

"SpiritSpark"

**The First Baptist Church
of Manchester Center, VT**

P.O. Box 1049, 4895 Main St. 802-362-1555

www.fbcmanvt.org

fbcmanvt@gmail.com

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Theresa Taylor

The Colburn House served as a stagecoach inn and hotel from around 1872-1985 when the Northshire Bookstore moved in. Our church building, founded in 1781, was built in its present location in 1833. (Year of this photo unknown.)

JANUARY 2026

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR THERESA

Greetings First Baptist Family,

What an amazing Christmas season celebrating the advent of Jesus with each of you. Thank you so much for your participation in various aspects of the worship experience. It is greatly appreciated and a wonderful way to glorify God.

Ken and I also wanted to extend our heartfelt gratitude for your very generous gift. It is a blessing to serve God through serving each of you. It is truly a privilege that we will treasure.

I pray that each of you experience a multitude of blessings in 2026. I also pray that you will have "God encounters" that will strengthen and grow your faith in our Mighty Savior! Here are some upcoming events for January.

We will start a new sermon series on the life of Ruth. This 4-part series will begin after Epiphany. We will focus on Ruth's choices and the way these actions showed God's redemptive power.

We are also eagerly awaiting the start of the Bonnet Street wall construction scheduled for January. This will get us closer to moving back into our beloved sanctuary.

The Church Leadership Council will be meeting to finalize our proposed plan for the new governance. It is our intention to send a written document of this proposal to our members for their review by Annual Meeting time. This is a fluid situation, so unforeseen delays may occur, but we are hopeful and pressing on. Thanks for your patience.

The new year always seems to lend itself to a sense of a new beginning or at least an opportunity to make a shift in how we approach life. This year, through all these changes, I challenge you to look up

and realize that God is the Alpha and Omega. If we just focus on earthly rewards, we will lose sight of the best course to follow. God knows and loves each of us and his ways are perfect. Keep looking up and know that the God of this universe is on your side.

Love in Christ,
Pastor Theresa

MISSIONS and OUTREACH

The Missions and Outreach Committee would like to thank all of you for the contributions you have made throughout the year. During December, we continued our local and international giving and, going into 2026, we will continue to collect for our Retired Ministers and Missionaries (RMMO). If you haven't had the opportunity to honor our past pastors by giving to this valuable organization, your donation will be greatly welcomed.

The next meeting of the Missions and Outreach committee is scheduled for January 14th at 7 pm via zoom.

Linell Pike, Secretary

DIACONATE REPORT

Advent is behind us and I just wanted to thank all those who participated in services, including the Christmas Eve celebration. What an amazing way to show our love and gratitude towards our Heavenly Father. I pray the hope, peace, joy and love experienced throughout Advent will continue into the next year!

We are seeking Sunday School leaders. If you are willing to lead for a day, month or whatever God is leading you to, please contact Pastor Theresa. We will start off the year with a study by Dr. Tony Evans called "Kingdom Race Theology" which looks at racial divides being reconciled through the lenses of a "Kingdom Race". We would love to have you join us Sunday mornings at 9:30 am in the conference room.

Please reach out to the deacons if there is a need we can assist you with.

Deacons for January: Ray and Jim Holden

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Theresa

**POTLUCK & GAME NIGHT!
COME ONE! COME ALL**

Saturday, January 17th, 2026

**Whole Group Games and Some Small Group Games
Bring your favorite board game or play the ones provided!**

A potluck supper sign-up sheet is in the fellowship room.

If you have any questions, please talk to Ken or Theresa.



PRUDENTIAL REPORT

The Prudential Committee met on Dec. 10, 2025.

As 2025 ends, the budget has been accurate even with unexpected expenses. The new property insurance premium is about half of what it has been for the last few months. The phone bill has been higher than usual and the treasurer will check on this.

The Preservation Committee is anticipating the beginning of the restoration project of the sanctuary in January. The construction people will probably be using the front door as they go in and out. The front walk will need to be kept shoveled.

A concern about the simultaneous installation of the boiler and work on the sanctuary wall will conflict with each other. We are still heating with the boiler GSK installed as a temporary fix. GSK is searching for a suitable boiler for the church.

