

THE OLD MEETING HOUSE

EAST MONTPELIER CENTER, VERMONT

February 2008 Newsletter

LETTER FROM DAVID CONNOR, Associate Pastor

Dear Old Meeting House Friends,

When Susan told me of her decision to cut back or step down from her OMH pastorate, my immediate reaction was equal parts, "Say it isn't so!" and "You go, girl!" More than most of you, I am fully aware of the gazillion ways that the OMH pastoral demands fill Susan's days and nights and the amazing way she stays "on call" even when she's away from Vermont. Like many, if not most of you, I have taken for granted Susan's indefatigable energy, deep faith, and abiding commitment to the human and spiritual welfare of our church community.

As Susan's friend, I celebrate her decision to devote more time to her marriage, family, grandchildren, mother, and Alistair's centenary, as well as for writing, spiritual pursuits, and travel. As Associate Pastor, I am concerned at any diminution of her leadership, guidance, and pastoral care among our wonderful congregation.

But, as I said last Sunday, I have great faith, grounded in almost two decades of OMH experience, in this church's ability to turn serious challenges, difficulties, disagreements, and losses into some of our finest hours. God has endowed the members of the OMH community with uncommon wisdom, trust, and mutual respect, driven by a faith that the Old Meeting House is

sacred space and that we are blessed to be part of a faith community where all of us are ministers to one another.

The meeting after church last Sunday reminded me of several other moving, emotional, candid, and positive community sessions over the years that have helped our church survive conflicts and losses to become even stronger and more appreciative of the great gift we are to one another. [If you weren't there, you can email profstanton@aol.com for a transcript of everyone's remarks.]

As longtime members of this community, Susan and I hope and plan to remain active and contributing lay members, no matter how the ministry or ministries may be configured after the prayerful work of the Futures Committee, the congregation, and any Search Committee that transpires. If any of you would like to ask any questions or discuss any aspects of these issues with me, please let me know.

Meanwhile, I'll be keeping all of you – as well as Susan and her loved ones – in my prayers and thoughts very often during this Lenten/Easter season.

Shalom,

David

CALENDAR

Parish House Café
Every Wednesday at
noon.

Preaching Schedule:

February 17:
Susan Cooke Kittredge

February 24:
David Connor

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

Sunday March 16
We will have a traditional reading of the Passion during worship.

Thursday March 20
We will have a Maundy Thursday Service at 7pm.

The Vigil will begin at 8pm Thursday the 20th and end Friday at 8pm.

Easter Sunday Service will be at 9:30.

THE OLD MEETING HOUSE STAFF, OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

Pastor: Susan Cooke Kittredge
Associate Pastor: David Connor

STAFF

Administrative Assistant:
Barbara Ploof
SS Superintendent:
Michelle Gardner
Music Director: June Morse
Choir Director:
Marcia Bowles
Sexton: Pat Forbes
Clerk : Jen Hollar

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Carolyn Scoppettone, chair
Linda Cueto
Richard Brock
Carol Leech
Brian Vachon
Barbara Blackman
Sue Hackney
Louise Rauh
Randy Brown
Michelle Gardner

FINANCE

Austin Cleaves
Glen Goodall
Joanna Day
Sandy England
Mark Catlin
Shaun Stephens
Janice Waterman, Treasurer
Cherie Staples,
Asst. Treasurer

OMHAM

Peter Nielsen, Chair
Carolyn Scoppettone
Charlie Kittredge
Connie Hare
Dana Lawrence

EXECUTIVE BOARD

Moderator: Peter Gilbert
Treasurer: Janice Waterman
Victoria King
Heidi Tringe
Lowell Vanderlip
Norman Hill
Adri Luhr
Richard Brock
Connie Hare
Ann Stanton

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Edna Martineau, chair
Jed Davis
Margaret McCoy
Ricia Heintzel
Marianne Perchlik
Adri Luhr
Maureen Carr

