Join Us for Holiday Events & Services!

Sundays at 10 am Attend on site indoors (much warmer!)
OR online https://zoom.us/my/cvuusservice/

Dec 5—Embodied Hope—What if we could express our hopes for a sustainable relationship with Earth in how we decorate some holiday wreaths? Rev. Barnaby thinks we can so we will give it a try in our Sanctuary this Sunday. Join us for some hands-on, hearts filled worship. Plus, we'll throw in a touch of Hannukah. We’ll collect for Charter House Coalition for Dec.

Dec 12—Radical Inclusivity—Rev. Barnaby walked into an unusual coffee store on vacation in Charleston, SC, and walked out with the theme for today's sermon. Vote for Radical Love raffle items.

Dec 19—Round the Bend --There's no better Sunday for digging deep into everything we love about orbiting a star together. Led by Rev. Barnaby.

Dec 26—Day After Christmas — Storytelling with Karl and Abi.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
Christmas Eve Service: The Prayer the Nativity Answers, Fri, Dec 24, 7:30 pm—Led by Rev. Barnaby with special music and readings from the Christmas Story. Ends with lighting candles and singing Silent Night. Attend in person or online via Zoom link above. Donations from the services go to HOPE. The traditional No-rehearsal Pageant planned for online has been cancelled while Poppy Rees, Dir. of Religious Exploration is on leave. Families are invited to have a role in the Christmas Eve service.
Words from Rev. Barnaby

Before writing this monthly letter to you, I snuck a look back. I was curious what I had said to you in past years as we looked forward together to another December. The messages read like a spiritual tug of war. Some years, I was drawn to the Winter Solstice, with its reassurance that the deep Winter ahead leads inevitably to Spring. Others, my mind and heart flowed more toward Christmas. What a compelling vision of how, precariously yet definitely, life unfolds within a Love beyond our full comprehension.

And then there was last year, that unnerving moment when vaccines were just a hope on the horizon but most of us were somehow confident that December, 2020, would be our only December lost to social distancing. I shared with you Maggie Smith's poem *How Dark the Beginning,* which ended on this hopeful note:

"...We talk so much of light, please
let me speak on behalf
of the good dark. Let us
talk more of how dark
the beginning of a day is."

To which I added my own *Prayer Because I Love You:*

*May the darkness bend toward flower,
Lift from us pandemic’s noose,
Sweep away those mad with power,
Wash us clean of Earth abuse,
Winter come, but hour by hour.
Summon angels, let them loose.*

For better or worse, that prayer still seems timely. Maybe there's more to be said, but I will wait for the weeks to come to lead me to the next verse in your company.

Blessed be, Rev. Barnaby

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**WORSHIP SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Zoom Social Host:** Hold the space for online visiting after worship.

**Usher:** Greet, pass out bulletins, oversee donation collection.

**Safety Volunteer:** Watch doors; oversee COVID protocols.

**Flower Co-op:** Bedeck our sanctuary with seasonal arrangements.

**Worship Associate:** Help create the service, welcome attendees, make announcements, light our chalice, select readings and other elements.

If you're interested, contact Abi Sessions
abi.sessions@gmail.com.

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**Jim Ross**

April 9, 1929 – September 19, 2021

*Celebration of Life*

Dec 4, 10 AM,
Sanctuary followed
by simple reception in Ann Ross Fellowship Hall

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**NURTURE Your Spirit. Help HEAL Our World.**
Welcome to CVUUS!
Visit us at cvuus.org, FB CVUUSVT, or email office@cvuus.org to follow us.

Arrange access to our spaces
Refer people to how to arrange for our spaces here. They are well-ventilated and feature wifi access and gender neutral bathrooms. We adjust the permitted attendance level and masking requirements depending on COVID conditions so ask the Office when you schedule. Watch our online calendar for when we are scheduled and when we are available for your small groups or events.

What Are Your Pronouns?
Celebrate gender identity by designating your pronouns on your name tag. Can’t find yours? Notify the Office, an usher, greeter or Ginny Ashenfelter. Check the Welcome Table basket in our lobby for collected and blank ones. Contact Poppy Rees about the future of CVUUS Our Whole Lives (OWL) which helps youth explore their sexual identity.

