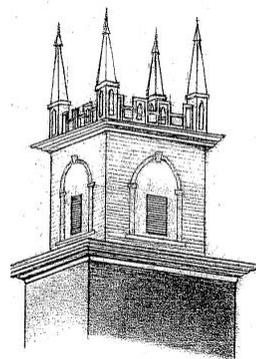


+ **N.E.W.S. CONNECTION**
Pittsford Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
121 Village Green
Pittsford, VT 05763

Vol. 21 No.5

May 2021



Message from the Pastor



Transparency and full disclosure are words we often hear in the media today. What do they mean for me in my work with you?

An aspect of my annual licensure as your interim pastor through The Southwest Association On Church and Ministry (SWACOM), I complete an annual self-evaluation in accordance with the U.C. Code of Ministerial Standing. To that end, I affirm these four aspects of covenanted ministry and share them with you, the church community.

First: Relying on Grace, I covenant with God through prayer, worship, Bible study, and nurturing the gifts of others in the church.

The phrase “contemplative in action” has stayed with me from my

earlier training. I recognize that ministry does not happen in isolation.

Second: With regard to myself, home, family, and friends, I engage in a healthy, balanced lifestyle that always sets aside for Sabbath. I continue to enjoy researching the history and families of Pittsford and elsewhere in Vermont.

Third: I “preach and teach the Gospel without fear or favor, regarding all persons with equal respect and concern” and firmly adhere to the principle that “there is yet more light and truth to break forth from God’s Holy Word.”

Fourth: With respect to the wider United Church of Christ, I endeavor to participate more fully in the covenantal work of the United Church of Christ. Through Zoom meetings, I have participated in required Boundary Training, monthly Bible discussions, and have service on the SWA Witness and Mission Committee. In furthering the work and mission of the Pittsford Congregational Church, I have learned and adapted to the technology of recording church services for access through our Facebook page, through You Tube, and on local cable access.

As we move closer to a new normalcy and the easing of COVID restrictions, I anticipate facilitating the work of various church committees that have been dormant. I welcome the coming opportunities for in-person dialogue and fellowship with local clergy and churches. I thank Rev. Jim Gray and Rev. Paul Sangree in their encouragement of my ministry among you, and in prayer and thanksgiving, I appreciate the steadfast support and counsel of Rev. Linda Kulas who serves as my mentor.

In closing, I share with you the “Marks of Faithful and Effective Ministry in the UCC” with these Best Practices for the nurturing UCC identity to which you hold me accountable:

- ❖ Acknowledging Jesus Christ as sole Head of the Church.
- ❖ Communicating passion for the oneness of the body of Christ reflected in Scripture (John 17:21).
- ❖ Holding active membership in a local church of the United Church of Christ.
- ❖ Participating in the various settings of the United Church of Christ, including associations, conference, general synod, and global ministries.
- ❖ Knowing and appreciating UCC history, polity, and theology.
- ❖ Exhibiting a commitment to the core values of the United Church of Christ: continuing testament, extravagant welcome, and changing lives.

- ❖ Demonstrating an appreciation for and participation in the ecumenical and interfaith partnerships of the United Church of Christ.

Yours in faith,
Michael F. Dwyer, Interim Pastor