON SUPER TUESDAY? (March 3rd) It's important to exercise your right to vote even if you think you know the outcome. It's a habit you don't want to lose. Senior residents of Westminster and those who are unable to drive and want to vote, should call Westminster Cares at (802) 722-3607.

David Stern, the illustrious artistic director of Main Street Arts is directing "Cabaret" which will be showing at the BF Opera House in mid March. **Ira Wilner** is on the production team and is designing lights for this show which appears to be apropos for our political time where tolerance is rapidly sliding into intolerance. Ira is also on the production team for sound and lights for the Bellows Falls Union HS production of Mama Mia for those who want a more lighthearted production. Do you know how to sew?

Do you know how to sew? The Westminster West Library is looking for someone who can teach a group of kids (10 and up) how to make their own clothing. If you are willing to teach us 3-4 Saturdays from 10-12, please call us: 387-4682.

The Windham Orchestra, led by the orchestra's conductor and director, Hugh Keelan and soprano Elizabeth Wohl, will present four performances of Mozart's, The Magic Flute, at the Latchis Theater. The three spirits, supporting characters in the opera that guide principal characters through the journey they are on, will be played by **Magda Scharff, Callan McDowell and Finnegan Pucciarello**. All three are youth from Westminster West. They will be bringing their diverse singing experience together to form this tight trio. A local recital of Magic Flute excerpts featuring the spirits and the maestro and other available cast performed at the West West Congregational Church March 1st. Performances dates for the full opera in all its magic and charm are March 19th, 21st, 27th and 29th. To see our Westminster West spirits and the rest of cast and orchestra on stage at the Latchis Theater, purchase tickets at the Brattleboro Music Center's March calendar page.

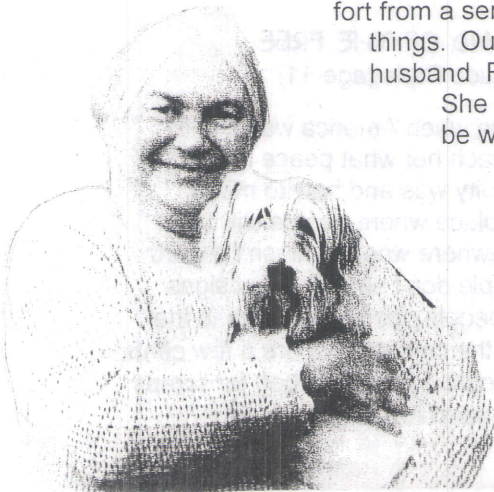
Bev Major passed away peacefully surrounded by her family on February 5th. She was a founding member of the Windmill Hill Pinnacle Association, deacon of the Westminster West Congregational Church, kindergarten teacher, librarian, long term Westminster school board member and very active in the Vermont Democratic party. She had many passions that she pursued locally and farther afield. Through her life, Beverly maintained her faith in the goodness of people, delighted in

her love of nature, and drew comfort from a sense of the divine in all things. Our condolences to her husband Randy and her family.

She leaves big shoes to be will be missed not only

by her family but by our community

A celebration of her life will be Saturday April 4th in the afternoon at the Westminster West Church. To the left is a photo of Bev with her beloved dog Zachary.



From **Eshagh Shaoul**: On Sunday morning Feb.16th Rose fell down some steps and landed on her head. I called 911 and soon she was rushed to the hospital in Brattleboro. Unfortunately they found there was internal bleeding in her head and called their contacts in Dartmouth Hitchhike hospital for help. Soon a helicopter was sent and Rose was moved there. Sunday evening Rose went through a 2 hour brain surgery which was very successful. Since last Sunday she has improved. But she is still in and out of some pains sleeps a lot and takes various medications for pain. Her memory is also improving. She is in good hands and well treated by the doctors, nurses and the staff of Dartmouth Hitchcock. My son and I are there with her all day and our daughter who lives in NY has spent 4 days with her. We send our prayers to Rose and her family.

Miles Brautigam is an intern in the performing arts division at MassMOCA; **Carrie Brautigam** is employed at the newly-opened Fotografiska Museum in New York

Elena Tansley was accepted into the Alpha Eta Honor Society. Alpha Eta is a national honor society that recognizes outstanding academic achievements and leadership accomplishments in the Allied Health Professions (athletic training, exercise science, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and speech language pathology/audiology). Elena is in the final semester of her senior year in the six year Physical Therapy program at Ithaca College.

The **Westminster Planning Board** could use another member who knows Climate Change is real and wants the town to plan accordingly with respect for Earth. For information, contact Kathy Kingston shawkingston@gmail.com

Lydia Pedigo was named to the fall Student Honor list at Vermont Community College.

