

May, 2025

The

# BANNER

College Street Congregational Church

*An open and affirming congregation of  
the United Church of Christ*

# A Note from the Pastor

- Pastor Jessica Derise

Greetings CSCC family,

It's hard to believe that I have been here almost two months now in Vermont. During that time, I have had the pleasure of getting to know you in addition to getting the opportunity to enjoy some of the local Vermont sights. I am enjoying my new home in the Malletts Bay area and I am finding Burlington to be a welcoming and pleasant place to live. My dog Rio is also quite enjoying his fenced in backyard at his new home.

It has been a busy couple of months getting acquainted with all of your different groups and leaders - but I am starting to get a better picture of the overall life of this church. Over the next few months, we'll start widening the circle of feedback and we'll be hosting some feedback sessions from the congregation. The timeline of this is still being decided but leadership very much values your input and we are committed to being as inclusive and cohesive as possible.

Over time, you will see that we are going to try some new things in worship. Please know that we do our best to make the decisions as collective as possible and that no decision is permanent if it isn't working. Something that I encourage all parishioners to do is to embrace a new idea and to ask for the "why" behind a decision before evaluating the effectiveness of it. Often times, once we understand the thought process behind a move, the decision begins to make more sense. I encourage all of us to embrace the spirit of trying new things and discussing the outcome of the decisions together as a community.

I say this often about College Street - but we honestly have a world of talent and opportunity here and I encourage you to (without denying losses of the past) frame our language into the language of possibility. Sometimes when we have gone through loss, we do not see what a newcomer can see. And what I see is a community that can reinvent itself and has every bit of potential possible to move forward into a new era. Let's claim it and embrace it!

With hope,

Pastor Jessica

## Farewell to Jessica Titcomb

We are sad to report that Jessica Titcomb has decided to step down from the position of Director of Children's Ministries at College Street. Her final Sunday with us will be May 11. Jessica has been key to nurturing our children and organizing Sunday morning teaching and activities in ways to help them learn and grow, but also have fun and know that they are loved. They will miss her and so will we. We thank her for providing handover information and suggestions, and wish her all the best as she moves on. The Faith Formation Ministry Team is working on transition arrangements for the children's program for the rest of the church school year and beyond.



# 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Parking Lot Dance Party and Picnic

Saturday June 7<sup>th</sup> Picnic at 5 pm. Music and dancing from 6pm to 8 pm.



Once again, we're transforming our parking lot into a big ol' community dance party - for ourselves and our wider community - raising money for local outreach. Since 2021, we've raised over \$2500 for VT flood relief, JUMP, and music education grants for VT students. This year, we are collaborating with one of Burlington's newest and most impactful street ministries, the Street Community Action Team of Burlington, better known as the **Street CATs**

**Street CATs** forms connections with, and provides resources to, our unhoused neighbors and friends, one person at a time.

## How You Can Help Make This Our *Best Party Yet!*

The best way? Come join in! Hang out, talk, laugh, listen to great music, and enjoy the dancing! This event is FREE to anyone and everyone. We'll need a few volunteers to set up and serve. If you'd like to help, please sign up at [Parking Lot Dance Party 2025 Sign Up](#) or get in touch with Matt Van Wagner at [matt.vanwagner@gmail.com](mailto:matt.vanwagner@gmail.com) or (603) 557-7504.



Green Mtn Swing at 2023 Parking Lot Dance Party

# Children's Ministry *– Jessica Titcomb*

Spring has been a season full of life and learning in our Sunday School! One of the events we enjoyed the most was a joyful Easter celebration, complete with a fun-filled egg hunt that had kids laughing and running all around the church basement. It was such a beautiful reminder of the joy and hope we find in the resurrection of Jesus.

Throughout the season, our lessons have centered around an inspiring series from the Shine curriculum called "Seeking Justice Together." These lessons have encouraged our children to think deeply about fairness, kindness, and how they can be peacemakers in their own communities. It's been inspiring to watch them engage with big ideas and learn how faith calls us to care for others.

I am thrilled to share that our Sunday School attendance has been wonderful, and the energy each week has been full of fun, curiosity, and connection. It's a blessing to see our children growing not only in faith but also in friendship.





The Vermont  
**CHORAL UNION**

# Rites of Spring

Brahms Lovesong Waltzes  
Mendelssohn Songs of Spring  
Mozart Spring's Beginnings

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 4:00 P.M.  
THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PAUL  
BURLINGTON, VERMONT

The Vermont Choral Union under the direction of Eric Milnes presents a varied and delightfully seasonal program of exquisite choral music by some of the greatest composers of 19<sup>th</sup> century Germany (Franz Schubert, Felix Mendelssohn and Johannes Brahms) as well as wonderful new discoveries by some of their lesser-known German contemporaries (Silcher, Rheinberger, Abt and Neuner). The result will be a richly sensual musical exploration of the delights of spring and new love, for all who delight in both! This deep dive into a distinguished and celebrated repertoire includes time-honored favorites such as the The *Liebeslieder Walzer* (Lovesong Waltzes) of Johannes Brahms presented in their original version for choir and four-hand piano, with VCU Director Eric Milnes and Director of Cathedral Arts Peter Berton at the piano, conducted by VCU Assistant Director Cole Marino. All those looking forward to the flora, fauna and warm breezes of spring who have experienced or anticipate the rapture of romance will find pleasure and beauty in this program, and the Vermont Choral Union looks forward to seeing you there!