MISSIONS

Ann Stanton, Chair
Betsy Vanderlip
Judith Granger
Tim Noonan
Peter Holman
Fran Mallery
Stephanie Shea
Jody Yates

TRUSTEES

David Lewis, Chair
Norman Hill
Allen Ploof
Malcolm Fielder
Erik Esselstyn
David Schutz
John Mallery
Nathan Phillips

Interim Administrative Assistant to be Hired for the OMH

After many, many years of dedicated service, Barb Ploof has resigned as our Administrative Assistant. We will miss her astonishing attention to detail and care of us all. Hers will be difficult shoes to fill, but we are giving it a try. Thank you, Barb, for your great service and ministry to the OMH.

As all the staffing needs of the OMH will be closely examined in the coming year, this will be an interim position for the time being. Those applying for this job will, of course, be welcome to apply for the permanent position once its purview becomes clear.

Please contact Susan Cooke Kittredge if you are interested in the current job at scookekitt@mac.com or 229-0840.

Interim Administrative Assistant Job Description

This is a permanent part-time position averaging 10 hours per week. Some of the work may be done at home on the telephone and on a computer with Internet access. An office space is provided at the Parish House of the Old Meeting House. The Administrative Assistant is supervised by Rev. Susan Cooke Kittredge, pastor of The Old Meeting House, and reports to the Executive Board. No benefits are provided for this part time position.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Administrative Assistant assists the pastors in administrative functions and is responsible for carrying out the activities of the administrative office of The Old Meeting House. Specific duties include but are not limited to:

- Preparation and copying of bulletins for Sunday services and other special services; maintaining copier and office supplies;
- Scheduling meetings and activities of the church and church committees, and communicating this schedule;
- Acting as agent for the church in arranging for rentals of the church property;

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- Overseeing the use and condition of the Old Meeting House buildings;
- Maintaining files and data bases and web site; copying and mailing; distributing incoming mail;
- Responding to inquiries and requests for information; writing thank you notes, letters and other correspondence.
- Facilitating the compilation and editing of the electronic newsletter on a monthly basis.

QUALIFICATIONS

Strong communication skills (written and oral), excellent interpersonal skills, excellent organizational skills. Proficiency with use of the Internet and word processing. Experience in office administration and record-keeping preferred. Ability to be at the Parish House several times a week, to collect and distribute mail. A commitment to confidentiality is essential.

Futures Committee Established

The Executive Board met this week and has named a Futures Committee. It is charged with articulating a vision for the church's future in close consultation with the entire congregation, and articulating several different scenarios of ministry or ministries that could serve that vision. It will seek to complete its work in about three months, before summer schedules make meeting difficult. The Futures Committee will report to the Executive Board, and its work will inform the work of a Search Committee, which will be formed in the summer. The Futures Committee will meet after church Sunday, February 17 to determine its meeting schedule going forward. While the Futures Committee is leading this effort, this process is one that includes the entire congregation. We are all in this together, and we encourage everyone to share their thoughts, feelings, questions, concerns, and suggestions with members of the Futures Committee. The committee includes:

Barb Blackman	Adri Luhr
Diana Fielder	Peter Nielsen
Peter Gilbert	Allen Ploof
Kate Gustafson	Deb Reed
Connie Hare	Jennifer Swasey
Matt Hollar	Brian Vachon
Victoria King	Lowell VanDerlip

The Parish House Gallery

We want to thank Connie Hare for sharing her collection of weavings with the Parish House Gallery. Hopefully all got to examine her craftsmanship (personship?) and enjoy them. This month and next we are fortunate to have John Mallery exhibiting his paintings. John has been painting, "by the seat of his pants", for many years. Stop by to enjoy this colorful and splashy exhibit.

If you would like to exhibit your work, or know a closet artist who might, please contact Wendy Soliday at wsoliday@aol.com

Confirmation Class

Members of the Confirmation Class will meet with Brian Vachon this Sunday (February 17th) and discuss components of our worship service. In the future, the class will have opportunities to attend worship services of other denominations and religions, and will explore ways in which those services differ from - and are similar to - our practices at the Old Meeting House.

