



## WINTER EDITION 2025

WHISTLER: Alison Latham 387-5711 [aliemae1@outlook.com](mailto:aliemae1@outlook.com)

### LOVE IS A VERB

"Love is a force. It is not a result; it is a cause. It is not a product; it produces. It is a power, like money, or steam or electricity. It is valueless unless you can give something else by means of it"

Anne Morrow Lindbergh

### ANNUAL WESTMINSTER WEST SOUP SALE

A COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND RAISER

Pause for a moment while on the Putney Craft Tour for a delicious meal of homemade soup and bread! The annual Soup Sale at the Westminster West Congregational Church will be held on both Friday and Saturday, November 28-29 from 11:00 to 4:00. Conveniently located about half-way through the Craft Tour route at the church in the village center of Westminster West, it offers a delicious lunch featuring a wide choice of hot soups, hot dogs, breads, coffee, tea and home-baked treats. Vegetarian options will be available. The Soup Sale is a benefit for local families living on the edge. It's the perfect way to take a break and warm up between stops on the Craft Tour, and help your neighbors at the same time.



## REFLECTIONS

### "SEEING WITH GRATITUDE"

By Rev. Sharon Easterling

"You're moving where?" My friends were in disbelief when I told them I was moving to Vermont in 2015. After 35 years of living and working in Philadelphia – 25 of them in the gritty neighborhood of Kensington -- they wondered how I could make such a dramatic shift in lifestyle. What could there possibly be to do in such a rural place?

The truth is, there had always been a core part of me that identified with the simple, back-to-the-land movement. Just a half generation behind the "hippies" of the late 60's and early 70's, I was profoundly impacted by cultural and political moments like the inauguration of "Earth Day" and the television commercial with a Native American moved to tears by the degradation of our land.

My call to ministry led me to work on issues of urban poverty, and I loved my adopted Philadelphia and all that city life had to offer. But as my career was winding down, my husband-to-be announced that he was retiring to Vermont and I was invited to join him. I am grateful every day that I said "yes".

After months of searching for a home we settled on a property just outside Chester Village – overlooking nearby hills and surrounded by open fields and adjacent woods. I remember being awed by the beauty of every season – glistening snow of winter, fragrant blossoms of spring, vibrant greens and flowering of summer, and of course, the unmatched grandeur of Vermont sugar maples in the fall.

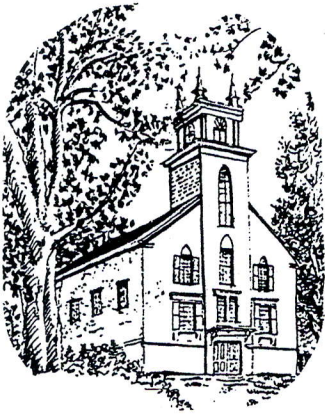
Sadly, we humans have an ability to allow the extraordinary to become ordinary. That which took our breath away initially can quickly become unseen in our daily rushing about. One of things I love most about the Thanksgiving holiday is that it reminds us to pause and reflect on our blessings, to see the things around us we have stopped noticing.

I am grateful this season for the beauty of this place I now call home – yes, even in stick season! Even more, I am grateful to live in a community that welcomes the stranger, protects the natural world, and acts with generosity toward those in need.

In these challenging times these values feel like a lifeboat in an ocean of chaos. My hope and prayer for all of us is that we see anew the gifts we have been given; and that the nourishment we receive from the beauty around us and the community we have created will enable us to be the healers this world needs.

Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours.

Rev. Sharon Easterling



# Congregational Church

(United Church of Christ)

Westminster West, Vermont

Organized 1799

We are hoping you can  
help us with the  
upkeep of the church  
building, maintaining  
a safe and welcome  
space in our community!

44 Church Street  
Westminster West  
Vermont 05346

November 9th 2025

Dear Friends of the Congregational Church of Westminster West,

The story of the Westminster West church is one intertwined with community moments- monumental and miniscule. To me, this place is where I stopped in at 39 weeks pregnant at 11am on a Sunday knowing I could find friendly, supportive faces and a snack. It's where, growing up, we'd have community dinners sometimes spaghetti and sauce, sometimes incredible Thai Food. And even now, after the dinner is over the kids are all gravitationally pulled to play and explore in the graveyard just exactly as we did.

It's where we've mourned losses and celebrated lives of family members and friends' parents. The sanctuary, stairway, and basement overflowing with caring community. It's where we threw a huge party for my grandmother's 80<sup>th</sup>. It's even where we had driver's ed classes.

The Westminster West Church shines for the Westminster West Fair, with community members, music, and activities swirling in and around this building mixing with the alluring scent of the BBQ. Where my daughters build fairy houses one day then return the next to make sure the fairies have suitable amenities.

Maybe you have your own version of these stories, how you've interacted with this space. The church was built and functions as a spiritual building, but it brings our community together in a hundred more ways, fostering connection in moments great and small. Moments like these are exactly what we need as we look to build joy, inclusivity, and resilience.