Daron Tansley hiked all 48 4000 footers in the White Mountains between December 22nd 2019 and February 25th 2020. On February 23rd he hiked the Presidential Traverse, about 18 miles, which includes Mount Washington. Many of the winter hikes started at night in order to reach mountain summits by sunrise. The longest one day, solo hike was around 26 miles and started at 2:45am with the temperature at -18F. Daron was often accompanied on the hikes by Boreal Chickadees, White-winged Crossbills, and Canada Jays, and he found tracks left in the snow by snowshoe hare, pine marten, fisher, smaller members of the weasel family, porcupine, fox, coyote, bobcat, and a moose.

Galen Robinson, Nora Riley's son, has just recently created a business as a professional photographer. This is his first professional venture since he graduated from Northeastern University with a masters in digital media.

ITS FAIR TO SAY OUR LOCAL FAIR NEEDS YOU

The delightful, home-grown Westminster West Community Fair is scheduled to take place again on Saturday, September 12th, 2020 - as always, the Saturday after Labor Day. A small and dedicated group of community members have done the planning for many years, and could really use an infusion of new energy and ideas! Might you be one of those people?

This is not a one-size-fits-all commitment. There are many ways to get involved. We welcome anyone who is willing and interested in helping support this wonderful, community gathering that brings old & new friends and neighbors together.

NATURE MUSEUM OF GRAFTON PROGRAMS

For more information on any of these programs, go to our website at www.nature-museum.org

Friday March 6th- MOONLIGHT SNOWSHOE HIKE on the Danforth property in Grafton. Following a trek around their pond replete with beaver lodges, we'll head inside for a mug of cocoa or glass of wine. (7-9 PM)

Thursday March 26th- "WINTER BLIZZARDS BRING SPRING LIZARDS" - (7-8:30 PM) Location - The Homestead Room of the Grafton Inn, Grafton. No, not actual lizards, but every spring as the snow thaws and rain returns, frogs and salamanders emerge from their winter refuges and migrate to their breeding wetlands, recently replenished by water from the winter melt. When roads get in the way of these incredible movements, amphibians are put at great risk, and if traffic levels are high enough, entire populations can be wiped out. Yet the same roads posing a threat to frog and salamander populations also present unique opportunities for people to see these remarkable animals for themselves, sometimes in very large numbers. And for a child to witness such an awesome event can truly be a life changing experience. Join local herpetologist, Kiley Briggs, from The Orianne Society, to learn how frogs and salamanders survive the winter, how to predict when and where they can be seen migrating in the spring, and how to safely witness the event for yourselves (and collect valuable data!)

Sunday April 5th - "FARMING ON THE WILD SIDE" with Nancy and John Hayden- (7-8:30 PM). Location: NewsBank Conference Center, Chester. One farm's decades-long journey into regenerative agriculture—and how these methods enhance biodiversity, pollinators, and soil health

Northern Vermont's Nancy and John Hayden have spent the last 25 years transforming their draft horse-powered, organic vegetable and livestock operation into an agro-ecological, regenerative, biodiverse, organic fruit farm, fruit nursery, and pollinator sanctuary. In *Farming on the Wild Side* they explain the philosophical and scientific principles that influenced them as they phased out sheep and potatoes and embraced apples, pears, stone fruits, and a wide variety of uncommon berry crops; turned much of their property into a semi-wild state; and adapted their marketing and sales strategies to the new century. As the Haydens pursued their goals of enhancing biodiversity and regenerating their land, they incorporated agroforestry and permaculture principles into perennial fruit polycultures, a pollinator sanctuary, repurposed greenhouses for growing fruit, *hügelkultur*, and ecological "pest" management. Beyond the practical techniques and tips, this book also inspires readers to develop greater ecological literacy and respect for the mysteries of the global ecosystem. *Farming on the Wild Side* tells a story about new ways to manage small farms and homesteads, about nurturing land, about ecology, about economics, and about things that we can all do to heal both the land and ourselves.

Saturdays, April 18th and 25th – JOURNAL MAKING AND NATURE SKETCHING WORKSHOPS Location: The Nature Museum at Grafton. (April 18th - 10-2) (April 25th - 9-3) Join local artist Lisa Robarts on April 18th to make an "Upcycled" nature journal, and return on the 25th to sketch in nature with published illustrator Susan Sawyer.

IF OCEANS COULD SPEAK

Manu Noce (age 8)

The oceans say
Stop putting so much trash into my body
Of waters
Killing all the habitat
Stop making all this plastic.
Everyday it gets put into my waters
Hear my voice
Sounds like the splashing of the waves
Word then splash – word then splash – word then splash
The oceans are speaking to the bad
Who make garbage and put in this trash
The oceans are happy that people play in it
And have fun
But sad that so many people throw trash in
And the animals are dying
The oceans are thankful
For the people
That take care of it.

HELPING WITH THE CENSUS EARNS BIG BUCKS

The 2020 Census is upon us and hiring NOW - Support your community and be a Census Taker! Find out more by meeting with Windham County Census Recruiter, David Longsmith, on Wednesday evening the 18th of March between 5 and 7 pm. at the Westminster West Library. He can answer your Census questions and assist in the application process. Wages start at \$20 per hour plus \$.58 per mile. These are part-time, flexible, temporary jobs from April to September.