Pastor Theresa reported that the new copier has arrived and is in use. The Church Windows program has not yet been installed on the new computer.

The church has engaged the Orkin Co. to check on mouse infestation. Jim Comar is going to talk to another provider about the cost and how much service is actually required.

The next Prudential Committee meeting is scheduled for Wed., Jan. 14, 2026 at 5 P.M.

Martha Thompson, Secretary

PRAYER and BOOK DISCUSSION

The Prayer Group and Book Discussion will begin again on January 13 at 7 pm via zoom. We will be reading and sharing our thoughts on a book by Max Lucado titled “What Happens Next – A Traveler’s Guide Through the End of this Age”.

Max writes this: “Some people take up gardening or painting as they get older; I’ve taken up the questions about the rapture, the Antichrist, and Armageddon. I really, really want to know what’s around the corner.”

Please join us!

Let Pastor Theresa know if you would like to receive the link.



INTERFAITH COUNCIL of the NORTSHIRE (IFCN)

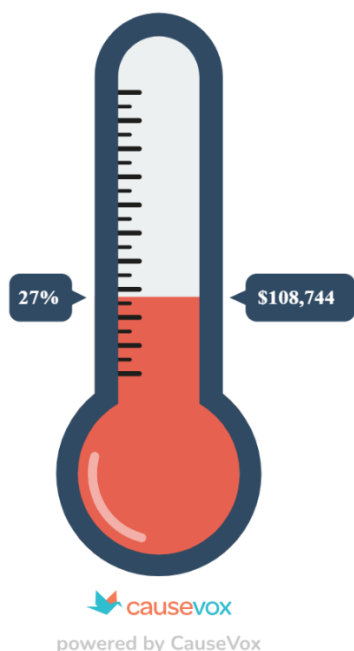
The December meeting of the Council was held at Christ our Savior on Dec. 4, 2025. The Council again sponsored The Annual Interfaith Holiday Project. The Emergency Needs Fund guides this project and receives the bulk of its donations at this time in order to continue its work.

A service honoring Martin Luther King will be held at the Arlington Federated Church on Monday, Jan. 19 at the Arlington Federated Church. The speaker, Paul Sangree, Assoc. Conference Minister from UCC will be speaking about a calling to promote justice and peace. Refreshments will follow the service. All are welcome and encouraged to come.

The next IFCN meeting will be held at the Israel Congregation on Thursday, Jan. 15, 2026.

~submitted by Martha Thompson

GOAL: \$400,000



OUR PRESERVATION FUND
STANDS AT \$108,744.99.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
CONTINUING
CONTRIBUTIONS!

MARY & MARTHA FELLOWSHIP

Members of the Mary & Martha Fellowship gathered on Sunday, Dec. 14, 2025 at 8:30 A.M. for breakfast and business.

The Annual Cookie Sale was a success and \$600 was raised. Thank you to bakers and organizers.

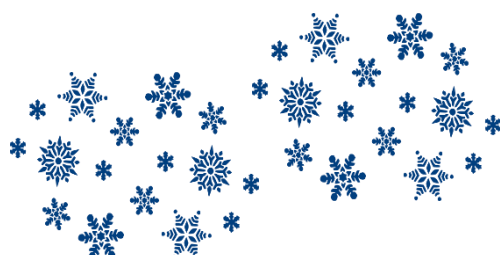
The Fellowship took responsibility for providing clothing for two girls for the Interfaith Christmas Project. They were delivered to Christ our Savior for distribution on the 16th of December.

Judy Koch purchased decorative angels for shut-in members of the church as a gift from MMF.

In new business the First Responders Project was discussed. A dinner will be held at the firehouse to honor the Fire Department. The menu is mac and cheese, salad, bread and assorted pies for dessert.

The next Mary & Martha meeting will be a breakfast meeting and is scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 11, 2026 at 8:30 A.M.

Martha Thompson, Secretary





RING OUT THE OLD! One of the last photos taken (by Yvonne) in our vestry before we moved all the pews aside to make way for construction!