*"Among New York's choruses, few could have shown up for work as confidently and so well-prepared as under Eric Milnes' direction at The Merkin Concert Hall. He achieved a remarkable fineness..."*

Bernard Holland, THE NEW YORK TIMES



Tickets:  
VtChoralUnion.org  
and at the door

  
CATHEDRAL ARTS

# The Outreach Team - Sue Kamp

The Outreach Team is made up of Carole Carlson, Nancy Harkins, Marjorie MacNeill, Mark Pennington, Andrea Rogers and Melinda White-Bronson as the core group with help from Ashley Couture and Scott Mackey. Many others have contributed ideas.

We are focused on maintaining our core outreach activities in addition to looking at ways we can assist those facing homelessness in our community. Through a book study last fall when many read *When We Walk By* by Kevin Adler, we learned of Miracle Messages, an outreach program the author started in California that is growing across the nation. Nancy reached out to Dr. Adler and we are now working with their Executive Director to start this project in Burlington.

Miracle Messages has two activities: the Buddy program in which a person who is experiencing homelessness is paired with a phone/text buddy volunteer, to develop a supportive friendship. There is no money involved; it is simply an effort to provide a buddy to the person experiencing homelessness since many experience what the author calls Relational Poverty. The other activity is Miracle Messages. If a person experiencing homelessness or one of their family members is trying to reconnect with each other, Miracle Messages works to track down people and reconnect them, if both are willing.

We have been advised that these projects should happen through an organization that serves people experiencing homelessness, so Nancy Harkins has been reaching out to various organizations. To date it appears the Fletcher Free Library may be interested. Nancy is also waiting to hear from a staff person at COTS. Once we have more information on how you can become involved, we will be reaching out through News from the Pews, announcements at church and through the Banner.

Marjorie MacNeill has graciously led several book groups this year. She is looking for ideas for future book studies and welcomes your input. Please be in touch with her with any suggestions about book topics regarding social issues.

Finally, we continue to support the youth at Outright Vermont with meals for their Friday Night Group. Ashley Couture is organizing this and the sign up is available through a link in News from the Pews each week. There are dates available from mid-May well into the future if you are interested. We are also looking into ways people who can't manage the cooking could sponsor a delivered meal such as pizza. More to come on that soon.

Our next meeting is May 18, 2025, after church. All are welcome to attend. If you have any questions, please be in touch with Sue Kamp.



# May

<p>April 27</p> <p>8:45am-CSCC Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>10 am—Worship</p>	<p>28</p> <p>7pm Book Discussion—Zoom</p>	<p>29</p> <p>5:30pm-Solaris Rehearsal</p>	<p>30</p> <p>4:30 pm-Aurora Singers Rehearsal</p> <p>6pm-Youth group</p> <p>6:30pm_Executive Board Meeting</p> <p>7pm-Heart &amp; Soul Discussion Group</p>	<p>May 1</p> <p>6pm-CSCC Bell Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>2</p> <p>12 noon-Aurora Singers Rehearsal</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9:30am-AI-Anon Meeting</p> <p>5pm-Aurora Singers Rehearsal</p> <p>7:30pm-Aurora Singers Concert By the Still Water</p>
<p>4</p> <p>8:45am-CSCC Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>10 am - Worship</p> <p>11:30am-Prayer Shawl Group</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>5:30pm Solaris Rehearsal</p>	<p>7</p> <p>6pm-Youth group</p> <p>7pm-Noyana Rehearsal</p>	<p>8</p> <p>1pm-Meditation Group</p> <p>6pm CSCC Bell Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9:30am-AI-Anon Meeting</p>
<p>11 Mother's Day</p> <p>8:45am-Strummers, Pluckers &amp; Strikers Practice</p> <p>10 am - Worship</p> <p>11:30am-Caring for Loved Ones</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p> <p>5:30pm Solaris Rehearsal</p>	<p>14</p> <p>6pm-Youth group</p> <p>7pm-Heart &amp; Soul Discussion Group</p>	<p>15</p> <p>6pm CSCC Bell Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17</p>  <p>9:00am-Church Clean-Up Day!</p> <p>9:30am-AI-Anon Meeting</p>
<p>18</p> <p>8:45am-CSCC Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>10 am - Worship</p> <p>11:30am - Prayer Shawl Group</p> <p>11:30 Outreach Team Meeting</p>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p> <p>8am-Men's Group at Panera Bread, Shelburne Rd.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>6pm-Youth group</p> <p>7pm-Noyana Rehearsal</p>	<p>22</p> <p>1pm-Meditation Group</p> <p>6pm CSCC Bell Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>7:30pm CSCC Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9:30am-AI-Anon Meeting</p>
<p>25</p> <p>8:45am- CSCC Choir Rehearsal</p> <p>10 am —Worship</p>	<p>26 Memorial Day Office Closed</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>6pm-Youth group</p> <p>7pm-Heart &amp; Soul Discussion Group</p>	<p>29</p> <p>6pm-CSCC Bell Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>30</p> <p>7pm-Vermont Choral Union Rehearsal</p>	<p>31</p> <p>9:30am-AI-Anon Meeting</p> <p>3pm Vermont Choral Union Rehearsal</p> <p>7:30pm Vermont Choral Union Rites of Spring Concert</p>

For the most up-to-date Calendar, visit our website: [collegestreetchurch.org](http://collegestreetchurch.org)

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**Interim Pastor:** Rev. Jessica Derise

### **Church Staff:**

**Interim Pastor:** Rev. Jessica Derise

**Children's Ministry Leader:** Jessica Titcomb

**Youth Ministry Leader:** Will Gunger

**Music Director:** Eric Milnes

**Office Administrator:** Gail Stevenson

**Church Sexton:** Tim Gibbo

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