PEN OF PEACE

Ani Gypson, age 12

As I hold my pen of peace
I see a world of love, and hope, and community
I see a world with equal rights,
Where everyone can be free to be who they are.
As I hold my pen of peace,
I see a world coming together to solve problems,
To share with each other the magic that we have created
Our music, our art, our stories, our poems,
And most of all,
Our love.
As I hold my pen of peace,
I write the story,
Of a new future.

LAND OF THE FREE

Jude Paris (age 11)

If I was alive when America was a child
I would teach her what peace meant
What equity was and how to make
America a place where people will want
To live somewhere where war isn't a word
Where people don't see keep out signs
And where people open their doors to the
Homeless and the rich could spare a few cents
So the poor would not have to beg for scraps
I would teach America a lesson!!!

WESTMINSTER WEST CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday worship normally begins at 10am – come as you are
We are an Open and Affirming Church, fully accessible;

- March 8 – Susie Webster-Toleno, Manna Collection
(Note time change – move those clocks ahead one hour)
March 15 – Pulpit exchange, Rev. Dr. Scott Couper, Centre
Congregational Church, Brattleboro,
March 22 – Susie Webster-Toleno,
March 29 – Adrienne Major
April 5 – Palm Sunday Susie Webster-Toleno, Holy Commu-
nion and collection for One Great Hour of Sharing
April 9 – Tenebrae Service 7pm, Susie Webster-Toleno
April 10 – Good Friday, Ecumenical Service in Brattleboro,
location TBA, noon – 3pm, come and go at will
April 12 – Sunrise service, 5:50am, Leslie and Tom Griffith
Followed by Easter Breakfast at the church, (8ish)
10am - Easter Service – Susie Webster Toleno
May 17 - We are hosting the Windham Union Association
meeting here at 2pm, for a celebration of church choirs

CHOIR: Folks who'd like to join the choir for any Sunday can contact Charlotte Gifford at gifford@languagehead.com or 387-4145. Choir rehearsal is at 9am each Sunday. All services during the Easter season feature special music; with an additional rehearsal: March 29 at 11:30am, right after service.

PALM SUNDAY: We open Holy week with a special Palm Sunday service on April 5th led by Susie Webster-Toleno and featuring music by the choir.

GOOD FRIDAY: An ecumenical service will be held at a church TBA noon to 3pm, come and go at will.

MAUNDY THURSDAY: The Tenebrae service will be held on Maundy Thursday, April 9th at 7pm. Maundy Thursday is the time we commemorate Jesus' last night with his friends, when he shared his Last Supper with them. The word "tenebrae" means "shadows", and the Tenebrae service allows us to delve into the shadow side of the Christian journey, through scripture readings, music, and the extinguishing of the candles. The service ends with darkness, with the knowledge the congregation will gather again on Easter morning to celebrate the new hope that comes with Christ's resurrection.

EASTER FLOWERS: We are asking folks to buy their own Easter lilies, tulips, or other spring flowers and bring them to the church prior to the April 12th service. Please email Susie at susiewt@gmail.com with names of those you wish to honor or memorialize in our Easter worship bulletin.

EASTER: On Easter Sunday, we start with a sunrise service, a pancake breakfast for the community, and then an Easter Service at 10am. The Sunrise Service begins at 5:50 am. As has become traditional, it will take place at Milenkovich's pond overlooking the Connecticut River valley and Mount Monadnock, and offering, should the weather cooperate, a beautiful celebration of the sunrise. (Off of Patch Rd, go up Barnes Rd, at fork in road go left on Lettieri Rd, take the next right on Milenkovich Rd, and go to the end.) The pancake breakfast begins at 8:30am at the church. We welcome donations of juice, eggs, bacon, sausage and other breakfast foods. We'll supply the pancakes, syrup and coffee! Those who attend the Sunrise service can hang out at the church with a cup of coffee as they await breakfast. The choir will rehearse after breakfast at 9:00. Come to breakfast and stay for the Easter Service.

CELTIC BLESSING

May the blessings of light be on you – light without and light within. May the blessed sunlight shine on you like a great peat fire, so that the stranger and friend may come and warm themselves at it.

And may the light shine out of the two eyes of you, like a candle set in the window of a house bidding the wanderer come in out of the storm. And may the blessing of the rain be on you, may it beat upon your Spirit and wash it fair and clean, and leave there a shining pool where the blue of Heaven shines, and sometimes a star.

And may the blessing of the earth be on you, soft under your feet as you pass along the roads, soft under you as you lie out on it, tired at the end of the day; and may it rest easy over you when, at last you lie out under it. May it rest so lightly over you that your soul may be out from under it quickly; up and off on its way to God.

And now may the Lord bless you, and bless you kindly.

