



July 2025

THE SPIRE

**First Congregational Church
77 Main Street, Springfield, Vermont**

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www.facebook.com/fccuccspringfield/

"We are a community in Christ, called to act with love toward our neighbors."

Pastor's Message July 2025

"The flowers appear in the earth: the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land" Song of Solomon 2:12



Following Pentecost and Trinity Sunday, our church calendar returns to what's known as "Ordinary Time". What an interesting way of referring to a time of recounting Jesus' ministry, the lives of the apostles and prophets, and the growth of the early church as recounted in the epistles. If anything, that sounds to me like an extraordinary time!

My understanding is that Ordinary Time, in this period after Easter and Pentecost, differs from other seasons in that there is no unifying theme Sunday to Sunday. Robert Webber writes in The Services of the Christian Year, from vol. 5 of The Complete Library of Christian Worship:
"In Advent we await the coming of Christ;

during Christmas, we celebrate his arrival; and at Epiphany, we proclaim that Christ is manifested to the world as Savior. During Lent, we prepare for the death; in Holy Week, we re-enact his death; then in Easter, we celebrate his resurrection and complete the Easter cycle with the celebration of the coming of the Holy Spirit. But in the nonfestive season of the church year, there is no unified theme that ties the Sundays together."

Accepting the thematic looseness of the time, we still may make this a festive season: this is the time of year that the Song of Solomon notes for its profusion of flowers and birdsong. God's colouring book is vivid here in July and August, as gardens are in full bloom and the sunlight seems at its brightest. God makes each day on God's earth truly beyond ordinary. This is a great time to take Jesus' advice as reported in Matthew 6:28, and "consider the lillies of the field, how they grow".

As many folks spend more time on the road for vacation, attend Independence Day parades and family functions, have more time outdoors in the warm weather enjoying, literally, the fruits of creation, the wonder of God's creativity is astounding. I hope you are able to experience the pleasure of the summer, especially getting a chance to enjoy our Green on Main! We'll serve lemonade and cookies for the Street Fair on July 12th, giving us a chance to meet, greet, and encourage others to make use of the space. May we make this season most un-ordinary.

Pleasant summer wishes to all,

Michael Mario, Pastor



CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS!

July 8th – Walter Dodd

July 22nd – Glenna Richardson

Happy Birthday to everyone in the
month of July!



CELEBRATING ANNIVERSARIES!

July 1st – Cindy & John Hughes

July 24th – Diane & John Holme

Happy Anniversary to everyone in the
month of July!

Church services will continue to be live
streamed on Facebook each Sunday at
10:00 and the services can be viewed
anytime through the church website.

Sunday church services are also
recorded on DVD for SAPA TV to be
shown at a later date. The present
channels are 160 for VTEL TV and 1077
for Xfinity Comcast and services are
shown on Sunday at 10AM and
Wednesday at 4PM. There is at least a
one-week delay.

TREASURER'S REPORT (as of May 31, 2025)

YTD income	\$ 47,293.
YTD expenses	\$ 78,167.
Difference	(\$30,874.)

Total Liquid Assets	\$273,249.
<u>Restricted Funds</u>	<u>\$146,219.</u>
Avail. Liquid Assets	\$127,030.

Springfield's Street Fest 2025 Is Almost Here!

Mark your calendars for **Saturday, July 12**, from **3:00 to 8:00 PM**, as **Springfield comes alive with music, activities, and over 40 local vendors** in **Co-op Plaza** and **Comtu Park**!

One of the festival highlights is the **Donut Dash**, starting at **3:30 PM**. Proceeds from the race will benefit **Project Action**, a local initiative that works with community partners to reduce crime, address substance misuse, and support residents on their recovery journey.

In past years, our church has shared strawberry shortcake with festivalgoers—first by the falls, and more recently in the plaza parking lot. This year, with new leadership at **Springfield on the Move** and fresh energy behind the event, we're switching things up!

We'll be offering **lemonade and cookies** from **3:00 to 6:00 PM** in our green space. It's a perfect way to welcome neighbors into our garden oasis and provide a cool, shaded spot as they explore Main Street's festivities.

We Need Cookies!

When you bake your family's favorite batch, please consider setting aside **two dozen** and placing them in the **church freezer**, labeled **"Street Fest."** Sharing our hospitality with the community is a simple but powerful way to connect—and cookies always help!

Thank you, everyone—and be sure to join the fun!

Diane Holme, Outreach Ministry

Community Lunches Take a Summer Break

Our final Community Lunch of the winter/spring season was held on April 16th—and what a way to wrap things up! A record-breaking crowd of 90 joined us for a lively and joyful afternoon filled with great food and good company.

