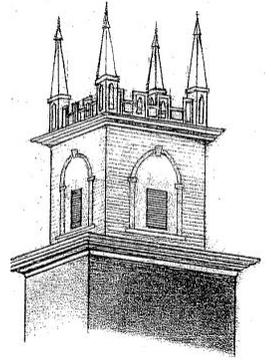


**+ N.E.W.S. CONNECTION**  
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**Message from the Pastor**



The Installation Serve for a Settled Pastor on August 14 was a personal milestone that filled me with love and gratitude for all that the ceremony embodied. We were all lifted up through the words, prayers, and music. Eight other church communities of the Southwest Association of the United Church of Christ were represented through their ministers or delegates: Dorset,

Bennington Second Congregational, Manchester, East Arlington, Fair Haven, Grace, Brandon, and West Rutland.

Some highlights from the service:

Our guest musicians were organist Alastair Stout, Minister of Music at Grace Congregational Church and Olivia Boughton, soprano. Olivia's husband, Jim Boughton, from PEG TV, video-recorded the service.

Rev. Linda Kulas led the welcome and call to worship. She gave the prayer of invocation:

Most Holy One in whom we are made whole, we come together this much anticipated day, in celebration with Christ for the call to ministry of Michael Dwyer and the ministry we share on behalf of the universal church. In every relationship of the church we share a covenant - a holy bond with each other to empower and encourage, to authorize and assist, to follow in trust and speak truth in love, that the body of Christ on earth may thrive.

As we install brother Michael as settled minister of The Pittsford Congregational Church, help us anoint him with our camaraderie and compassion, our pride and prayers, our human spirits and The Holy Spirit, that he may never feel aloof from us and always feel that You, O God, are near at hand.

Bless Michael with all the spiritual and physical tools he needs to build this church - discipleship, diligence, dedication, and discernment - reflecting that of Jesus his Lord's; that all together - pastor, congregation, association, denomination. and the universal church may witness to the glory of God. In Jesus's name we pray. Amen.

Moderator Ken Gagnon read from the Old Testament, ISAIAH 6:1-13

Olivia Boughton sang "Let the Life I've Lived Speak for Me"

Rev. Richard A. Bower, an Episcopal priest, read the Gospel: JOHN 21: 15-19

George Valley gave the sermon, "The Call to Love," concluding paragraph below:

It was not for nothing that John recorded this incident. He recorded it to show Peter as the great shepherd of Christ's people. It may be, indeed it was inevitable, that people would draw comparisons in the early Church. Some would say that John was the great one, for his flights of thought went higher than those of any other. Some would say that Paul was the great one, for he fared to the ends of the earth for Christ, but this chapter says that Peter, too, had his place. He might not write and think like John; he might not voyage and adventure like Paul; but he had the great honor, and the lovely task, of being the shepherd of the sheep of Christ. And here is where we can follow in the steps of Peter. We may not be able to think like John; we may not be able to go out to the ends of the earth like Paul; but each of us can guard someone else from being lost, and each of us can feed the lambs of Christ with the food of the word of God. We can all say, "Here I am. Send me".

"The Call" from Ralph Vaughan Williams's *Five Mystical Songs* complemented the sermon.

Rev. Dr. James H. Gray, Pastor of the United Church of Dorset and East Rupert, representing the Committee on Ministry of The Southwest Association of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ, presided over the installation of the settled pastor:

As we begin this service of installation, it is good we realize that, in our denomination, The United Church of Christ, installation is always the action of an association, but done in cooperation with the local church. Installation confirms and celebrates the covenantal relationship among the local church, its pastor and teacher, and the United Church of Christ and the wider church.

Moderator of the Pittsford Congregational Church, Ken Gagnon, read:

The Pittsford Congregational Church, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has called Michael F. Dwyer as its pastor and teacher, and respectfully requests that the Southwest Association install him in this ministry among us, according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ.

Rev. Jim Gray continued:

The Southwest Association has reviewed the request of The Pittsford Congregational Church. We have prayerfully examined Michael. We confirm that he has been called by God for ministry in this place and declare that he has met all the necessary conditions for installation in this office. We are pleased to install him as your pastor and teacher. Pastor Michael Dwyer, please rise and come forward.

Are you willing to heed your call to ministry and enter into covenant with The Pittsford Congregational Church as their pastor and teacher, as well as into covenant with us who are The Southwest Association of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ?

Pastor Dwyer responded:

I am willing, and I promise to serve this church faithfully, preaching and teaching the word of God, administrating the sacraments and fulfilling the office of pastor according to the United Church of Christ.

The congregation affirmed:

We, the members of The Pittsford Congregational Church, receive Michael Dwyer as our pastor and teacher, promising to labor with him in the ministry of the gospel and give to him due honor and support. We gather with him and the Southwest Association as a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ.

All other clergy, delegates and other members present of the Southwest Association repeated:

We, the members of the Southwest Association of the United Church of Christ gather with you the people and pastor of The Pittsford Congregational Church as a sign of our covenant and in celebration of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

Rev. Gray concluded the Service of Installation with:

In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of The Southwest Association of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ, I declare you duly installed as pastor and teacher of The Pittsford Congregational Church.

Almighty God, you have heard the promises of your servants this day. Enable us to keep our vows and be steadfast in our good and faithful work.

Bless Michael Dwyer to whom the care of this congregation is now committed. Pour out the Holy Spirit on the people of The Pittsford Congregational Church and all the churches of The Southwest Association, that our mutual ministry may be blest with diligence and courage, sound minds, compassionate hearts, fervent energy and loyalty to Christ.

Inspire us to awaken the apathetic, strengthen the faithful, comfort the afflicted and build up the church. In these challenging times keep us steadfast in Your truth and love, in Jesus's name we pray. Amen.



Pastor Dwyer expressed his thanks, led the closing hymn, “Abide with Me,” and gave the Benediction. A lovely reception followed in the Fellowship Hall. A special thank you to Rebecca Davenport and the Reception Committee and all who provided beautiful flowers from their gardens. Thanks to Ivy Dixon for creating a photo album of the installation service. It will be available for viewing in the back of the church.

Yours in shared faith,

Michael F. Dwyer, Pastor