Adult Religious Exploration
See Rev. Barnaby about an orientation to UU and CVUUS history and values as well as an overview of our many small group opportunities.

CVUUS COVID GENERAL RULES
1. Please do not come to CVUUS if you have any COVID symptoms, even if you think it's just allergies. If you have symptoms you should get a COVID test.
2. Masks should fit well and cover your nose and mouth.
3. Remember to sign in (contact tracing).
4. Use hand sanitizer before entering or interacting with others.

INSIDE—Mask AND distance from those not in your pod; no group singing except for final song. HUMMING is okay.

OUTSIDE--Mask OR distance; group singing IS okay BUT REQUIRES MASK. Humming does not require a mask.

CVUUS ZOOM: Ask Laura (388-8080 or office@cvuus.org) how you can request a cvuus zoom meeting. To "claim host" once you are in: Click on your name in "participants" and scroll down below the list of names and click "claim host" and where it asks for the "host key", put in these 6 numbers: 364568. You can also do this from "chat." In the bottom right corner of Chat, there are 3 dots. Click them. Click claim. To allow everyone to share their screen: Click on "Security" in your bottom toolbar. Click on "share screens" and you should be all set.

Honoring Indigenous People
CVUUS worship opens with a ringing of the bell and saying: "We recognize that CVUUS gathers on the land of the Western Abenaki people. We respect their spiritual relationship to the land. We hope to learn from them how we can live together in peace and justice." See more at cvuus.org/news/honoring-indigenous-people.
We want the holidays to be about being generous, being grateful, being together, and enjoying our family and friends. Our Kids for Kids community service projects have been great but they’re only once a month, so here’s an idea for something fun and imaginative to do with your kids for the month of December: the Kindness Elves.

Here’s how it works: at the start of the month, a few small elves (or plastic dinosaurs, etc.) show up with a note that says “Hello! We’re the Kindness Elves/Dinosaurs!” They say that they have heard that the kids are kind and want to see for themselves and will offer some ideas for acts of kindness. Then every morning, they are in a new location with a note that suggests something to do: bake cookies for someone, shovel snow for the neighbors, call a relative just to say hi, clean up someone else’s mess, donate an old toy, etc. Sometimes the note mentions an act of kindness that they noticed the kids doing on their own. This idea comes from the imagination tree blog and Facebook page and they have tons of ideas, including printable notes.

The Kindness Elves are fun and a bit magical – a perfect fit for the holiday time. You might like it so much that it becomes a new family tradition! If you do this at home, take pictures and let me know how it went, so that we can share ideas.

May your holidays be filled with love and kindness ~

~ Poppy, your Director of Religious Exploration

COMING UP...

**Annual UUSC Guest At Your Table Ornaments:** This year’s theme: “Now is the time for courageous change” UUSC Guest at Your Table boxes will be available starting Dec 5 for families with children to take home to put change in over the month of December. Others can participate in Guest at Your Table by buying handmade ornaments made by the kids, and putting donations in boxes before and after worship in the foyer in December. Please bring small bills for this purpose. We’ll put decorations from previous years on our sanctuary tree.

**OWL 7-8:** Alternate Sundays (Dec 5 & 12) 10-12:30 at Otter Creek Yoga Studio, led by Joanna Colwell and Jordan Young

**Youth Group:** Alternate Sunday afternoons led by Jess Danyow. Cookie baking on Dec 12 at 3 pm, in Lower level kitchen.

**Christmas Eve Service** Fri Dec 24 7:30 pm, ask Rev Barnaby for a role in the service. (No Pageant this year while Poppy is on family leave.)


~ Love, Poppy - your Director of Religious Exploration
Coming in January 2022, CVUUS Race In America Book Group continues with the reading and discussion of [Image of book cover].

The Pulitzer Prize–winning, bestselling author of *The Warmth of Other Suns* examines the unspoken caste system that has shaped a number of countries including the United States and shows how our lives today are still defined by a hierarchy of human divisions. Make sure you have a copy and join us on the 3rd Wednesday of each month, beginning January 19, 2022, 7 PM via Zoom. Already read it? Read it again and join the discussion! For more information, and to join contact Jean Terwilliger at jtwigvt@gmail.com or Mike Greenwood at mike802vt@comcast.net.

