

# *Brandon Congregational Church UCC*

*A United Church of Christ*  
*Rev. Sara A. Rossigg, Pastor*  
1 Carver Street, PO Box 97  
Brandon, Vermont 05733  
Phone 802-247-6121

brandoncongregationalchurch@gmail.com



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Dear Brandon Congregational Members & Friends,

The end of the year is almost upon us, the snow has already started to fall and temperatures are headed south, so it's time to consider our annual stewardship of the Brandon Congregational Church UCC. Our church is a hub in Brandon, not only visually but spiritually through the many programs and outreach it provides. In addition to our worship and Bible studies, we have offered our spaces for performance rehearsals and a concert venue, art shows, a knitting group, free health screenings, WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Clinics, Red Cross blood drives, a rainout location for summer camp programs, storage for the library during renovation, community meetings, and affordable private rentals for showers and birthday parties—not failing to mention Rev. Sara's thoughtful and Spirit-filled weekly services. Looking at all this practically, it's necessary to do our best to balance the cost of providing what we do with the financial support that comes into the church. Your financial contributions are gratefully and prayerfully received, and are essential to our planning for the coming year's ministries.

You will find enclosed a draft of next year's budget, prepared by the trustees which provides some expectations of what it will cost to maintain all that we do, along with a letter from them detailing the reasons behind the expenses. As you can see, the difference between income and expense is narrow indeed. Yes, we're very blessed to have endowment funds, but the restrictions placed upon them at their inception mean we are not able to draw more than a cost of living increase from the principal. Therefore our collective financial support continues to be important to maintain our church -- the building and all its programs.

A pledge form is enclosed in this letter. We ask for your prayerful consideration of a pledge or one-time gift. You can bring the form to church to drop in the offering plate in the coming weeks, or mail in to: BCC, Attn: Hillary Knapp, Financial Secretary, P.O. Box 97, Brandon, VT 05733.

We have some challenges ahead of us, but we've always been able to meet them in the past because we have a loving, vibrant, spiritually strong congregation. And we trust this year will not be any different, thanks to all of you. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration as we seek to do God's work in our wonderful community. We're grateful for your participation in our community, in whatever form it takes.

Holiday Blessings,

Mr. Jeff Stewart, Council Chair