

# **Bristoletter**

**Newsletter of the United Church of Bristol  
A member congregation of the United Church of Christ**

**United Church of Bristol  
7177 County Road Two  
Bloomfield, NY 14469**

**“God is still speaking”**

Paula Dorn  
Treasurer

Joan Hall  
Moderator

**Rev. Thomas (Tim) Hamlin, Pastor    E-mail: [redcedar58@gmail.com](mailto:redcedar58@gmail.com)    Phone: 585-727-2938**  
**Church School -- during service    Worship -- 10:00 am    Fellowship Hour -- 11:00 am**  
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### Those Whom We Hold in Prayer

Wendy and Denise, Sophia, Jim and Mary Dunne, Matt, Ginny, Lance, Catherine, Linda and Bob, those who are grieving, those who are fighting drug/substance addiction, those with cancer or chronic illness, those who have depression, anxiety or mental illness, those who are victims of violence or injustice, and those who are victims of natural disaster.

We give thanks for the rescue of the children trapped in the cave, for sunny days, rainy days, vacations, retirements, friends, music, health and for the steadfast love of Christ in the good times and in the bad.

### Altar Flower Committee Report

The Flower Committee, Trustees and others are working together to upgrade the landscaping. Basically the exterior of the church and grounds. We are making progress, all are welcome to join in! We are calling the group UCB Garden Club! Agenda items include recommending to Cabinet new all-weather handicap ramp for the front entry and improving the facade/semi solid stain for the concrete entrance. New planters have been donated and they will be cleaned & stained.

Several areas have been weeded/trimmed/pruned. Planting of flowers/mulching/upgrading in general is in the works! We want the exterior to be as warm and welcoming as the congregation inside!

Our thanks to all – many hands make light work! Please contact any Flower Committee member to volunteer with any project—there is one rule [if you plant you maintain].

Memorial gifts for the Altar – contact:

Diane Bassage	657-6609
Art Cratsley	657-4789
Gloria Miles	229-2322
Fran Staub	229-7306

### Christian Education

Our Christian Education Committee has been very busy this summer. Thank you to MaryLynne, Stephanie, Linda Ensmann and all their team for such an exceptional **Vacation Bible School**.

### SAVE THE DATE

Sunday School Kickoff will be **Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup>**. Details to follow!

### Community Formation

Cc Bodnar is chairing a committee for Community Formation. This is for our church community to increase knowledge of our deeply held values as individuals and as a community.

She has set up a table in Fellowship Hall with different brochures, articles, pictures etc. that help to give us insight into ourselves and others. If you have anything that represents how you feel or your values or interests to add to the display please feel free to bring them in. For further clarification see Cc or Joan.

### Deacons Report

The Deacon's hope everyone is enjoying a safe and fun filled summer. We manned the church booth at Bristol Fun Days and helped serve lunches at Vacation Bible School. We will not be meeting in July but continue our "Over 80's" birthday visits. The Deacons will assist Rev. Gilbert at the July 29th service and will start gearing up for the holiday season after school starts up. The Deacons are always available to lend a hand and/or pay a visit. Enjoy the remainder of the summer.

### Information of Note

**WINNER, WINNER, TURKEY DINNER 2018!**  
**Saturday, October 20<sup>th</sup>! Yum, yum!!**



### Moderators Words

**I would like to thank all the members of the Church Boards and Committees for their unending commitment to our church family.**

We have accomplished so much for a small congregation. Our Joy Jar collections help a wide variety of people in need, our special collections, many of which are anonymous; go to wonderful causes. Our float in the Bristol Fun Day parade was a hit! Vacation Bible School was a delight for eight children and more so for those who watched it come alive. Our Deacons reach out to all those over that certain age and make each one feel special. Gloria sends out cards to us on a regular basis and Art gives us beautiful lilies to greet us each Sunday all summer. When a special call went out to clean and spruce up outside our building, so many stepped up that the work was done in no time. A special shout out to Bob Drayn, Lance and Diane, MaryLynne and Paula for their over and above work. With so many eager hands it looks just great! A great thank you goes out to Jane Marble for keeping our indoor spaces bright and clean!

**We are growing!** Anyone who is interested in formalizing membership or transfer of membership into

the United Church of Bristol or in being baptized into the faith please contact Pastor Tim. There will be an informational meeting to discuss the mission and future of our church in the following weeks. Stay tuned.

**I want to thank Pastor Tim for his devoted care of his church flock for the last fifteen years on behalf of all of us.** Well done! We always know he will be there when we need him and that is indeed a great blessing. We need to thank him also for all he does in the community. He gives freely of his time to bring music to the Continuing Care Center and Quail Summit and he is an ever present member of the Hands of Hope Ministry.

**Lastly I want to thank you, our congregation; for your faithfulness, your joy, your efforts and your love for all who enter our Church on the Hill.**

Blessings, joy and peace,  
Joan Hall, Moderator

### Missions and Outreach

We will be receiving our Neighbors in Need offering on October 7<sup>th</sup> in conjunction with World Communion Sunday. Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry. Two-thirds of this offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects through grants. Neighbors in Need grants are awarded to UCC churches and organizations doing justice work in their communities. This year, special consideration will be given to projects focusing on serving our immigrant neighbors and communities.

### Pastor's Letter

A friend of mine recently celebrated her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday with a white-water rafting trip out west. Warm sun and warm friends, frothy water and frothy beer all conspired to make it an event for the ages. I saw the pictures. The Argonauts appeared variously panicked, proud, determined and drenched, full of smiles, memories and perhaps one or two Ibuprofen.

There's such power in a white-water trip...and there's powerful symbolism too: strapping yourself in, fully at the mercy of a power greater than yourself, churning headlong down-stream, full of propulsion, peril, perspective and peace – in about that order – eventually gathering in the calm water of gratitude and granola bars.

I admired their guts, but also found myself holding defiantly to my preferred vision of a birthday bash: cake, ice-cream and perhaps a languid trip out in a Sunfish. Each to his or her own!

What I found inspiring about this “birthday baptism” was the willingness to risk – to place oneself into a situation far beyond one's control and to receive whatever was forthcoming, fully believing it would be good. Of course, “risking” is not the same as “recklessness”: there were seasoned guides, personal flotation devices, and first aid kits. But over against a raging river, even such precautions pale.

There comes a point when you've checked the gear, tightened the straps, and it's time to go. Long ago, there were those who, when challenged by Jesus to throw in their lot, insisted that they had tasks yet undone. Christ would have none of that. It was now or never, all or nothing. Similarly, you don't get half-way down a Class IV rapid and suddenly head back home to finish your laundry.

Life with Christ changes things. It sets into motion things not easily reversed. And it brings its own unique set of obstacles and dangers, its own peculiar rewards and pleasures. There's a reason that very few people bring knitting needles on a white-water rafting trip - just as you'd be hard-pressed to find a kayak at a quilting bee. Our lives become shaped by the journey we choose.

Whatever your preferred brand of “risk”, we all take one when we sign on with Christ. A risk we gladly share with others who are willing to place themselves into the service of love and justice and peace. I may be all wet, but I believe it's the best trip around, and I am grateful to share the journey with you all!

In Christ,  
Tim