Session dates: Jan 19, Feb 16, March 16, April 20 and May 18, 2022; 7 PM on Zoom and/or live as COVID rates subside!

Radical Love Giveaway Raffle – 2021 Edition

For our fall fundraiser this year, we created an online version of the Radical Love Giveaway Raffle. Here’s how:

- **OFFER SERVICES & ITEMS:** CVUUS members and friends offered services or items to give away up to Dec 3.
- **CHOOSE SERVICES & ITEMS:** Everyone (adult or child) will get ten virtual tickets to throw into virtual baskets connected with the items that appeal to them until Dec 10.
- **WIN SERVICES & ITEMS:** For each item, the raffle team will randomly select a winning ticket, and notify the donors and winners after Dec 10.

Where do we contribute to the Giveaway Raffle? Here! [https://cvuus.breezechms.com/form/RADLOVEDonation](https://cvuus.breezechms.com/form/RADLOVEDonation)

Please contact Priscilla Bremser (bremser@middlebury.edu) or Mary Hadley (hadleyme@juno.com) with any questions.

An Important Reminder: Our unique Giveaway separates Fall Fundraising from fellowship, but while it does away with the traditional auction that favors those who are well off, we still have a budget to balance. If you didn't get around to the extra financial donation before Thanksgiving we solicited, it would be very helpful to get your "Fall Gift" now. Please indicate this on a check mailed to us or through online giving (see page 11 for how).
**Social Action Updates**

**December “Share the Plate” Donees:**

**Charter House Coalition** is a local organization which has been providing housing and meals to the homeless in the Middlebury area since 2005. Over the years, its importance has grown, as has the need. In 2019 Charter House provided almost 40,000 meals to hundreds of individuals and families. It housed 134 men, women and children. In 2020 of the pandemic, Charter House has had to radically change its activities, and is now serving three meals a day to people living in various locations around Middlebury, including its own residents. CVUUS makes dinner for residents (up to 25) on the second Monday of each month and cookies (up to 250) for the community supper on the fourth Friday of each month. It is constantly seeking funding in order to employ the staff and purchase the food and other supplies. CVUUS has always been a generous supporter of Charter House, and with your assistance in December, we will continue to do so. More at chcvt.org

**HOPE (Helping Overcome Poverty’s Effects)** will be our donee for our Christmas Eve service, as before. HOPE is a local non-profit whose mission is to reduce the effects of poverty in Addison County by providing low-income residents with opportunities for becoming more self reliant. Your support of our often unseen neighbors is greatly appreciated. More at hope-vt.org.

**End of Year Message from Donations Ministry**

In the spirit of giving thanks, I would like to give a huge shout out to YOU, our members and friends for donating just over $10,000 to our Share-the-Plate recipients through October of this year! We collected for organizations large and small, local and global; your donations helped the environment and several UUA groups; and we supported many different social justice issues, Native Americans, women and children in need, and the arts. THANK YOU, EVERYONE for your generosity. And I would also like to recognize the members of the donations ministry for their continued input and thoughtful contributions: Barb Karle, Chris Murphy, Ashleigh Hickey, Avi Freund, and Becky Strum; and to Rev. Barnaby for guiding us. While we are a small ministry, we serve a vital role in fulfilling CVUUS’ pledge to donate 50% of every collection. Should anyone be interested in learning more about our ministry, even joining it(!), we welcome you to reach out. You can find more information about the Donations Ministry and various Share the Plate donees on the CVUUS website under the Justice tab. Gratefully, Allison Cutler (allisoncutler56@gmail.com) Thanks to all who gave to Honor the Earth last month. Track how much we contributed to them and other donees at cvuus.org/justice/sharing-donation-plate/
Volunteer and Know You Make a Difference with Your CVUUS Teams

**Meals on Wheels** provides more than just a meal. The friendly visit, safety check and nutritious meal are a lifeline. Age Well, which organizes Meals on Wheels, needs drivers. Delivery is typically 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., week days. Volunteer for a day or to be an occasional substitute driver. CVUUS has a longstanding team on Mondays coordinated by Mary Conlon mcolon@shoreham.net. Contact her. Welcome, Deborah Lewis and Gayle Muenchow!