Marion Major

Your tax-deductible donation to the Congregational Church of Westminster West (or CCWW)  
can be sent to 44 Church Street, Putney, VT 05346

Thank you again



## THE WHISTLE BLOWER

**From Amy Harlow:** Loved the Halloween Party's plans to have Stephen Major read the scary poem "The Cremation of Sam McGee" by Robert Service. My father used to read Sam McGee to us when we were kids growing up in WW!

**From Mary Sherbatskoy:** Learning how to make real caramel was the theme of a small caramel apple event at the Westminster West Library on October 25th. The commercial stuff used in past apple-dippings has many non-food ingredients, so here is how to do it at home.

### CARAMEL FOR APPLES

Cook over medium heat in a heavy pot, stirring occasionally:

1 3/4 cup heavy cream  
1 cup light corn syrup  
2 cups brown sugar  
6T. butter

Cook to 235° - 240°

This is soft ball stage - when you drop a drop of boiling syrup into a cup of cold water, and it forms a ball that you can push around with your finger. This takes about 15-20 minutes. If it falls apart, it is not done yet; if it is hard enough to pick up, it is too done.

Cold apples are good; make sure they are clean and have no wax on them. To safely dip with children, let boiling syrup cool slightly then put some in a hot water bath to keep it from hardening.  
Practice makes perfect!

**From Angie Dodd's** Facebook posting: Eben (Dodd) passed away peacefully early this morning. Thank you one and all who loved and encouraged and prayed for him. We offer our sympathy to Eben's family & friends.

We are sad to announce that **Stephen Belczak** has died as a result of a fall, and **Veronica Brelsford**, age 90, who died recently. Our condolences to their families.

### GRACE'S RECIPE FOR SPICY PUMPKIN PIE

Mix in blender:

2 cups of pumpkin  
3/4 teaspoon salt  
1 2/3 cups evaporated milk (14.5 oz can)  
3 eggs  
3/4 cup of sugar  
1 tablespoon butter  
1 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon ginger and nutmeg  
1/8 teaspoon cloves  
1 heaping tablespoon flour  
Pour into high sided pie pan

Bake at 425 for 45 to 55 minutes  
Test with knife 1 inch from edge.  
Serve with whipped cream

## THE OXEN

By Thomas Hardy  
Sent in my Janet Langdon

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.  
"Now they are all on their knees,"  
An elder said as we sat in a flock  
By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where They dwelt  
in their strawy pen, Nor did it occur to one of us there  
To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave  
In these years! Yet, I feel,  
If someone said on Christmas Eve,  
"Come; see the oxen kneel,

"In the lonely barton by yonder coomb  
Our childhood used to know,"  
I should go with him in the gloom,  
Hoping it might be so.

### WHAT IS TRUE LOVE

Sent in by Dean Lynch aka I.N. Hale

Looking out at dawn  
Sky red then gold  
Cloud against blue sky  
Thinking of younger days  
Birds at the feeder  
Temperature just above freezing  
What did we know  
Nothing or every thing  
A look a smile  
Thunderbolt lights the mind  
See it over time  
Have to wonder why  
Means so much now  
Realize was fortunate to  
Have mind so touched  
Before confusion of body  
Walking hand in hand  
Only minds so intertwined  
Seeing our inner souls  
That love still survives  
And hopefully always will  
Until the last breath  
Priceless memory last thought  
Having known true love

I.N. Hale 11-20-2025

**TWO** retirements at the Congregational Church of  
Westminster West:

Fred Gray as musician and Alison Latham as trustee  
(but she's still treasurer and Whistler editor.)

### SUGGESTED ANNUAL DONATION FOR THE WHISTLER

Basic \$25 Neighborly \$50 Angelic \$100  
CCWW, 44 Church Street, Westminster West  
Vermont, 05346

## I AM GRATEFUL FOR:

From **Lise Sparrow**: I'm grateful to live in a community where young people choose to live among and with us. The joy of seeing generations grow together is immeasurable!

From **Laura Williams**: I am grateful to live in a place with people that attempt to be respectful to the land and have a good understanding that we are all part of nature.

From **Karen Blanchard**: - I am thankful for all those, all ages, who show up to make good trouble. ❤️ Karen

From **Alison Latham**: I'm grateful for my daughter who not only removes countless ticks from my body but cooks twice a week for me and sends me home with lots of leftovers.

**Living Earth Action Group** (LEAG) met with Betsy Damon (author of "Water Talks") and shared a potluck supper. These are what we are grateful for:

Wellness

Water in the brooks and ponds after a dry summer.

The innovative, creative, holy imagination of LEAG

The ongoing support of my colleagues

My beloved grand daughter who will heal the earth

Water, and the dilemma it is forcing us to consider

Family and close dear friends

The beauty and mystery of this earth

Seeing a bald eagle in the wild less than 10 feet away

Life and beauty

For the circle of sharing with good hearted people

Food, friends, family, home, work, pets

From **Karen Becker**: I am grateful that I had the incredible good fortune to live in Westminster West for 35 years, one of the most beautiful places on earth. I miss the rural location and the wonderful people a lot. I now love living in Brattleboro, which is wonderful for artists.