The Confirmation Class will also plan to spend the final hour of the church's vigil on Good Friday evening (March 21), meeting for quiet conversation and meditation in the church from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Youth Choir

Youth Choir is currently working on a piece with parts for lower or higher voices that we will be singing with the adult choir. Please come and join in even if just for this one piece. Everyone finds it energizing to hear the younger voices blend with our adult choir. Please email Marianne at chikabee@sover.net for information regarding rehearsals. We will be rehearsing Sunday Feb 17th during the first part of the service and again immediately following the coffee hour with June in the loft.

Youth Choir is also looking for song ideas of any kind, not just religious music, for Muddy Gras. If you have any fun songs or ideas please bring them. We will be using our regular Youth Choir time during the first half of the services during March to prepare for Muddy Gras. All are welcome!

Missions Spotlight

The Missions Committee met on the first Tuesday of February to welcome new members Judy Granger, Fran Mallery, Stephanie Shea and Jody Yates and orient them to our activities. We thought it would be interesting to share all that we do with readers of the newsletter, so here below, in outline form, is that information. We welcome your suggestions, as we will be setting our mission priorities for this year at our upcoming March meeting. Email members of the committee (also including Ann Stanton, Tim Noonan, Peter Holman and Betsy Vanderlip) with your suggestions.

SOME MISSIONS ACTIVITIES, ONGOING AND PAST

- Distribute allocated funds from the general budget. We review these, discuss them and sometimes add or subtract organizations.
- Educate the congregation about Missions and those organizations we support
 1. Mission Moments during the Sunday service
 2. Mission Spotlights in the Newsletter
 3. As part of fund-raising concerts
 4. Waive fees for using building for organizations involved in Missions (e.g. New Orleans fundraiser by Kellee Moran)
- Encourage contributions by individuals beyond the budget
 1. Neighbors in Need (a UCC-sponsored organization which provides grants usually around social justice, educational and environmental projects)
 2. One Great Hour of Sharing (A multi-denominational organization based in National Council of Churches, including American Baptist, Episcopal, and Methodists, among many others. Providing funds for relief work of various kinds internationally.)
 3. Food Shelves and Food Bank Sort-a-Thon
 4. Good Samaritan Meals
 5. Special collections (e.g., for Niger)
- Sponsor events that raise money for missions or raise consciousness about issues relevant to missions. These include or have included:
 1. Potluck about homelessness

2. Fun Run, sponsored by Tim Noonan with funds going to Missions
3. Concerts by Celina and friends, funds donated to Missions
4. Collaborate with Sunday School (e.g., on Heifer project)

Families of the OMH

- Our prayers go out to Dick Thurston's family following his death on January 29, 2008.
- Prayers for Nancy Strong.
- Prayers for Susi Wahlrab as she continues her treatment for cancer.
- Joyous prayers of thanksgiving for the birth on January 10th of Charlie and Susan Cooke Kittredge's new grandson Zerach Gabriel Scoville. Zerach is the son of Zebulon and Kimberly Scoville and he was born on his great-grandmother, Jane Cooke's, 95th birthday.
- Prayers of thanksgiving that Jenn Swasey is recovering after a week long stay in the hospital for a stomach illness.
- Prayers of joy and thanksgiving to Jim and Heidi Tringe on the baptism of their daughter Emily Kristin Tringe on January 6, 2008.

Good Friday Vigil

March 20th is Maunday Thursday. For the past several years we have held a vigil in the sanctuary which ends the next day, Good Friday. Again this year the Spiritual Life Committee is asking for twenty-four volunteers to be in the church for an appointed hour of your choice. The vigil begins immediately after the Maunday Thursday service at 8:00 PM and ends at 8:00 PM the following evening, Good Friday. We will have a large sign-up sheet in the narthax with one hour slots and a hand-out of Vigil Guidelines which you should take after you choose your hour. The Vigil Hour is an opportunity for silent meditation and prayer. Everyone is invited to come in during this time but often you are the only person there. Just come with open mind and full heart, to be in the stillness, to stay awake with Christ in that hour.