**Charter House Dinner Prep Team** We make dinner for Charter House residents (25) every SECOND Monday of month. Right now these are prepped ahead in the homes of volunteers and gathered at CVUUS between 10 am and 1 pm for delivery to Charter House. In addition, we provide baked goods (250 cookies) for Community Dinner on the FOURTH Friday of month. If you want to help, contact Alan Moore alanwmoore1947@gmail.com to get on his email sign up list. See how it works in his google doc sign up here.

**Donate items to Neat Repeats, Buy Again Alley, JuneBug, WomenSafe, HOPE and Addison Allies!** Let them know you are donating on behalf of CVUUS.

**Helen Porter Gift Program:** Let Sheila House know if you would like to help with this annual tradition of providing wished-for gifts for up to 16 residents potentially assigned to us by Dec 16 in time for their holiday party.

**Tiny House Public Meeting, Sun Dec 5, 12:30 pm, Fellowship Hall** Learn how HomesFirst Vermont is making our vision happen! CONSTRUCTION BEGINS JANUARY for our first small, sustainable, beautiful, well-crafted home for a neighbor in need in Middlebury. After much planning and work, Hannaford Career Center is starting construction in January on one of the tiny homes that was drawn by Norwich University's Architecture Department for us. Learn all that has happened since we last spoke with the CVUUS community 2 years ago.

**Mexican Consulate Visit 2021:** The consulate helped 140 Mexican citizens living in the region with processing 200 legal documents (a record number) on Nov 20. We provided food and drinks, preventative health checks, parking guidance and child care so parents could take care of business and relax. Your support helped to create a wonderful (and organized) event with a festive atmosphere, tamales and all! Thank you! The consulate looks forward to returning in Nov 2022. More on efforts to help our migrant neighbors at cvuus.org/news.
Explore Small Ministry Groups: A Different Way to Do Church

Small Ministry Groups deepen and broaden personal spiritual growth. A group usually consists of 8-10 members who meet monthly. Each meeting is focused on a spiritual or religious topic. To join or form a group, contact Doug Richards (drichard@keuka.edu or 802-989-9387). Or join one of our affinity groups.

Writers Group meets the second Monday of the month at 7:30 pm on cvuus zoom. Contact Bobbi Loney at bobbiloney@gmail.com to be added to list.

UU Cingles gathers for those aged 60+ to provide company and conversation. Meets every other Saturday at 1 pm usually in Fenn Chapel during colder months while face to face meetings are permitted. Watch the Blast for location. For more, call or email Monty Montgomery, Revell Allen or Marjorie Carson.

CVUUS Sangha & Meditation
If you’re interested in developing a meditation practice, you’re warmly invited to join us Sunday evenings at 7 pm when Dinah Smith gives guided meditations. It’s aimed at those who are new to meditation or already have a meditation practice. Please feel free to contact Dinah with any questions. Zoom link here.

Native Moons Book Group
Zooming on the Full Moon (although in-person clustering is smiled upon). The Native Moons Book Group has chosen to learn about Abenaki history more deeply and more intimately. We meet monthly at 7 pm to reflect on with Aunt Sarah, Woman of the Dawnland. Contact Liam or Mike Greenwood to be added to their email list for meeting reminders.

Green Sanctuary Ministry is led by Elizabeth Golden. Track our efforts at reducing our carbon footprint in response to climate change and environmental stewardship at cvuus.org here. We have made great strides in accessing solar power for ourselves and others, gleaning for HOPE, participating in the Interfaith Climate Action Network of Addison County (ICAN), hosting climate action initiatives in coordination with Climate Economy Action Network of Addison County, 350.org, Green Mountain Club, VT Interfaith Power and Light, and others.

Music & Choir Choir rehearsal is back in our sanctuary! Come Wednesdays 5:45 pm where we will prepare for services with our special masks. It is never too late to join. Want to meet with Music Director Ronnie Romano one on one? Contact him at music@cvuus.org or 201-388-4038 to be added to his list. Look for email from choir@cvuus.org.
FROM YOUR CVUUS BOARD

We’re about halfway through the 2021-22 church year, and it seems like a good time to let folks know what the Board has been up to, and to celebrate the contributions of various Board members.

First, a shout-out to Priscilla Bremser, who has coordinated completion of the Board’s 2021-26 strategic plan, designed to guide the work of CVUUS’s Board, Minister and staff, Council of Ministries, and its ministries and teams. The plan reflects much listening and gathering of input from members, staff, and ministries. Look for an announcement soon about how to access it on the church website.

The Board will review the plan annually both to see how we’re doing and to include new initiatives or objectives that might arise. Priscilla has done a wonderful job in organizing the plan and improving its clarity and focus. Kudos to her for helping facilitate this important task.

Ann Webster and Mary Hadley have diligently managed the transition in financial oversight as Ann took up the reins as Treasurer this summer. They have also worked together with the Finance and Facilities committees and others to write the strategic plan’s crucial Stewardship section. We owe them much thanks for their excellent work in overseeing CVUUS’s finances.

Board Secretary Kas Singh has kept us on track by keeping detailed minutes of our monthly conversations, allowing us to pick up the threads and move forward efficiently from month to month with the several tasks on our to-do list. Thanks, Kas!

Kerri Duquette-Hoffman has assumed the role of Board Vice President during the past several months, agreeing—among other duties—to lead the Board’s initial preparations for the ministerial transition process as this unfolds over the next few years. We are blessed that this vital task is in such capable hands.

Our newest member, Hannah Sessions, has hit the ground running, doing a superb job in reformulating the Board’s Covenant into a powerful declaration of our commitment to the work we do together. Having grown up in the church, she provides a singular perspective on our history and values. She brings a fresh point of view to our work, asking important questions and contributing thoughtful observations to our discussions. We are so lucky to have her.

CVUUS is fortunate to have such a thoughtful, caring, committed, and talented group of Board members to help guide us through these challenging times. It’s a pleasure to work with them. I hope you’ll join me in thanking them the next time you see one of them.

And please share your thoughts with any of us regarding how CVUUS might better achieve its vision of providing a loving, sustainable, and welcoming community in the Champlain Valley.

Doug Richards, Board President
**Roses to...**

...Marnie Wood, Dinah Smith, Chris Murphy, Alice Berninghausen and Bobbie Carnwath of our Flower Co-op for their coordinated efforts in providing stunning arrangements for our Sanctuary throughout November and bedecking us for the holidays.

...Lise Anderson and Alan Moore for coordinating coverage of the extremely successful Mexican Consulate Visit and all who contributed time and donations of gift cards and food items.

...Abi Sessions for covering CVUUS Zoom Coffee Hour.

...All your offers in raffle items and financial donations to the Radical Love Giveaway online edition coordinated steadfastly by Priscilla Bremser and Mary Hadley.

...Rich Wolfson and Margs and Jordan Young for helping us install the new much larger video screen in the sanctuary on its tabletop testing site.

...Mike Greenwood and Alan Moore for running the coffee hour experiment until Covid conditions forced us to put it back on hold and continuing as usher and greeter.

...Llyn Rice for tending to our thermostats and doors.

...Mary Conlon for coordinating Meals on Wheels team.

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**Have You Discovered Our CVUUS LIBRARY & Library of Things (LoT)?**

Need UU fall reading material? See our CVUUS Library reading lists at [https://www.cvuus.org/learning/library/reading-lists-2/](https://www.cvuus.org/learning/library/reading-lists-2/). We’re happy to locate books for you. Arrange with Office or awolfson@middlebury.edu. Library of Things (LoT) is a listing of useful items, owned by congregants, that they are willing to lend to other community members. Let Artley know what items you are willing to lend. Visit [https://www.cvuus.org/connection/library-of-things/](https://www.cvuus.org/connection/library-of-things/) to view what’s listed.

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**Staying Connected**

Sunday Morning Zoom Coffee Hour (~11 am): Join exchanges after worship where we check in with each other. Login [https://zoom.us/my/cvuusservice/](https://zoom.us/my/cvuusservice/)

Weekend Greeting (Fridays): Rev. Barnabty shares inspirational thoughts, music and readings in a regular email from revbarnaby@cvuus.org. Not getting these? Email office@cvuus.org.