THREE CHANCES TO SHARE OUR BLESSINGS

In April, we have two good opportunities to put our communal strength behind our wish to be a force for compassion in our world. On April 5th, we'll participate in the annual "One Great Hour of Sharing," a national interdenominational offering that supports justice missions throughout our country. On March 8th we'll share our monthly local outreach efforts with our Manna Offering for Our Place in Bellows Falls. If you're not able to be in church with us those days, consider mailing your offering to the church so we can be even more expansive in our giving. The third way is to share your blessings and your curses at the Cabin Fever Supper Saturday March 7th at 6pm

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Our pastor, Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno, welcomes visits and calls, and is also happy to visit YOU in your home, workplace, hospital room or wherever. Susie's generally in on Monday and Thursday afternoons, and can be reached at the church any time at 387-2334 if it's not an emergency, but the fastest ways to reach her are via cell 802-579-8356 or email susiewt@gmail.com.

BUILDING USE: Tom Griffith 387-569
tgriffith@hilltopmontessori.org

DEACONS: Charlotte Gifford 387-4145
gifford@languagehead.com

TRUSTEES: Guy Payne 869-2600 Gpay-
nevt@gmail.com

WEB SITE: www.westminsterwest.org.

WEEKLY MIDDAY PRAYER SERVICE

Pastor Susie makes a point of being in prayer for our community every Thursday 1:30-2:00pm. If you have prayer concerns that you'd like her to lift during that time, please let her know. If you'd like to join her, she'll happily arrange to meet you at the church or elsewhere. If you can't be with her but would like to join in that habit from where you are please know that your prayers for the community are weaving together with all who pray at that time and being strengthened.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS AT THE WEST WEST CHURCH

SILENT MEDITATION: Are you looking for a way to decompress and de-stress before the start of the new week? In response to interest from the community, both at our grant-funded workshops and in a survey at last year's Cabin Fever supper, the church now opens every Sunday afternoon for a half hour of silent meditation. You are invited to join us at the church at 5:30 for a time of quiet reflection. In this non-sectarian practice, participants sit in silence and meditate. Please feel free to join us - all are welcome!

LABYRINTH WALKS: As part of our Lilly Endowment grant, the church acquired a gorgeous labyrinth, based on the ancient design in the cathedral of Chartres, France. It is a beautiful pattern, painted purple on canvas, and it rolls out to fill our sanctuary. The church offers labyrinth walks on an on-going basis, and all are welcome. It's very easy to walk the labyrinth: simply come with clean socks (spares are available at the church), and follow the path at your own pace. We encourage you to try this contemplative practice for yourself. Currently, we open the labyrinth each solstice and equinox, to observe the cycles of the natural world, as well as on Ash Wednesday, to open the season of Lent. The next scheduled walk will be on the eve of summer solstice: Saturday, June 20th at 7:00pm. We hope to use it out doors in the future.

DOG LICENSES AND \$10 RABIES SHOTS

Licenses are due by April 1. Just come to the Town Hall and bring a copy of your dog's certificate of rabies vaccination and the fee (see below). If your dog was vaccinated last year, it is good for two years and the Town Clerk should have a record. You can also obtain a dog license by mail. Send a copy of the rabies vaccination, if needed, and a check to the Westminster Town Clerk, P.O. Box 147, Westminster, VT 05158

You can also obtain a license at the annual rabies clinic, Sat. March 28th, 10:30 to noon, at the town garage. The clinic is held by Dr. Vincent DiBernardo of the Rockingham Veterinary Clinic. The cost is \$10.00 per vaccination.

The dog license fee before April 1 is \$9.00 (\$11.00 after April 1) for dogs that are spayed or neutered and \$13.00 (\$17 after April 1st) for dogs not spayed or neutered

IF A LIE WAS A TRAVELER

Indigo Goldman (age 11)

If a lie was a traveler,
Then it would be money,
And does it travel? Yes.
And does it spread? Yes.

If a lie was a traveler,
The world would rain its tears,
And it would
Earthquake its shivers,
And lies would be travelers forever.

But if truth was a traveler,
The world would be free,
There would be rainbows every day,
And cries would be unknown.

If truth was a traveler
Then peace would rule...

2020 LEGO CONTEST COMING SOON

The 2020 LEGO Contest is taking place on Saturday March 14 from 9AM to 1PM at the NewsBank Conference Center, 352 Main Street, Chester, VT. Early registration by March 6 qualifies for a discounted entry of \$15. The event is open to LEGOmaniacs Pre-K through Grade 8 and their families.

Participants should construct their original creations (no kits allowed), with a maximum size of 24" x 36", and bring them on March 14 between 9 and 10am to the Conference Center, generously donated by NewsBank for the event. Entries will be judged in different grade categories for their originality, imagination, and presentation. There is also a separate family team class for collaborating children and parents.