TWO CONCERTS IN MAY AT THE OMH

Alasdair Fraser & Natalie Haas
Friday, May 9 — 7:30 pm

“... one of Scotland’s most valued tradition-bearers.”
— BBC Radio Scotland

“Alasdair Fraser is recognized throughout the world as one of the finest fiddle players Scotland has ever produced. [His] name is synonymous with the vibrant cultural renaissance which is transforming the Scottish musical scene.”
— SCOTS Magazine

Master Scottish fiddler Alasdair Fraser is a consummate performer. His dynamic fiddling, engaging stage presence, and deep understanding of Scotland’s music have created a constant and international demand for his solo appearances and concerts with a variety of ensembles. Alasdair has been a major force behind the resurgence of traditional Scottish fiddling in his homeland and the U.S., inspiring legions of listeners and learners through his recordings, annual fiddle camps, and concerts.

Vibrant young cellist Natalie Haas is already a seasoned performer, recording artist, and teacher. She has joined Alasdair Fraser for festival and concert appearances in Scotland, Spain, France, and throughout the U.S., including Celtic Connections Festival in Glasgow, Scotland, the Festival Interceltique de Lorient in France, and the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C.

“People may be familiar with the gorgeous, melodic cello sound,” says Fraser, “but they’re surprised to learn that the cello used to comprise the rhythm section in Scottish dance bands. Natalie Haas unleashes textures and deep, powerful rhythms that drive fiddle tunes. We can “duck and dive” around each other, swap melody and harmony lines, and improvise on each other’s rhythmic riffs. She has such a great sense of exploration and excitement for the music; it’s a joy to play with her!”

Pat Donohue
Friday, May 16 — 7:30 pm

“Pat Donohue is one of the greatest finger pickers in the world today.” — Chet Atkins

From swing to jazz to bottleneck blues to folk, Grammy-winning acoustic guitarist Pat Donohue plays it all with a flourish of artistry and melodic inspiration. Chet Atkins called Pat one of the greatest finger pickers in the world today; Leo Kottke called his playing “haunting.”

Pat is certainly one of the most listened to finger pickers in the world. As the guitarist for the Guys All-Star Shoe Band of Minnesota Public Radio’s *A Prairie Home Companion*, Pat gets to show off his savvy licks and distinctive original songs to millions of listeners each week.

His decade-long association with Garrison Keillor’s popular program has led to some unusual gigs: There was the after-show club date in Berlin, when Wynton Marsalis showed up to sit in with Pat and the Prairie Home band. Or playing music on camera for the *Prairie Home Companion* movie with director Robert Altman and stars Meryl Streep, Lily Tomlin, Kevin Kline, John C. Reilly, Woody Harrelson and Tommy Lee Jones. Besides the weekly radio broadcasts, Pat plays about 30 concerts a year nationwide.

Pat’s musical tastes are eclectic. Though he considers himself foremost a folk guitarist, Pat’s influences are rooted in bluesmen Blind Blake, Robert Johnson, Charlie Parker, Duke Ellington, Muddy Waters and Miles Davis. He manages to blend jazz and blues with folk, and the mix is seamless. Over the years he has captivated audiences with his unique original compositions, dazzling instrumentals and humorous song parodies, including *Sushi-Yuck!* and *Would You Like to Play the Guitar?*

Old Meeting House
Muddy Gras — April 12, 2008
Performance Proposal

(Please submit to Connie Hare or Dana Lawrence asap.)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Act Title: _____

How many folks in the act: _____

Type of act: (humorous or serious, song and/or dance, instrumental.....) _____

Approximate length: (should be between 3 and 7 minutes) _____

Would you need piano accompaniment? _____

Any other needs for the performance? _____