Weekly Blast (Wednesdays): Provides pathways for connection with links to our upcoming worships, past services, events. Not getting these? Email office@cvuus.org.

**Yellow Card Milestones & Passages:** Submit them before Sunday at [https://cvuus.breezechms.com/form/YellowCard](https://cvuus.breezechms.com/form/YellowCard).

**Council of Ministries:** Lise Anderson and Brett Millier convene reps from our ministry groups on 1st Monday of month at 5 PM in the Blue Room to brainstorm and update each other. They will not meet in Dec. Look for opportunities galore for you to promote, celebrate and stay connected with CVUUS.
CVUUS Seasons of Life Fund

Our Seasons of Life Fund is a way to share your joy or concern with the CVUUS community. Members and friends can commemorate personal milestones and passages through financial gifts to CVUUS that provide extra money for us to fulfill our mission statement. The names of the donors and the occasions of the gifts are noted in our monthly newsletter. There is no minimum amount and the size of your donation will not be made public. Please consider the Seasons of Life Fund the next time you—or someone you know—want to honor a birthday, marriage, retirement, anniversary, death, or achievement.

Pastoral Care

CVUUS is blessed with wise and well-trained individuals providing support to members and friends in various kinds of distress. See Jordan Young or Majorie Carsen. This.

Wheel of Life

CVUUS commemorates births and deaths. Listen to Milestones and Passages each Sunday for these and share your own. See how on page 12. Also see the Seasons of Life Fund below.

Online Giving

https://cvuus.breezechms.com/give/online

See how to choose options here or by code to right.

Our Caring Network provides support, such as calls, visits, meals, and rides, to those in need. We offer rides to any member or friend who might want a ride to and from their covid-19 vaccination appointment. If you or anyone you know could use a ride, please call or email Kathryn Schloff (kathrynschloff@gmailcom or 349-5264) and arrangements will be made.

Visit www.uua.org to learn about the wider work of UUA and our affiliates.

Visit www.cvuus.org to explore our happenings and most current calendar.
Champlain Valley Unitarian Universalist Society

2 Duane Court, Middlebury, VT 05753
Located at Duane Court & Charles Avenue

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
(802) 388-8080; office@cvuus.org
Office Hours: M–F, mornings
And Facebook page CVUUSVT

MINISTER
Rev. Barnaby Feder
388-8080 (office)
989-9303 (cell)
989-7197 (home)
Email: revbarnaby@cvuus.org

CVUUS Board of Trustees
Doug Richards – President
Kerri Duquette-Hoffman – Vice-President
Ann Webster – Treasurer
Kas Singh — Clerk

Members At Large:
Priscilla Bremser
Mary Hadley

CVUUS Leaders
Caring Network – Kathryn Schloff 349-5264
Council of Ministries — Lise Anderson 734-255-3434, Brett M
Donation Ministry — Allison Cutler 989-7792
Facilities – Bob House 989-5050
Fellowship—Mike Greenwood 349-5653
Finance—Ann Webster 388-7506
Green Sanctuary — Elizabeth Golden 598-2388
Library & Information Resources – Artley Wolfson 989-7081
Membership Ministry — Marjorie Carsen 453-8457
Music Ministry Team — Carol Harden 989-8783
Pastoral Care — Jordan Young, Marjorie Carsen
Religious Exploration Council – Tracey Harrington, Jess Rouse
Safe Congregation—Alan Moore 865-335-2028
Small Group Ministry — Doug Richards 989-9387
Worship Team – Abi Sessions 349-8147

CVUUS Staff
Bookkeeper – Kris Butler (fm@cvuus.org, 989-7346)
Music – Ronnie Romano (music@cvuus.org, 201-388-4038)
Dir. of Religious Exploration – Poppy Rees (re@cvuus.org)
Office Manager – Laura Asermily (office@cvuus.org)
Custodian— Keith Rickerby (989-6036)

More inside @ cvuus.org

Fri Dec 24, 7:30 pm onsite & online
Christmas Eve Service welcomes all
Choose your options by Dec 10
Radical Love Giveaway Online RAffle
(on site suspended)
Coffee Hour continues online
Attends onsite indoors OR online

Dec Worship Services 10 am

Return Service Requested