In the spirit of picnic season, guests enjoyed oven-barbecued hot dogs with rolls, classic brown bread and baked beans, a variety of fresh salads, and a sweet ending of ice cream and strawberries. A special thank you to Polly Blais and Karen Oehl for leading the charge, and to all the volunteers who pitched in to make the day a success—including Pastor Michael, who provided wonderful musical entertainment!

We're already looking forward to the next Community Lunch on **September 17th**. New menu suggestions are already coming in, and we'd love to hear yours too. We hope to welcome back our amazing volunteers—and maybe see a few new faces as well.

Wishing everyone a safe and happy summer!

Happy Summer!
Pat Townsend

Claim a Piece of Our Garden! 🌿

With all the recent rain and warm temperatures, our beautiful new plants and shrubs are thriving—but so are the weeds! We're inviting you to **adopt a small section of our garden (about five feet)** to weed, nurture, and make your own.

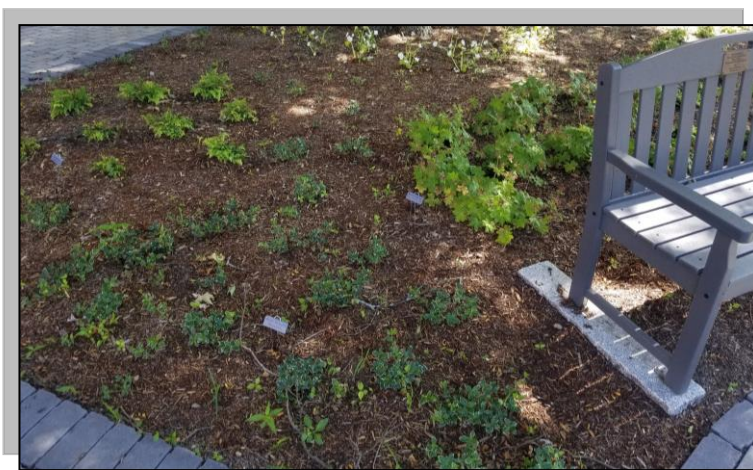
This is a great opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, contribute to a peaceful space, and be part of something growing—literally and figuratively!

We're fortunate to have **Scott Morgan**, a professional landscape architect, helping us care for the garden. Scott is happy to answer questions, offer guidance, and support your green-thumb efforts.

Since this is a new opportunity, we're still working out the details—whether we'll have regular group work times, or simply encourage everyone to come when it works best for them (or maybe a mix of both!). Either way, we'll be scheduling a time soon when **Scott will be on-site** so everyone can gather, ask questions, and choose their garden spot.

Stay tuned for more info—and consider claiming your piece of our garden!

With gratitude,
Diane Holme, Outreach Ministry



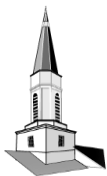


First Congregational UCC's Calendar

July 2025

V-Vestry, FR-Fellowship Room, KD-Kindergarten, 10,11,12 Classrooms 2nd floor

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 7:00p-8:00p Wilderness Bible Study	2 5:00p-6:00p ACOUSTICAL WORSHIP SERVICE - SONGS AND SCRIPTURE!	3 10:00a-11:00a Wilderness Bible study- Zoom Please let Pastor Michael know of your interest in joining us.	4	5
6 10:00a-11:00a Church service followed by Coffee Hour	7	8 7:00p-8:00p Wilderness Bible Study	9 4:00p-5:30p Leadership Council	10 10:00a-11:00a Wilderness Bible study- Zoom Please let Pastor Michael know of your interest in joining us.	11	12 3:00p-4:00p Springfield Street Fest p-6:00p
13 10:00a-11:00a Church service followed by Coffee Hour	14	15 7:00p-8:00p Wilderness Bible Study	16	17 10:00a-11:00a Wilderness Bible study- Zoom Please let Pastor Michael know of your interest in joining us.	18	19
20 10:00a-11:00a Church service followed by Coffee Hour	21	22 7:00p-8:00p Wilderness Bible Study	23	24 10:00a-11:00a Wilderness Bible study- Zoom Please let Pastor Michael know of your interest in joining us.	25	26
27 10:00a-11:00a Church service followed by Coffee Hour	28	29 7:00p-8:00p Wilderness Bible Study	30	31 10:00a-11:00a Wilderness Bible study- Zoom Please let Pastor Michael know of your interest in joining us.		



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Website: www.firstchurchspringfield.org

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Michael Mario, Pastor
Michelle Hamlin, Adm. Assistant
885-5728
Todd Murray, Sexton
885-5728

Church Office Hours
Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Pastor's Hours
Wednesday & Thursday
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM