

The Spire

First Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

77 Main Street

Springfield VT 05156-2999

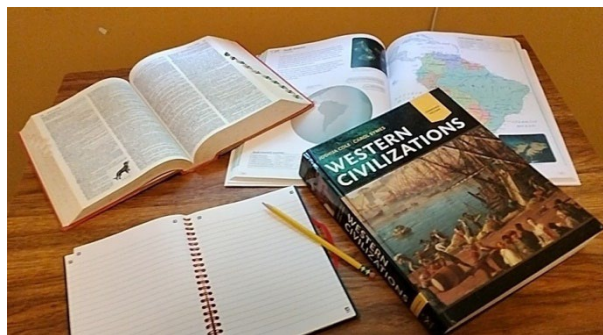
(802) - 885-5728 fccucc@vermontel.net

www.firstchurchspringfield.org

www.facebook.com/fccuccspringfield

Pastor's Message September 2026

"How much better is it to get wisdom than gold! and to get understanding rather to be chosen than silver!"
Proverbs 16:16



Back to school! For many people, September and the return to school was part of the rhythm of the seasons for at least twelve years of our lives. There are still some warm sunny days, still some crops to be harvested, now being scheduled around the school day.

While that particular school rhythm to the year may be done for most of us, the opportunities for learning never do cease. The metaphors, parables, myths and histories in scripture hold plenty of lessons for us, and they are there for us anytime, in any season. The bible offers us learning

throughout our lifetimes, and as the passage from Proverbs 16 reminds us, this wisdom and understanding are deeply precious. May we be lifelong students of God's teaching.

The month is filled with activity in the community. Our "Acoustic Worship" sing-along returns on Wednesday, September second. Join us at 4 in the vestry for a lively time of singing and bible verse.

On Sunday the thirteenth we'll mark Homecoming, begin Sunday school, and enjoy a pot-luck lunch following worship.

Sunday the 20th, Paul Sangree, Vermont's Associate Conference Minister, will join us for worship and to hear about our hopes and plans for the future. It'll be an opportunity for sharing our ideas.

As I've done frequently over the years, I'll be taking some time off in late September. Pete Andrews will lead worship on the 27th, and I'll return for Sunday, October fourth.

Springfield's Fourth Friday events are ongoing, and we do our part, offering refreshments and music on the Green on Main. Come enjoy music from Kyle this Friday, August 28!

I wish you all a Happy Labor Day, and may the Peace of God be with you,

Michael Mario, Pastor

Homecoming Sunday 9/13/26
With a Pot Luck Brunch

Bring something that you enjoy making, eating and sharing!
The brunch will begin after the 10 o'clock service with a short break to set up the food. Beverages provided. Come see who is returning to their home town to visit and share news.
Maybe there will be extra dessert!

Church services continue to be live streamed on Facebook each Sunday at 10 AM 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 10 AM and Wednesday at 4 PM. There is at least a one week delay.

TREASURER'S REPORT
(as of July 31, 2026)

YTD income	\$ 52,762.
YTD expenses	<u>\$88,351.</u>
Difference	(\$35,589.)

Total Liquid Assets \$225,154.
Restricted Funds \$152,715.
Avail. Liquid Assets \$72,439.

**Rev. Paul Sangree Joins Us on
Sunday, September 20**

Paul Sangree, Associate Conference Minister of the Vermont Conference UCC, will join us for worship and a discussion during Coffee Hour. We invited Paul to join us to talk about our future as a congregation. We are not the first church to experience declining membership, increasing age of our members and difficulty finding ministerial leadership on a part time basis.

We have been a significant part of the history of Springfield. Our steeple is an icon of our town. What are our options to go forward? What have other congregations done in the same circumstances? How do we honor the legacy of former members who left us this beautiful building? There is much to think about; and think about it, we must. Let's be proactive!

Join us on Sunday, September 20th and welcome Paul into our midst!

Repurposing the Church

During the past decade, there have been many discussions at Leadership Team meetings as well as Congregational Meetings about repurposing the church. Much of these discussions focus on obtaining additional income to help pay for the costs of operating and maintaining the wonderful, historic building we all call our church home.

Having the 7th Day Adventists share worship space with us has helped. But additional funds are still needed.

There are ongoing discussions with Springfield on the Move regarding renting some of the empty rooms that currently just sit vacant and unused. You may have noticed if you have been in the upstairs wing over the church office, that a major clean up has been ongoing. A considerable amount of material, some of which has not been used for a decade or more, has been removed – some of which has been given away, recycled or discarded.

The Church has had some success in the past applying for grants and/or using social media to help pay for improvements: ie. The Green Space and Help Save Our Columns. Earlier this year we became aware of a church in Claremont, located in the downtown, that had applied for and received a Northern Borders Regional Commission grant of approximately \$1,000,000 to turn their building into a community hub featuring a daycare facility, upgraded commercial kitchen and community meeting space. The similarities between our two buildings as well as what they plan to do and what we could do are striking. After meeting with members of the Claremont church who prepared the grant application and several internal discussions, the Leadership Team decided to begin the process of putting a grant application together teaming with Springfield on the Move.

Not wanting to put all our eggs in one basket, we are also looking into other grants that might be pursued to help us upgrade the facilities. Anyone wanting to be more involved in this process should contact any member of the Leadership Team to express their interest.



SPRINGFIELD FAMILY CENTER NEEDS FOR THE FOOD SHELF

Spaghetti and other pasta plus sauce
Peanut butter and jam
Chicken Noodle Soup
Canned low sodium soups
Canned Fruit
Tuna
Oatmeal
Granola Bars
Let's bring in items for Homecoming
Sunday-September 13th

THANK YOU!

CELEBRATING BIRTHDAYS THIS MONTH

Sept. 2	Wes Marshall
Sept. 27	Justin Dechen
Sept. 28	David Mobus

Happy Birthday to All!!!

First Congregational Church, UCC
77 Main Street
Springfield, VT 05156



First Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
885-5728
fccucc@vermontel.net
www.firstchurchspringfield.org

Michael Mario, Pastor
Todd Murray, Sexton
885-5728

Church Office Hours	Tues. & Wed. 9:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M
Pastor's Hours	Wed. 9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.