From **Tom Griffith**: I am grateful for the opportunity to learn and perform and listen to music in our community, especially as the advent season approaches.

From **Stephen Major**: I am grateful for people who love animals

From **Janet Langdon**: I am grateful for my many blessings, which include:

My sweet and thoughtful husband, John;

My three beautiful sheep dogs, Roy, Bill, and Liz;

My good health;

Living in Putney in a cozy wood-heated home with a big pond for summer swimming;

CCWW community of caring;

Sheep for dogs to work;

Farmers who let me come with my dogs to their sheep;

Good books;

Good music;

Friends, old and new;

And so so much more...

From **Pia Nanda Rabin**: I am so very thankful for the love of God pouring down upon me, for His great mercies and truth and guidance as I seek His Face and will throughout my days left on earth. (Her art work below)



From **Rich Talbot**: My neighbors and friends are the people I'm most grateful for. I would do anything for them and I know they would do anything for me. This village is so special!

## WESTMINSTER CENTER SCHOOL ANNUAL HARVEST MEAL

By Elizabeth Harty, Principal

Students, staff, and families met Tuesday Nov 25 for the school's annual Harvest Meal, a favorite fall tradition that brings the school community together. This special meal highlights the importance of supporting local agriculture while teaching students where their food comes from.

Teachers, staff, and volunteers helped serve the meal, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere for all. From creating decorations and setting up tables to cutting vegetables, peeling squash, chopping potatoes, and mincing garlic; all students had a hand in planting, harvesting and preparing this meal. Most ingredients are harvested right here in the WCS learning garden. What isn't harvested here is produced within a 20 mile radius.

This year, we prioritized a "conscious clean up" to reduce our waste stream. We will compost all food scraps, bowls, cups, and silverware, along with reusing any non-compostable items. The event reminds every one of the importance of gratitude, kindness, and community as the holiday season approaches.



## WESTMINSTER WEST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH SERVICES

Sunday worship begins at 10am  
come as you are (masks are optional)

We are an Open and Affirming Church, fully accessible

***We are using Facebook Live to stream our weekly services, but you do NOT have to have a Facebook account. Use the Facebook search bar to find "Congregational Church of Westminster West"***

Nov 23 ~ Karen Blanchard ~ Stewardship Sunday (on this day we hand in our pledges for 2026 and have a special collection for the building fund)

Nov 30 ~ Rev. Lise Sparrow ~ First Sunday in Advent ~ HOPE

**Dec. 6 ~ 9 AM Saturday: Greening the Sanctuary**

Dec. 7 ~ David Mulholland ~ Holy Communion ~ Second Sunday in Advent ~ PEACE

Dec. 14 ~ Ray Huessy ~ Third Sunday in Advent ~ JOY

Dec 21, **5 PM:** Community Candlelight & Carols Service: Adrienne Major and story tellers ~ Fourth Sunday in Advent ~ LOVE (no service in the morning)

Dec. 24, **11 PM:** ~ Christmas Eve service: ~ Rev. Lise Sparrow

Dec. 28 ~ Sue Venman ~ our annual all-request post-Christmas Carol (and hymn) sing;

### GREENING OF THE SANCTUARY

On December 7th, we'll gather at 9 AM to "green" the sanctuary for the Advent and Christmas season. This is one of those fun tasks that, yes, has to be done, but also add a great deal of conviviality to our lives! If you'd like to join the fun, do come. If you can't come, but have interesting greens to donate (cedar greenery! holly berries! fluffy ornamental grasses!), leave them outside the church that morning or the night before, and we will use them with gratitude.



The Pinnacle's champion white ash tree, the largest tree of this species in Vermont. It took four people with their arms outstretched to encircle the tree!



Ed Alpin's photo of Northern Lights from West West Road

### COMMUNITY CANDLELIGHT & CAROLS SERVICE

This service will begin at 5 PM on Sunday, December 21st – the same day as the Winter Solstice, which is the longest night of the year. Through sacred story and song, we will share the story of the birth of Love (as we understand the coming of the Christ child), and we will celebrate the persistence of Light amid the shadows. The service will be led by Adrienne Major and story tellers, with musician Fred Gray at the organ. The service will end with the congregation singing Silent Night by candlelight, and there will be a gathering with hot cocoa and goodies in the fellowship hall after the service. The church is fully wheel chair accessible, and the service is appropriate for all ages. We welcome one and all to celebrate with us in this joyous time.

