

E-News for the Week of Sunday, February 14

First Sunday in Lent

7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Readings</u> Isaiah 58: 1-12 Psalm 51:1-17 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 -</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Participants</u> Celebrant: Rev. Nancy Wright Altar Guild: Cheryl Couillard Communion Assistant: Bob Furst Lector: Jane A' Lee Heyerdahl Liturgical Assistant: TBA Organist: Ann Gnagey</p>

10:00 a.m. Regular Sunday Worship for the 14th	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Readings</u> Deuteronomy 26:1-11 Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16 Romans 10:8b-13 Luke 4:1-13</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Participants</u> Celebrant: Rev. Nancy Wright Altar Guild: Kathe Bruno Communion Assistant: Johanna White Lector: Johanna White Liturgical Assistant: TBA Organist: Ann Gnagey Greeters: Karen & Peter Grant Ushers: Sharon Sturm & Richard Butz</p>

Upcoming Week

Wednesday, 2/10: Ash Wednesday

7:00 p.m. Worship Service

Sunday, 2/14

9:00 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Monday, 2/15

6:00 p.m. Council Meeting

Tuesday, 2/16

6:00-9:00 p.m. Nunn's Men's Group (rental—SS annex)

Wednesday, 2/17

6:15 p.m. Choir

7:15 p.m. Contemporary

Thursday, 2/18

10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Quilter's Group

6:00 p.m. Care for Creation showing of "Merchants of Doubt" (see announcement below)

Click [HERE](#) for a long-range calendar.

Services in Lent

Ash Wednesday (February 10) 7:00 p.m. Receiving of Ashes and Holy Communion

Maundy Thursday (March 24) 7:00 p.m. A common Agape meal, Holy Eucharist, stripping of the altar

Good Friday (March 25) 7:00 p.m. Tenebrae service of scripture readings, prayers, and hymns, ending in darkness

Easter Sunday (March 27) 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. Worship services with Holy Communion; Pancake breakfast by Church Council from 7:30-9:30 a.m.

Upcoming Birthdays

2/11 Gene Heyerdahl

2/12 Samuel Schroeter

2/12 Kay Vasick

2/15 Jim Wilhite

2/16 Bekki Bruno

Pastor's Message

Today is Ash Wednesday. I hope that you will be able to attend a worship service. The service at Ascension will be at 7:00 p.m.

Ash Wednesday marks the time when we rededicate ourselves to God's love and God's purpose for our life. We remember that we are fragile and mortal and receive ashes, marked with the cross on our foreheads, with the words "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return."

This Lent I encourage you to practice taking Sabbath time. I've written a brief description in the upcoming Church Mouse. Sabbath is a time to reenergize, take a deep breath; relax; be aware of one's life and commitment to God, fill the spiritual "well," understand how through Jesus' resurrection we already have changed and can change. We recharge at the Source. Many activities can be part of this: and it may take planning.

Honoring the Sabbath is the Fourth Commandment, we take this with seriousness. But Sabbath keeping depends on circumstances and needs to be individualized--being restful, joyful, and nurturing a deeper sense of God's love is part of it. I will connect keeping Sabbath to each Sunday lesson during Lenten sermons. I encourage us to be in conversation about Sabbath and to enjoy this beautiful practice.

Blessings, Pr. Nancy

Sunday School News

Children

Valentine's Day is Sunday, and we are celebrating **LOVE!** Our love for each other and God's love for us. This is what's planned for kids and parents and grandparents and friends. Small children will need assistance with some of these from their grown up helper. 9:00 AM The fun begins! We'll start with some **"love"** songs. (All-purpose room.) We will also sing "Happy Birthday" to our seven children who have February birthdays. We have a special heart-shaped cake for them, with candles to blow out. Then, we'll divide to different areas to make lots of take home crafts and yummys.

Please feel welcome to bring a friend, if you wish. This is what we'll do:

A light breakfast bar will be set up to help yourselves, as you wish, when you wish. Juice, muffins, bagels, coffee, etc. (Kitchen island)

1. A giant tie-dyed heart valentine for the congregation. Trace your hand on white paper, write your name on it, cut it out, and add it (staple it) as a lacey border to the heart. (That is your sign-in)

2. Bead bracelet or necklace making, with heart shaped beads to highlight or accent your creation. Wear it or give it to someone you love. (In the Sunday School room)

3. Valentine card making, with stamps and stickers, markers and doilies. Share with a loved one. (In the Sunday School room)
 4. Decorating cupcakes and heart-shaped cookies, with icing, sprinkles, decorative picks, and placing them in bags or boxes with ribbons, to take home or give to someone special. Not to be eaten here. (in the all-purpose room)
 5. Fill felt heart pockets with Hugs and Kisses (Hershey) and a heart-shaped note with your name on it, and give it to someone to make them happy, maybe adults coming into church. (all purpose room).
- At 9:50 AM we will gather again, in the all-purpose room, and share our wonderful activities with each other, have a love prayer, and sing our final "Amen" song.

Other notes:

The Rock Star class made Valentine window hangers, refrigerator magnets and decorations that were distributed through Meals on Wheels on Feb. 5.

Our past few Sundays have been spent studying the prophet, Jeremiah, and Jesus calling of the first Disciples, by making them fishers of people. (in case you wonder what the fish were about).

The children, even the little ones know how to read and spell "God" and "Love."

Reminder: No Sunday School on Feb. 21. (due to school break)

Adults

The class is reading Pope Francis I Encyclical *Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home* as the Bishop has suggested. Anyone can join at any time; you can purchase a book from Pr. Nancy or read the Encyclical on line for free. No class preparation is needed, as we read aloud and discuss each paragraph.

From the Office

CHURCH MOUSE SUBMISSIONS—We received VERY FEW submissions for the Church Mouse (absolutely no still photos of the Scandinavian dinner even, and I know there are some floating around). So that we can (hopefully) have a richer *Church Mouse* edition, we are **extending the deadline to Sunday, February 14** for submissions in order to provide you with an electronic version with next week's E-News and the print version next Sunday, February 21 (which also happens to be our Congregational meeting)!

HARK! IMPORTANT UPCOMING NEWS AND EVENTS

Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform

Michael Hechmer will join us on **February 14** to speak about the criminal justice (and injustice) system in Vermont. Michael is a retired interfaith chaplain who now offers interfaith spiritual direction, teaches meditation, and volunteers with Mercy Connections, as well Vermonters for Criminal Justice Reform. Michael first began working in prisons in the early '90s at Washington Correctional Facility in Comstock NY. For most of a decade he led three day, intensive, experiential workshops in non-violence training at that facility. After retiring from UVM Med. Ctr. Hospital in 2010 he began teaching meditation at the NW Correction Facility in St Albans. He will share both some general information about this topic, some personal experience with inmates, and insights into how we have all contributed to our broken criminal justice system.

Save the Date - Care for Creation movie - Merchants of Doubt

7 PM - Thursday Feb 18, 2016

This 90-minute documentary delves into the well-funded campaign to spread doubt about climate change and other important issues. This event is co-sponsored by the Care for Creation Committee, VT Interfaith Power and Light, and the South Burlington Energy Committee.

Watch the trailer and find out more: <http://sonyclassics.com/merchantsofdoubt/>

Quilter's Group

All are welcome to join with the quilters at Ascension in the assembling of mission quilts for Lutheran World Relief. The quilts are tied rather than quilted hence no sewing skills are required. The process is simple and moves along quickly when many hands are involved. The group meets the first and third Thursday of the month 10 a.m. to 12 noon. **Next meeting is Thursday, February 18!**

Men's Breakfast

Calling all Men of Ascension! The next Men's Breakfast is **Saturday, February 20 at 8:30 a.m.** at Ascension. We're looking for one of the guys to make breakfast for us. Any volunteers? If so, contact Jake.

Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 21, 2016, 11:30 a.m. (immediately following service)

Meeting agenda will consist of voting for new council members, approving the minutes from the December Congregational Meeting, and approving the 2016 budget.

Women's Retreat 2016

Friday, April 29 (dinnertime) to Sunday, May 1 (after lunch) at the Blue Gentian Lodge in Londonderry, VT

It's our 20th Retreat! Great ready to have some memories made with our theme of Choosing Happiness → Having Fun & Celebrating Grace!

Cost is \$165/person (includes your room and all 7 meals!)

Sign-up sheet is in the Narthex. Questions? Ask Bonnie @ bonnielomb@gmail.com.

Coffee Hour

The 2016 coffee hour list has been posted. Please sign up!

Additional News and Opportunities

Film Festival

On **February 11-13, 2016**, the Vermont International Film Foundation (VTIFF) is presenting a three-day festival of cinema from the Middle East in Contois Auditorium, Burlington City Hall. This specially curated program brings to Vermont eight films from Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, including the Academy Award-nominated Palestinian film Omar. N.B.: 50% of the films were directed by women. Global Roots was launched by VTIFF four years ago to offer our community opportunities to learn about other cultures that relate to Americans living in Vermont, without the clichés of sensational and superficial media representations.

Two of the filmmakers will be attending the screenings – Leila Sansour for Open Bethlehem and Roger Sherman for In Search of Israeli Cuisine. Every evening around 5:30 or 6pm VTIFF will offer tastings of food from the Middle East with cash bar.

The Festival was made possible with a grant from the Sisters of Mercy Peace Initiative and co-sponsored by the Burlington-Bethlehem-Arad Sister City Program, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary. Mousa Ishaq, long-time member of Ascension, is the chair of the Sister City Program and extends a special invitation to Ascension members and friends to attend. The film Open Bethlehem,

to be screened on Thursday, February 11, at 7 P.M., may be of special interest, given our sister congregation relationship with the Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem. The film's director, Leila Sansour, will be at the screening for a follow-up Q and A session. A reception to which all are cordially invited starts at 6 P.M.

Passes for the three-day festival of eight films are available now for \$30 (general), \$20 (VTIFF members), and \$15 (students). Tickets to individual films are also available now and at the door. For more information, visit www.vtiff.org.

Tai Chi at Ascension!

Tai Chi for All Generations, **Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.** with Elizabeth Wirls (**Does NOT meet 2/10 for Ash Wednesday**)

It's a new year, time to get into a new groove! Please join us!

Classes are ongoing and everyone is welcome to come as you are, whenever you wish. All generations are welcome! Please note that we have decided to offer these classes on a "pay as you can" basis. That way everyone who is interested will be able to join us! For more information, see the attached brochure and feel free to contact Elizabeth in the church office, 862-8866

[CLICK HERE](#) for full brochure.