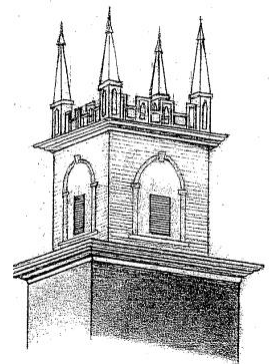


+ N.E.W.S. CONNECTION
Pittsford Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
121 Village Green
PO Box 570
Pittsford, VT 05763



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Message from the Pastor

Back to School Yearnings

Five years after packing up my classroom and taking home dozens of boxes (some still await opening), I still feel drawn back to school. These feelings long preceded teaching. I couldn't wait to go to school! Do you remember your first day of school? I walked the six blocks to school with our next-door neighbors and just couldn't understand these weeping kids in the schoolyard still clinging to their mothers. Typical for the time, my wonderful teacher could also play the piano almost every day. Among the songs we learned, "My little puppy's name is Rags; he eats so much that his tummy sags..." Someday, in the Fellowship Hall, when we need some light entertainment, I will sing it for you.



Pittsford Gothic: Pastor Dwyer and Trustee Andrea Winslow at work.

Beginning then with preprimary, every school year unfolded with new things to learn. And, as I started teaching at twenty-three, I had to learn first new material well enough in order to teach. At the end of each academic year, the students and I could reflect back on all the experiences and emotions we shared together. With the feedback that I continue to receive from former students, some of whom are now in their late fifties, what they remember more is the person who taught them with the content coming second. That meant caring and operating from a strong moral center. Actions speak louder than words.

My back-to-school energy has now manifested itself in the renovation of the nursery through the help of Stephanie White and Andrea Winslow. We have weeded through old toys and books, removed the worn and moldy carpet, have applied two coats of paints with the final coat going on September 7. We await the approved installation of a new floor that seals in the old and broken asbestos tiles. With these steps, we are sending a message that our children are valued.

All of this goes towards the steps we are taking to provide an ongoing Christian education for our young people that is based on some universal truths that God loves us and we, in turn begin Gospel mission that loves and cares for others. Our children will learn Bible stories as well as the purpose of what we do in worship on Sunday morning. We will continue to involve them in worship. Not only does our future as a church

depend on the next generation, so much is at stake in our country right now to lay a firm foundation that embraces goodness and truth and shuns all that does not come from Christ.

You will be reading more from Erma Rowe and Jane Wilson as they articulate their vision for our new monthly Sunday school lessons. We are grateful to them, once again, as they share their gifts and experiences of working successfully with children. Their leadership allows me to spend more time to develop our fall Bible Study program on the Gospel of Luke. This all begins on Sunday, September 10 and will continue on the second Sunday of every month. More information on the specifics of the Bible Study curriculum are forthcoming.

Let us say this prayer together in church and at home each time we begin a lesson with children and young adults.

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, you have committed to your holy Church the care and nurture of your children. Enlighten with your wisdom those who teach and those who learn, that rejoicing in the knowledge of your truth, they may worship you and serve you from generation to generation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Yours in shared faith,

Michael F. Dwyer, Pastor