### CHRISTMAS EVE LATE SERVICE

On Christmas Eve at 11pm, late-night in the sanctuary, will be our traditional service of lessons and carols in a quieter, more reflective mood. Led by Rev Lise Sparrow, this service will include Holy Communion and a table bedecked with memorial candles / prayer candles. Rev. Shawn Bracebridge will be the guest accompanist on piano and harp. This service is where you'll find the more traditional readings, and a (not too long) sermon. Folks who attend this service regularly remark that it brings special meaning and an island of time for reflection in the midst of an otherwise high-energy holiday.

### CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Once again, we are asking folks to buy their own Poinsettias and bring them to the church. We'd like to have the poinsettias arrive at church prior to the Dec. 21st Candlelight and Carols Service. If you wish to honor or memorialize someone, email the names to Charlotte so that she can include them in our worship bulletin.

## A TRADITION OF REACHING OUT

As has become our tradition, the church will be sending gift cards to a number of local families. Each year we are supported in this effort by some of the funds from the Women's Fellowship Soup Sale, for which we are so grateful. Thank you to those who stopped by for a cup of soup during the Craft Tour. We would welcome community help with our project too – if you would like to donate money to offset our costs or if you know of someone who could use a little TLC over the holidays, please contact Alison Latham, 802-387-5711 or email me.

### CHURCH CONTACTS

As we seek a settled pastor through our search and call process, we will not be able to offer office hours as usual, but the Deacons (Karen Blanchard, Charlotte Gifford, Ray Huessy, Adrienne Major, and Sue Venman) are available to support the congregation. You can leave a message on the church telephone number 802 387 1178 or contact a deacon directly. In case of a pastoral emergency, a deacon will call on Rev. Shawn Bracebridge (pastor of the Dummerston UCC Congregational Church) and help a person in need to get in contact with him.

BUILDING USE: Tom Griffith 802-387-5694

tgriffith@hilltopmontessori.org

DEACONS: Charlotte Gifford 802-387-4145

gifford@languagehead.com

TRUSTEES: Guy Payne 802 869-2600

Guy@buildingsscience.org

WEB SITE: [www.westminsterwest.org](http://www.westminsterwest.org)

FACEBOOK: **Congregational Church  
of Westminster West**

## 12 LIFE LESSONS FROM A 90-YEAR-OLD MONK

- 1) Never chase people. The right ones walk with you, not away from you.
- 2) You become what you tolerate. Raise your standards or stay stuck.
- 3) The quieter you become, the more you hear. Silence sharpens your inner voice.
- 4) Heal so deeply that even your triggers get bored.
- 5) If it costs your peace, it's too expensive: walk away.
- 6) Time is your true currency: spend it like it's running out.
- 7) Most people don't listen to understand, they listen to reply. Don't be one of them.
- 8) Never argue with fools: spectators can't tell the difference.
- 9) Your ego screams, but your soul whispers. Follow the whisper.

10) Let go or be dragged. Suffering often begins with attachment.

11) Rest is not laziness: even the moon disappears for the night.

12) You don't find yourself. You remember who you were before the world changed you.

## RIVER SINGERS WINTER CONCERT

The River Singers Community Chorus led by Mary Cay Brass with Andy Davis is celebrating their 35th anniversary of joyous singing together with two special holiday concerts Saturday, Dec. 13th at 4pm and Sunday, Dec. 14th at 4pm at the Westminster West Church. The admission fee of \$15-\$25 will be donated to local organizations working in community food support.

The 70-voice River Singers is a multi-generational chorus known for its eclectic mix of community-based music from many cultural and musical traditions. You'll hear thrilling, soulful songs from Bosnia, South Africa, the Macedonia and Belarus, rousing African American gospel, social justice songs and more! Choir member Andy Davis will lead songs from the local Nowell Sing We Clear tradition and one of his own compositions based on a text from Wind in the Willows. The choir will also sing a memorial song arranged by and honoring Peter Amidon.

Throughout the years the River Singers have hosted many international choirs - The Boys Choir of Kenya, The Christminster Singers and Big Sky Chorus from the UK, the Zedashe Ensemble from the Republic of Georgia, the Bulgarian Pauni Trio, Kitka, the San Francisco based women's Balkan ensemble. Internationally renowned choral leaders from South Africa, Georgia, Ghana, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Russia, Albania, to name a few, have done residencies & workshops with the choir a unique repertoire of authentic, lively, earthy sounds.

## CAUTIONARY ADVICE

### FROM OUR VOLUNTEER FIRE AND RESCUE

Now that standard time has arrived, people will be out walking after dark. If you are a walker or a biker, be sure to be wearing bright colors including a protective vest or piece of clothing. Even carrying a flashlight is a good idea. We see so many people out there wearing dark clothing. And of course, always walk of the left side of the road facing traffic and bike on the right side of the road with the flow of traffic. When crossing the road or street, even in a cross walk, don't assume the driver or the on-coming vehicle can see you. You are in charge of your own safety.

IF YOU LIKE THE WHISTLER BETTER  
ON PAPER,  
GO AHEAD AND PRINT IT.



## WESTMINSTER WEST HALLOWEEN REVIVED

From Lise Sparrow with photos

Rain didn't dampen spirits or ghouls or princesses on Halloween Night in Westminister West.

Local middle schoolers decorated the hall and welcomed trick or treaters to the Grange to get something healthy to eat before setting out. Community members provided soup and pizza and mac and cheese not to mention cider and butter beer (a Harry Potter beverage). After the costume parade participants received prizes provided by Sharon Bocelli and Ingrid Seilbocelli. Special thanks to Pete's Farm Stand for pumpkins galore!! to the Grange for the space, to the church for the use of their kitchen and to all in the community on the Westminister Inclusion Committee who donated food, fun and treats.



The 3 teens who organized: Hazel, Cleo and Sophie

Trunk or treaters welcomed little ones in front of the Westminister West Library (thank you!) and the villagers were ready to offer treats at their doors. By 6pm everyone was back at the Grange and ready to hear the very scary story of the Cremation of Sam McGee by Robert Service read by Stephen Major and to sing some scary songs with Amy Cann. Thanks to everyone who came to fill the Grange with fun. Below Calista Chapin and Teo Tarmy head out to trick or treat.



## WESTMINSTER CARES ANNUAL APPEAL

For 37 years funds raised from the community, the Town of Westminister, and local businesses, in combination with fundraising events and grants, have enabled Westminister Cares to meet our budget requirements and pay for the programs and services we provide to seniors and adults with disabilities in our community. This is our primary fundraising source. Appeal cards are mailed out at Thanksgiving and our goal is to raise 30-35% of our annual budget from this mailing. Funds generated from the Appeal support programs and services such as those listed below. Donations can be made throughout the winter by check and mailed to We Cares at: P.O. Box 312 Westminister, VT 05158. Donations can also be made on our website: [www.westminstercares.org](http://www.westminstercares.org).

### Meals-on-Wheels:

If you are a Westminister resident aged 60 or older, and are unable to shop or cook for yourself, you may be eligible for home-delivered meals. Call Westminister Cares for more information: (802) 722-3607.

### Transportation Program:

14 rides were given in October

### Friendly Visits & Assistance:

In October, volunteers made 8 friendly visits and delivered Pet Food to those enrolled in the Foxy Pet Food Program of Senior Solutions.

### Medical Equipment:

In October we loaned out 10 pieces of equipment; had 3 items returned to us and had 4 items donated to us.

### Community Nurse Program:

Starting in January, the Community Nurse will be holding monthly Blood Pressure Clinics during SOUPer Wednesday lunches at the First Congregational Church. To make an appt. for a home visit, call the office at 722-3607. (There is no charge for this service.)

### Elder Tech Program:

The next Elder Tech session will be held on Saturday, December 6th from 9am-12pm at the Westminister Institute. Call the office to make an appt. for a one-on-one session.

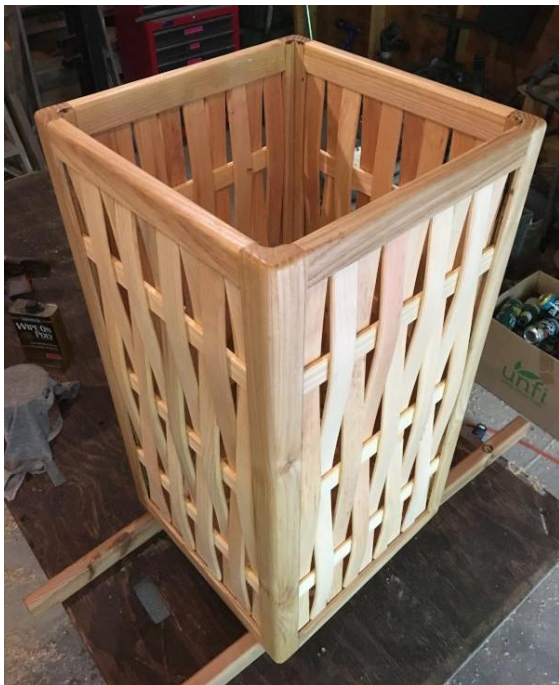
### Tai Chi Classes ~ Come out and try it!

Ever hear how wonderful Tai Chi is for your health & want to try it out? Westminister Cares and O.H.A.A. certified instructor Leslie Lassetter of O.H.A.A. are offering a free class on Wednesday, December 3rd at 11am. Come out and try it! A new class for beginners will start up in the new year.

### "Seated" Tai Chi:

Can't stand for an hour-long class? Seated Tai Chi for older adults meets Tuesdays at 12:15pm. Come and try a class at no charge. To sign up or ask questions contact Donna Dawson at Westminister Cares: (802) 722-3607 or email [wecares@sover.net](mailto:wecares@sover.net). Classes are held at the Westminister Institute, 3534 U.S. Rte 5.





Laundry Basket by Blake Johnson of HeartSpark Arts

### PUTNEY CRAFT TOUR NOV 28 - 30

The 47th annual Putney Craft tour will be held Friday through Sunday (after Thanksgiving) from 10am-5pm. There will be 24 artisans within a 12-mile radius of the village, hills and farmlands of these quiet Southern Vermont towns. Visit their studios and do your Christmas shopping at the same time. Maps are available at area stores, the church, and at each artist's studio. The good news is that you don't have to get in your car and drive to visit their studios, you can go on line to [putneycrafts.com](http://putneycrafts.com) and see what each artisan is doing and what is for sale. In addition to the 5 locals whose crafts are included on this page are the studios of other locals and community supporters: Parish Hill Creamery, Joshua Gold, Robert Burch Glass, Green Mountain Spinnery, and Putney Mountain Winery. Oh, and don't forget to stop by the WW Church for a bowl of soup, a benefit for community outreach.



Moonlight oil on canvas by Judy Hawkins



Orchard Path paintings by Nancy Calicchio



Annie Quest



Hand Crafted Silver Jewelry from Jeanne Bennett



## FAIR NEWS

6

The winners of the 50/50 raffle were Don and Donna Dawson.

The Fair Committee is looking for a new freezer and for a newer refrigerator. The old freezer uses a lot of power, so help us lower our energy use and save the planet. If you have one to donate, please call Alison Latham at 802 387-5711 or email her at [aliemae1@outlook.com](mailto:aliemae1@outlook.com).



Grand Marshall Howie Prussack – Photo Ira Wilner

## RACE RESULTS

### 5K

Men's Open: 1st - John Ralston

Women's Masters: 1st - Holly King, 2nd - Elizabeth Nieuwsma-Dell

Men's Masters: 1st - Matt Dall, 2nd - Michael Janeš

Women's Seniors: 1st - Abigail Littlefield, 2nd - Ingrid Boccelli

Men's Seniors: 1st - Joe Ninesling

## KIDS FUN RUN

### OLDERS:

Girls 11-12: 1st - Hazel, 2nd - Bany, 3rd - Danasiah, 4th - Madison

Boys 11-12: 1st - Hunter, 2nd - Peter, 3rd - Gunnar, 4th - Stryder

Girls 9-10: 1st - Olivia

Boys 9-10: 1st - Lukas, 2nd - Mana, 3rd - Eli, 4th - Grayson

### YOUNGERS:

Girls 7-8 :1st - Hazel, 2nd - Aya, 3rd - Maddison

Boys 7-8: 1st - Jameson, 2nd - Llewyn, 3rd - Caleb

Girls 5-6: 1st - Arianna, 2nd - Luna

Boys 5-6: 1st - Birk, 2nd - Luciano

Girls 4 and under: 1st - River

Boys 4 and under: 1st - Noah, 2nd - Ronan

*thank you!*

**THANK YOU!**

**THANK YOU!**

The trustees and members of the Congregational Church would like to thank each and every one of you for making our 36th Annual Community Fair a great success. So many of you helped by donating baked goods, silent auction and golden elephant items, or your time, we are so grateful. See you same time next year.

## VEGETABLE CONTEST WINNERS

(Judged by Jenny Holan)

**FLOWERS:** ADULTS: 1st - Laura Ridgeway, 2nd - Emily Weinberg, 3rd - Katie Morrison.

**VEGETABLE SCULPTURE:** ADULTS: 1st - Dan Savel, 2nd - Alison Latham

**VEGETABLE SCULPTURE:** YOUTH: 1st - Mira Peller, age 9

**LONGEST ZUCCHINI:** ADULTS: 1st - Dan Axtel, 2nd - Hyim Savel, 3rd - Charlotte Gifford.

**ODDEST VEGETABLE:** ADULTS: 1st - Alex Margolies



Dan Savel's vegetable sculpture – Photo: Ira Wilner



Local farm workers join Howie Prussack in the parade  
Photo – Ira Wilner





The Pinnacle board and friends celebrated retiring board members Laura Swoyer and Camilla and Silos Roberts in June. Camilla and Silos (pictured here) served on the WHPA board for more than 20 years and were instrumental in the growth of the organization, both serving as chairs during their years of volunteer work.

With his expertise as a forester, Silos guided the land management plan and practices as 1,400 acres were added to the WHPA's stewardship. Camilla's passion for community engagement in conservation helped build



the WHPA's capacity and fundraising, always with an eye towards the future. The WHPA is strong and thriving, in no small part due to their leadership.

Camilla and Silos Roberts. Photo: Nora Gordon

### PHOTO CONTEST ENTRIES WELCOME

The 2025 Pinnacle photo contest is still open! Prizes will include Pinnacle T-shirts and other swag. Photo entries must have been taken on Pinnacle lands anytime during the year 2025. No more than five photos per entrant. Please email larger file sizes (ideally 1 MB or more), horizontal/landscape orientation preferred, to [WHPAphotos@gmail.com](mailto:WHPAphotos@gmail.com) by Dec. 31, 2025. Please include a photo credit with your submission. We look forward to seeing your photos! By entering this contest, you grant the WHPA the right to use the photos (with credit) in its publications, website, or social media platforms in perpetuity. The photographer retains all other rights to their photos.