COMMUNITY FOOD CUPBOARD

JANUARY WISH LIST

2
0
2
6

LOW SODIUM SOUPS AND CANNED MEALS
 WHOLE GRAIN CEREAL
 BROWN RICE OR WHOLE WHEAT PASTA
 LOW-SUGAR PASTA SAUCE
 HEALTHY(ISH) SNACKS LIKE
 CRACKERS AND GRANOLA BARS

TOOTHPASTE AND TOOTHBRUSHES
 HOUSEHOLD CLEANING PRODUCTS
 LAUNDRY DETERGENT

thank you 

HAPPY 2026! ITS THE TIME OF YEAR WHEN WE ALL MAKE RESOLUTIONS AND TRY TO LOOK AHEAD WITH OPTIMISM. NEW YEAR, NEW YOU! IN THAT SPIRIT, OUR WISH LIST THIS MONTH IS FOCUSED ON ITEMS TO SUPPORT POSITIVE CHANGES. WHETHER IT'S EATING HEALTHIER, BRUSHING AFTER EVERY MEAL OR KEEPING UP WITH CHORES, WE HOPE TO HELP EVERYONE REACH THEIR GOALS IN 2026!

DROP-OFF LOCATIONS: MANCHESTER TOWN HALL, SHAW'S, MANCHESTER LIBRARY, DORSET POST OFFICE, CHRIST OUR SAVIOR PARISH, FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, DORSET CHURCH.



OUR CHURCH IS PRIVILEGED TO BE ABLE TO OFFER

OUR FACILITY TO THE FOLLOWING AA GROUPS EACH WEEK.

Breakfast with your Higher Power: Monday-Friday 7:30-8:30 am

Equinox Group: Monday-Friday: NOON -1:00 pm

The Depth & Weight Group: Thursday 6:00-7:00 pm

NOTE: These AA groups will be meeting at the Congregational Church during our construction

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev Dr Theresa Taylor: (802) 535-7710

First Baptist Church: (802) 362-1555

Website: www.seektheson.org

My office door is always open for visitors. Here are my office hours:

Mondays - 12:00-4:00

Tuesdays - 9:00-1:00

Wednesdays - 9:00-1:00

I would also delight in home visits. Contact me if you are interested.

Text or call: (802) 535-7710.

Email: revtheresa67@gmail.com

CALENDAR OF CHURCH EVENTS for JANUARY

- 4 Adult & Youth Sunday School: "Kingdom Race Theology" at 9:30 am
Epiphany Worship Service in the Fellowship Room at 10:30 am
- 5 Dinner in honor of the men & women in our Fire Department at 5:00 pm
- 6 Deacon Meeting at church at 1:30 pm
Church Leadership Council meeting via zoom at 7:00 pm
- 11 Mary and Martha Breakfast and Meeting at 8:30 am
Adult & Youth Sunday School: "Kingdom Race Theology" at 9:30 am
Worship Service in the Fellowship Room at 10:30 am
- 12 Uplift Cancer Support Group at home of Linda H. at 2:00 pm
Preservation Meeting via zoom at 7:00 pm
- 13 Prayer Group/Book Study via zoom at 7:00 pm
- 14 Prudential meeting at 5:00 pm
Missions meeting via zoom at 7:00 pm
- 15 Interfaith Council Meeting at 11:45 am
- 17 Men's breakfast at 9:00 am
Potluck and Game Night from 4-7:00 pm
- 18 Adult & Youth Sunday School: "Kingdom Race Theology" at 9:30 am
Worship Service in the Fellowship Room at 10:30 am
- 19 Martin Luther King Jr. Interfaith Service at the Arlington Federated Church at 7:00 pm
- 25 Worship Service in the Fellowship Room at 10:30 am
- 26 Uplift Cancer Support Group at home of Linda H. at 2:00 pm
- 27 Prayer Group/Book Study via zoom at 7:00 pm

FLOWERS

Jan. 4: Poinsettias

Jan. 11: Poinsettias

Jan. 18: Jim West in Memory of Barb West

Jan. 25: Martha Thompson in memory of past leaders in our church and their legacy