The Registration Form may be downloaded from Special Events at www.stlukesepiscopalvt.org & www.ourchester.org. Entries by Friday March 6 are \$15. After that date and on the day of the contest, entries will be \$20. A check for the registration fee should be made out to "St. Luke's Church" and mailed, along with the registration form, to the Registrar, Lillian Willis, PO Box 318, Chester, VT 05143. Early registration is requested. For additional information, please contact Lillian Willis at 802-875-1340 or lbwillisct@comcast.net.

PERENNIAL PLANT SWAP

oup of gardeners meet at the Fire Station in Saxtons River or Ascutney every Wednesday at 6pm to swap perennials. Then they visit a nearby garden. Schedules vary, to be informed, get on the email list by contacting Alison Latham at alie-mae@juno.com. It's fun!

WESTMINSTER CARES PROGRAMS

Senior Potluck Lunch – 2nd Thur of month – noon at the First Congregational Church (FCC). Bring a dish to share.

Gentle Yoga – Mon 10am at the Westminster Institute. Led by Lisa Negro, participants can pay for 10 weeks or on a weekly basis. **Chair Yoga** – Fri 9:30-10:30am at FCC led by Bonnie Anderson, must sign up with Donna Dawson.

Living Strong Classes - at CCWW only Thur at 6pm and at FCC Mon and Thur at 9am. Also in Bellows Falls.

Secrets of Healthy Aging – 2nd & 4th Tuesday at 11:30am at the Fire Station.

Meals on Wheels – available 5 days a week for eligible seniors 60 years old or older and adults with disabilities.

For information or transportation, contact Donna Dawson at Westminster Cares at 722-3607 or wecares@sover.net

LIBRARY UPGRADES, READ ALL ABOUT IT

The Westminster West Library received a 50% matching grant from the VT Council of the Arts for a Cultural Facilities Grant. They gave us \$3,100 and we covered the other half to pay for the recent electrical upgrades at the Library. We have new outdoor path lighting and safety motion lights, and we recently installed an AV system to display films and digital media. Welcome to the 21st century! We are so proud and happy to have these much-needed upgrades. Thank you, everyone! Our donors, volunteers, patrons, and new members will appreciate the lights, safety accessibility, and access to media on the new projector system. Thank you to our VT State Representatives who allocated these funds for non-profit organizations. We couldn't have done it without you.

PINNACLE ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 26TH

Program speaker Robert Zaino
"Vermont Conservation Design"

The meeting will be at the Westminster West Congregational Church, 44 Church Street, Westminster West from 4 to 6pm. WHPA members and members of the public are encouraged to come early, enjoy refreshments, peruse maps on display, and attend the brief business meeting to learn about plans the Pinnacle has for the coming year. Also the volunteer of the year award will be announced.

Robert Zaino is an Ecologist at the State of Vermont's Agency of Natural Resources and the Fish and Wildlife Department and one of 3-authors of "Wetland, Woodland, Wildland: A guide to the natural communities of Vermont". His topic is about Vermont Conservation Design, a scientific vision for maintaining Vermont's species in an ecologically functional landscape. How WHPA lands contribute to climate resilience, create carbon storage in their forests, and idea to further this work.

Photo:
Robert Zaino



WEEKEND STROLLS and SPRING PROGRAMS

For last minute changes, more information, or directions, visit www.windmillhillpinnacle.org or call program contact person.

April 19, Sunday (rain date April 25 Saturday), **10am - noon Vernal Pool Walk** Rebecca Chalmers, Wetland Ecologist for VT Agency of Natural Resources, will discuss the life cycles of animals found in vernal pools and Vermont's rules to protect those special places and their inhabitants. All ages welcome. Wear waterproof boots. Meet at the Martin trail head, 1.5 miles on Bemis Hill Road on right. No bug repellent allowed on your hands if you wish to handle creatures we find. Register at 802-869-1166 or rebecca.chalmers@vermont.gov or wilsonpaul@gmail.com. Check the Pinnacle website or Face book closer to the event to make sure there is no change in the meeting location.

May 2, Saturday, 9:30 AM-noon. Spring Wildflower Walk. (Rain date May 3rd) Libby Mills and Sarah Waldo will lead this favorite stroll to discover delicate ephemeral flowers of the hardwood forest. Meet at Westminster West Church to carpool to the mystery site. Wear waterproof shoes. Bring camera and water. For questions and requested registration, contact sarah_waldo@hotmail.com or 802-387-6036.

May 3, Sunday, 10 AM-1 PM. Herricks Cove Activity. Rain or shine. Vanessa Stern and Molly Wilson will host a table at the Herricks Cove Wildlife Festival with maps, program information, and a nature-based craft project for children. Herricks Cove is off Missing Link Road (Route 5) in Rockingham, VT. Visit Pinnacle's website for more information closer to the event.