### DECEMBER PROGRAMS AT BEEC

**DECK THE HALLS – WREATH MAKING FROM NATURE** - December 6th 1-3:30 - The December woods and fields are filled with over-looked treasure - lichens, dried plants, berries, seed pods . . . These humble neighbors take center stage in this work shop, as we participate in a central part of the holiday season, bringing nature home. We will take a short walk to seek inspiration and to gather materials to supplement those on hand. Then we will enjoy hot chocolate and popcorn in the farmhouse while we weave it all together. This even brings joy each year. Every creation is unique, beautiful and surprising. \$20 members/\$25 non-members, free for kids. Register at website [beec.org](http://beec.org).

Visit their website for information on other programs:

Friday November 28 1-3pm **GRATEFUL FOREST: A GATHERING OF STILLNES AND RENEWAL**

Thursday December 4 **FULL MOON AND HIKE**

Saturday December 20 **FOREST OF LIGHT: A SOLSTICE CELEBRATION**

### KAREN BECKER'S PAINTINGS ON DISPLAY

On December 6th, 1-3pm Karen Becker will talk about her current exhibit at the CX Silver Gallery (814 Western Ave, West Brattleboro, hours, 1-8pm Wed-Sat, up until Dec 31st.) She will share her journey from being a NYC Graphic Designer to an exhibiting fine artist, and her 40 years investigating and experimenting with the many styles and mediums on display in this current exhibit. These include pastels, watercolors, mono-prints and highly refined drawings. Other subjects that will be addressed: the role of muses, intuition, trust and surprises in contemporary art."



'Patch Farm, Westminster West, 1987,' pastel.



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



. With not much support from the world, we resort to praying  
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## WINTER 2024 CALENDAR

### WEEKLY EVENTS:

#### CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH of WEST WEST

Church Service – Sunday 10am

#### HEALTH AND FITNESS:

For new comers to exercise classes, Westminster Cares needs to determine if the person is appropriate for that class first so they need to call Donna Dawson at Westminster Cares 802 722- 3607

#### STRONG LIVING is happening by ZOOM

Karen Walter and Ronnie Friedman lead online weight classes 9:30 to 10:30am on Mondays and Thursdays. There is room for more folks and a donation to Westminster Cares is appreciated. To get on Karen and Ronnies'

list email them [Karensww7@gmail.com](mailto:Karensww7@gmail.com)  
[veronicafriedman24@gmail.com](mailto:veronicafriedman24@gmail.com)

#### YOGA is happening by ZOOM

Lisa Nigro leads a class Monday mornings 10 to 11:15.

Email Lisa at [lisa.nigro.yoga@gmail.com](mailto:lisa.nigro.yoga@gmail.com)

#### TAI CHI

Tuesday's at the Westminster Institute from 11:00-12:00pm; led by Leslie Lassetter. Contact the Westminster Cares office if interested @ (802) 722-3607.

#### WESTMINSTER WEST LIBRARY

Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 1-6pm,  
Saturday 10am to noon

Questions: [LiseHCavanaugh@aol.com](mailto:LiseHCavanaugh@aol.com)

#### BUTTERFIELD LIBRARY

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 1-6pm,  
Saturday 10:30 – 12:30

The Institute & Library share a website  
And a Facebook page.

website: <https://butterfieldlibraryvt.wordpress.com/>

#### RECYCLING

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

## THE LADIES SINGING AT THE PARADE



### OH HOME ON THE FARM

(to the tune of, "Oh, Home on the Range")

Chorus:

Oh, Home on the Farm  
With a young one tucked under each arm  
I cook for my clan  
Answering to my man  
And on weekend I sew and I darn

1. Oh give me a home  
Where my children can roam  
Amidst critters in pastures so green  
The scenery's grand  
As we live off the land  
Husband wife and young children times three

Chorus

2. My husband's a Man  
Who works hard on the land  
To provide for his wife and fam-ly  
We'll always obey  
What e're he may say  
As the natural order should be

Chorus

# THE THANKSGIVING ADDRESS

Or

The Words That Come Before All Else in the  
Onandaga language, from the Haudenosaunee Confederacy  
This text is the widely publicized version of John Stokes and  
Kanawahientun, 1993  
From the chapter entitled Allegiance to Gratitude, from "Braid-  
ing Sweetgrass", by Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2013

Today we have gathered and when we look upon the faces around us we see that the cycles of life continue. We have been given the duty to live in balance and harmony with each other and all living things. So now let us bring our minds together as one as we give greetings and thanks to each other as People. **Now our minds are one.** (a response like amen said at end of prayer.)

We are thankful to our Mother the Earth, for she gives us everything that we need for life. She supports our feet as we walk about upon her. It gives us joy that she still continues to care for us, just as she has from the beginning of time. To our Mother, we send thanksgiving, love, and respect. **Now our minds are one.**

We give thanks to all of the waters of the world for quenching our thirst, for providing strength and nurturing life for all beings. We know its power in many forms---waterfalls and rain, mists and streams, rivers and oceans, snow and ice. We are grateful that the waters are still here and meeting their responsibility to the rest of Creation. Can we agree that water is important to our lives and bring our minds together as one to send greetings and thanks to the Water? **Now our minds are one.**

We turn our thoughts to all of the Fish life in the water. They were instructed to cleanse and purify the water. They also give themselves to us as food. We are grateful that they continue to do their duties and we send to the Fish our greetings and our thanks. **Now our minds are one.**

Now we turn toward the vast fields of Plant life. As far as the eye can see, the Plants grow, working many wonders. They sustain many life forms. With our minds gathered together, we give thanks and look forward to seeing Plant life for many generations to come. **Now our minds are one.**

When we look about us, we see that the berries are still here, providing us with delicious foods. The leader of the berries is the strawberry, the first to ripen in the spring. Can we agree that we are grateful that the berries are with us in the world and send our thanksgiving, love, and respect to the berries? **Now our minds are one.**

With one mind, we honor and thank all the Food Plants we harvest from the garden, especially the Three Sisters who feed the people with such abundance. Since the beginning of time, the grains, vegetables, beans, and fruit have helped the people survive. Many other living things draw strength from them as well. We gather together in our minds all the plant foods and send them a greeting and thanks. **Now our minds are one.**

Now we turn to the Medicine Herbs of the world. From the beginning they were instructed to take away sickness. They are always waiting and ready to heal us. We are so happy that there are still among us those special few who remember how to use the plants for healing. With one mind, we send thanksgiving, love, and respect to the Medicines and the keepers of the Medicines. **Now our minds are one.**

Standing around us we see all the Trees. The Earth has many families of Trees who each have their own instructions and uses. Some provide shelter and shade, others fruit and beauty and many useful gifts. The Maple is the leader of the trees, to recognize its gift of sugar when the People need it most. Many peoples

of the world recognize a Tree as a symbol of peace and strength. With one mind we greet and thank the Tree life. **Now our minds are one.**

We gather our minds together to send our greetings and thanks to all the beautiful animal life of the world, who walk about with us. They have many things to teach us as people. We are grateful that they continue to share their lives with us and hope that it will always be so. Let us put our minds together as one and send our thanks to the Animals. **Now our minds are one.**

We put our minds together as one and thank all the birds who move and fly about over our heads. The Creator gave them the gift of beautiful songs. Each morning, they greet the day and with their songs remind us to enjoy and appreciate life. The Eagle was chosen to be their leader and to watch over the world. To all the Birds, from the smallest to the largest, we send our joyful greetings and thanks. **Now our minds are one.**

We are all thankful for the powers we know as the Four Winds. We hear their voices in the moving air as they refresh us and purify the air we breathe. They help to bring the change of seasons. From the four directions they come, bringing us messages and giving us strength. With one mind we send our greetings and thanks to the Four Winds. **Now our minds are one.**

Now we turn to the west where our grandfathers the Thunder Beings live. With lightning and thundering voices, they bring with them the water that renews life. We bring our minds together as one to send greetings and thanks to our Grandfathers, the Thunderers.

We now send greetings and thanks to our eldest brother the Sun. Each day without fail he travels the sky from east to west, bringing the light of a new day. He is the source of all the fires of life. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to our Brother, the Sun. **Now our minds are one.**

We put our minds together and give thanks to our oldest Grandmother, the Moon, who lights the nighttime sky. She is the leader of women all over the world and she governs the movement of the ocean tides. By her changing face we measure time and it is the Moon who watches over the arrival of children here on Earth. Let us gather our thanks for Grandmother Moon together in a pile, layer upon layer of gratitude, and then joyfully fling that pile of thanks high into the night sky that she will know. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to our Grandmother, the Moon.

We give thanks to the Stars who are spread across the sky like jewelry. We see them at night, helping the Moon to light the darkness and bringing dew to the gardens and growing things. When we travel at night, they guide us home. With our minds gathered as one, we send greetings and thanks to all the Stars. **Now our minds are one.**

We gather our minds to greet and thank the enlightened Teachers who have come to help throughout the ages. When we forget how to live in harmony, they remind us of the way we were instructed to live as people. With one mind, we send greetings and thanks to these caring Teachers. **Now our minds are one.**

We now turn our thoughts to the Creator, or Great Spirit, and send greetings and thanks for all the gifts of Creation. Everything we need to live a good life is here on Mother Earth. For all the love that is still around us, we gather our minds together as one and send our choicest words of greetings and thanks to the Creator. **Now our minds are one.**

We have now arrived at the place where we end our words. Of all the things we have named, it is not our intention to leave anything out. If something was forgotten, we leave it to each individual to send such greetings and thanks in their own way. **Now our minds are one.**