May 9, Saturday, 1 PM Wildflower Walk sponsored by Putney Mountain Association. Meet at the kiosk at the end of School Forest Drive behind Putney Central School (by the Putney Pool). For info, call Pat Shields (802) 387-8595 or check their website: putneymountain.org

May 23 Saturday, 9 AM-noon. Cliff or Ledge Walk. Does the Pinnacle really have cliffs? Well not really according to Webster. But we do have small rock walls or ledges caused by softer rock eroding away leaving the harder rock to form small cliffs which are very breath taking even if they aren't huge. Led by geologist Roger Haydock, the walk will start at the Jamie Latham Kiosk, traveling on the Hemlock Trail to the Undercliff Trail, to Paul's Ledges and back on the Hemlock trail. Meet at the Westminster West Church at 9am to carpool to the Latham Kiosk. Rain or shine. For info, call Alison Latham at (802) 387-5711. (see photo below)

June 6, Saturday, Five Corners Rendezvous, a joint walk with Putney Mountain. Hikers can get there from 5 different directions: Putney Mountain Trailhead (2.7 miles) on either the West Cliff Trail or the Ridgeline trail, Holden Trailhead (2.5 miles) Holden Trail to Headwaters Trail to Ridgeline Trail, Grassy Brook Trailhead in Brookline (1 mile) Windmill Hill Trail, and Ed Dodd Trailhead (0.8 mile) Ed Dodd Trail. Leave in time to meet at noon to have lunch with other hikers. To estimate your departure time multiply the miles by 1 mph for casual walkers and 2 mph for brisk walkers. You can choose to walk back the way you came OR swap cars with someone who left from a different trailhead, and drive their car to a designated meeting spot you both agree on. (i.e., School parking lot, town turn around or church.). For questions, call Alison Latham for WH"PA (802) 387-5711 or for PMA Kai George (802) 387-2877. Visit our websites to look at trail maps and access point information or last minute changes.

June 20, Saturday 9:30 AM-noon. Over the Hill Hike! Enjoy a 4-mile hike on the Jamie Latham Trail, past an old beaver pond and stone walls, through beautiful hardwood stands, with a stop to enjoy the view from the renovated Pinnacle Cabin. Bring water, lunch, snack, insect repellent, sunscreen. Meet at Westminster West Church to split cars and carpools between the start at the Latham Trailhead & finish at the Holden Trailhead. Register with Tony Coven at 802-387-6650.

The launch of "HOW DID THEY GET ALL THAT LAND?" by Libby Mills and Rosalyn Shaoul will be rescheduled.



Photo of Ledges on Undercliff Trail by Andy Toepfer

BOO

Banya LaRose (age 7)

I am building a house with my hammer.
It is hard work.

It takes 102 nails.

I am sweating!

Suddenly the doorbell rings

I run down the steps.

I fall on my bottom.

The door slowly opens....

I am frightened!

A ghost comes in.

He looks at me.

He said: "I am going to take you with me!

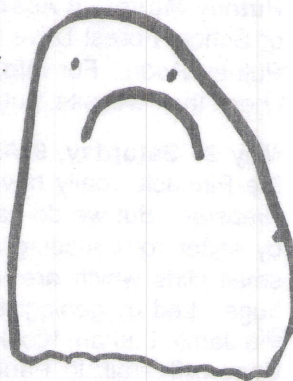
I will turn you into a ghost."

So now....

I hammer my nails,

Building my House.

A ghost still building my House: BOO



CHESTERS ANNUAL TREE & SCRUB SALE

This year we are offering a great Pagoda Dogwood tree and three fabulous shrubs: Winterberry, Little Quick Fire Hydrangea, and Aronia Low Scape Mound. All are extremely hardy and adaptable plants with colorful blossoms and multi-season interest. These reliable, low-maintenance plants are nursery grown and good size. They are offered to the public at below regular retail prices and would make excellent additions to anyone's property or memorable presents for birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's or Father's Day, or house-warming events.

Buyers do not have to be a Chester resident, but do have to pick the plants up when notified they are in at Sunshine Acres Nursery on Route 11 in Chester. Orders have to be submitted and paid for by April 1. For an informative and colorful order form that gives details about the plants, their prices, and where to send the check and order, go to www.ourchester.org or www.chestertvt.gov/chester-townscape.html to download the form. For more information, please contact Lillian Willis at 802-875-1340 or lbwillisct@comcast.net.

PEN OF PEACE

Jessy Joy Lipton Pierce (age 15)

As I hold my pen of peace
I see swirling twirling grafite whirling
Drawing with my pen of peace, it draws flowers over guns
And holds power over runs where the great fighter jet fly

As I hold my pen of peace, I write hearts over hate
And make feasts big and great
To feed the hungry people standing by

I dance my way through countries
Who have never seen a calm night
Where the bombs bloom big and bright

I swirl and I twirl always a whirl, prancing away the dislike
I see children laughing, I see enemies hug
I see life returned to all

But with one slip of a knife I know it will all fall
So I grant peace to the mind, peace of all kinds
And I go with a pied pipers call

All that dare have the gall to threaten the peace of the pen

LEARN NON-VIOLENT COMMUNICATIONS

Are you someone who would like to learn how to speak more effectively about your beliefs and feelings and still retain your cool? An 8 week course on Non-Violent Communication will be held in the fall, taught by Karen Fogliatti, experienced educator, mediator and counselor. If this is something you are interested in, contact Sue Venman at 802-869-2600.

What is NVC? Dr. Marshall Rosenberg, founder of Nonviolent Communication (NVC), describes it best: "You can enjoy powerful and satisfying relationships ... in all areas of your life. Most of us have been educated from birth to compete, judge, demand, diagnose - to think and communicate in terms of what is "right" and "wrong" with people. At best, the habitual ways we think and speak hinder communication, and create misunderstanding and frustration in others and in ourselves. And still worse, they cause anger and pain, and may lead to violence. NVC shows us how to reach beneath the surface and discover what is alive and vital within us, and how all of our actions are based on human needs that we are seeking to meet. When we understand and acknowledge our needs, we create a shared basis for a more satisfying relationship - a deeper connection with others and ourselves. Join the thousands of people world-wide who have improved their relationships - and their lives - with this simple, yet revolutionary process."

NVC IS RIGHT FOR YOU IF:

- You are tired of having the same old argument again and again.
- You lose friends or connections when you stand up for yourself.
- You hang on to friendships by "being nice" and abandoning who you really are.
- You either back down, disappear or explode when things get tense.

YOU CAN LEARN:

- To feel competent and confident in the heat of difference.
- To be authentic while simultaneously holding the connection.
- To nurture self-connection to understand and heal your triggers.
- To build a repertoire of skills which will help in any situation.
- To get to a resolution you can both feel good about.
- To use conflict for personal growth and enhanced relationships.

Karen Fogliatti has been facilitating Conscious Communication workshops and Nonviolent Communication (NVC) workshops since 2002. She has mediated interpersonal and group conflicts from 1993 to the present. Karen has also facilitated trainings in Alternatives to Violence in prison and in neighborhoods in Detroit in the 80s and 90s and counseled people in a domestic violence program in the Pioneer Valley in overcoming abusive behavior in intimate relationships. The powerful tools taught in her workshops lay a foundation for creating a world and a way of relating to self and others in which everyone's needs matter. Karen holds a Ph.D. in Philosophy of Education from the University of Michigan and wrote a dissertation on nonviolence. She currently lives in Western Mass.

WEST WEST LIBRARY PROGRAMS

For more information on any program call: 387-4682 or email: WestminsterWestLibrary@gmail.com

THE ADULT READING GROUP

Meets Third Monday of the month from 7-9pm. You can join in at anytime. The next readings are:

March 16th: "The Secret Scripture" by Sebastian Barry

April 20th: "Tarka the Otter" by Henry Williamson

May 18th: "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" by Caitlin Doughty

June 15th: "Underground Railroad" by Colson Whitehead

The job of presenter and discussion leader is shared among members, with the person who proposed the book under discussion being the leader. Refreshments are served. New members are welcome. The books are ordered through inter library loans. But please get in touch with Lise Cavanaugh if you have, or are planning to have, copies of the books.

VACATION WEEK AT THE WESTMINSTER WEST PUBLIC LIBRARY

During February vacation week, the WW Library hosted poet Rajnii Eddins and artist Amber Paris. A group of kids spent all week writing poetry and creating great works of art. In photo below, Rajnii Eddins is on the far right.

Originally from Seattle Washington, Spoken Word Poet/ Emcee and Teaching Artist **Rajnii Eddins** has been engaging diverse community audiences for over 27 years. He was the youngest member of the Afrikan American Writers Alliance at age 11 and has been actively sharing with youth and community in VT since 2010. His latest work, Their Names Are Mine, aims to confront white supremacy while emphasizing the need to affirm our mutual humanity. Rajnii is a gifted poet and teacher who held their attention and interest throughout. We are hoping that this will not be the last time he visits our community.

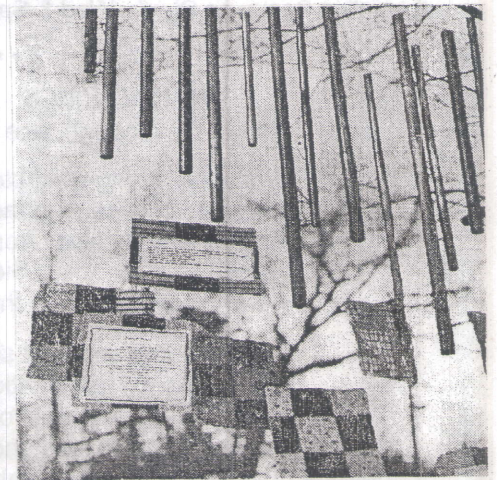


Amber Paris is a visual artist living in Putney, Vermont with her husband and three homeschooled children. When she's not busy making art or learning alongside her children, she facilitates collaborative, community art in libraries, at farmer's markets and in other community spaces. Amber received her BFA from Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia. She has made Vermont her home for the last decade. She is a fascinating artist and gifted teacher of art.

The children started the morning writing poems from prompts such as: "If my imagination was a nation.....If the ocean could speak... and: Write a poem as if you are truth personified. You are traveling the world. Who do you meet and how do they greet you?" The children showed great creativity and diversity of voice while answering these prompts, and they wrote many, many poems both individually and in groups.

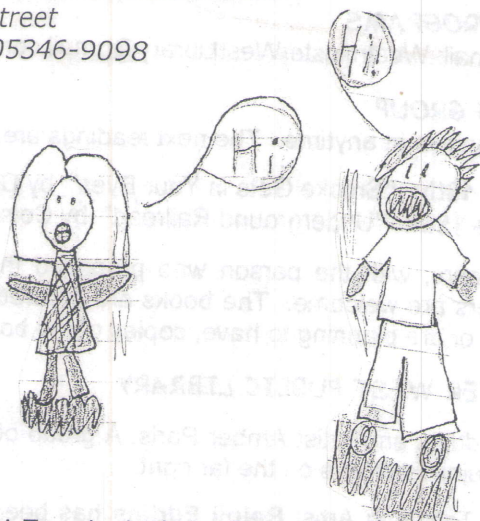
Photos by Lise Cavanaugh

After lunch, the children worked with Amber Paris on a community art project. The process included carving a large branch, cutting several pieces of metal pipe, and sewing weights for an impressive wind chime. The weights each feature one of the children's original poems. This wind chime are hanging outside the Library. Please stop by and take a look and pause to enjoy the chimes.



Congregational Church of Westminster West
THE WEST PARISH WHISTLER
 44 Church Street
 Putney, VT 05346-9098

**Return
 Service
 Requested**



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If Truth Were A Traveler by Luna Stamm and Banya LaRosa

SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER and CALENDAR

SPRING CALENDAR

WEEKLY EVENTS:

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS MARCH 8TH
SPRING FORWARD

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH of WEST WEST
 Church Service - 10am Sunday

HEALTH AND FITNESS:
 Living Strong Program at CCWW - Mon 6pm & Thur 6pm
 Living Strong Program at FCC - Mon 9am & Thur 9am
 Yoga at Westminster Institute - Mon 10am

PRE-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES
 Story Time at Butterfield Lib - Mon (1st & 3rd) 3:30pm

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM
 Westminster West Library Wed 2-6pm

WESTMINSTER WEST LIBRARY
 Mon 7-9pm * Tue & Wed 2-6pm * Thur 10am-noon
 Sat 10am - noon

SENIOR ACTIVITIES
 Secrets of Healthy Aging at W Fire Sta - Tue (2nd & 4th) 11:30am
 Senior Pot Luck Lunch at FCC - 2nd Thur

RECYCLING
 Recycling Center on Rte 5 - Wed & Sat - 9am - 1pm

WIND CHIMES

Slyker Cavanaugh, age 11

When the strong wind blows
 And the wind chimes sing their tune
 And the trees sway from
 Side.....to.....Side

The wind whistles along with the chimes.

I take my kite and let it soar
 as high as my imagination.

I picture my kite is a symbol of peace,
 showing the world how to love and be elegant
 like the bright eagle that flies high in the sky.

Cabin Fever Supper

15th Annual Fundraising Dinner
 Westminster West Congregational Church
Saturday, March 7, 2020 at 6 PM
At the church

Over a hearty meal provided by local chef Tristan Toleno
 Join your neighbors in celebrating our
 little patch of the planet. Bring a strong appetite and be pre-
 pared to share or enjoy short tales highlighting the
 quirky country life of our village and its environs.

The Menu:

Salad Greens with Apples and Maple Glazed Pecans (V & G/F),
 Kale and Beet Salad, (V & G/F),
 Vermont Grafton Cheddar Mac and Cheese (V),
 Roasted Rosemary and Garlic Chicken, (G/F),
 Baked Sweet Potato, Pear and Sweet Onion (V & G/F),
 Roasted Squash, Carrots and Parsnips (V & G/F),
 Red Hen and Orchard Hill Bread,
 Frozen Maple Mousse w/ Ginger Caramel Sauce (G/F)
 Chocolate Mousse (G/F)

(served family style)

Wow!

Adults: \$16 Kids: \$9. Under 4; free. Household
 max: \$45. Wine for sale by the glass. Call 387-5694
 for further details. **Sorry, no reservations.**
Doors open at 5:30, and we frequently sell out.

WANNA TRY OUT SNOW SHOEING?

The West West Library has about 10 pairs of snowshoes for
 children and teens and 2 pairs for adults. Provided by Wind-
 ham on the Move, a community program to encourage physi-
 cal activity. We also have garters and poles. Come check
 them out as you would a book; completely free of charge!