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# THE OLD MEETING HOUSE

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## EAST MONTPELIER CENTER, VERMONT

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*September 2008 Newsletter*

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### LETTER FROM DAVID CONNOR, Associate Pastor

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Dear OMH Friends,

Now that we've finally been blessed with some sun and warmth, our Vermont summer is winding down and it's Back to School time. I am taking this opportunity to catch up on the summer news before we speed into the busy fall.

- Here at our house, we've replaced our old Nashua wood furnace with a pellet furnace, accompanied by three tons of 50 pound bags of wood pellets piled up in the basement. Tomorrow (Aug. 28) we say good-bye to Nora as she drives west to Boulder, CO, in her trusty Tercel to begin a year-long paid internship with the National Wildlife Federation.

- Lowell VanDerlip has provided frequent updates on the ongoing work of the OMH Search Committee, which has been meeting regularly to complete the Old Meeting House Parish Profile. That profile is posted on the website for your perusal, under the Quick Links section.

- Sunday services have been well-attended, with a stimulating variety of worship leaders, including John Pateron, Francis Brooks and Elizabeth Towle. The Christian Education committee has provided regular activities for youth during Sunday summer services. Beth Ann Porter made a surprise visit one Sunday; she and her youth group volunteers pro-

vided fabulous peach cobbler for Coffee Hour.

- Speaking of food, the OMH Café convened on the first Wednesday of July and August. Salads were featured, as we pretended that summer had come...

- The OMH congregation formally commissioned the work of Randy and Stacy Brown and their children Jenna and Gus. The Browns left later that week for Mali, where Randy is helping to design and build a school. The family is settled in already, and the kids are in school. Catch up with them and leave your comments on their blog, <http://brownsinbamako.blogspot.com/>

- John Thaddeus Kress, son of Dawn Angney and George Kress, was baptized on Sunday, August 10. Aunt Amy was godmother and proud grandmother Alice performed the promenade around the Meeting House holding her beautiful grandson and introducing him to the congregants.

- Carol Krokenberger and Dexter Lefavour were married by Susan in a truly beautiful garden ceremony at the OMH outdoor flower garden on August 8th. The twins, Hans and Lucy, served as ring-bearer and flower-girl, respectively.

### PREACHING SCHEDULE

Sunday, September 7  
Gathering Sunday.  
Teresa Lever

Sunday, September 14  
Teresa Lever

Sunday, September 21  
Lay service.

Sunday, September 28  
David Connor

# THE OLD MEETING HOUSE

## STAFF, OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

Pastor: Susan Cooke Kittredge  
Associate Pastor: David Connor

### STAFF

Administrative Assistant:  
Barbra Ploof  
SS Superintendent:  
Michelle Gardner  
Music Director: June Morse  
Choir Director:  
Marcia Bowles  
Sexton: Pat Forbes  
Newsletter Editor:  
Izabel Nielsen  
Clerk : Jen Hollar

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Joanna Day  
Sandy England  
Mark Catlin  
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Cherie Staples, Asst. Treas.

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Treasurer: Janice Waterman  
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Heidi Tringe  
Lowell VanDerlip  
Norman Hill  
Adri Luhr  
Richard Brock  
Connie Hare  
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### OMHAM

Peter Nielsen, Chair  
Carolyn Scoppettone  
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Connie Hare  
Mark Catlin  
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Erik Esselstyn  
Dana Lawrence

- Circle of Care has been busy providing visits, food, and transportation to various OMH parishioners – most recently helping Connie Hare, who had a nasty spill from a spooked horse. (Connie is doing much better now.) Jessie Taylor has been facilitating pastoral care requests since Susan’s sabbatical leave began in early August.

- Our thanks to Barb Ploof, who stepped in to cover, temporarily, the Administrative Assistant position that opened when Margaret McCoy accepted a full-time job at the end of July with the Institute of Rural Development.

- My wife Ann can be seen cruising down the hill to Montpelier and back up on her new electric bicycle. The peppy bike got away from her one day, and she banged up her knee. Consequently, we have put our September Elderhostel trip on hold until next year when hiking and kayaking won’t be so challenging. We will be mostly home this fall, with a few short trips to visit family and an early November trip to Turkey. Please call on me for any pastoral needs that I can help with.

The recession, coupled with severe cuts to Vermont’s state budget, have raised major concerns about growing numbers of Vermonters experiencing cold, hunger, transportation difficulties, and homelessness this winter. In Morrisville where I direct the Lamoille Family Center, we will kick off the annual United Way campaign with a day of wood splitting and stocking for the new Community Woodpile, designed for families who need supplemental fuel this winter. All over Vermont, creative problem-solving meetings are being held, covering ideas like: opening schools and public buildings overnight during cold spells, car-pooling (Tim Shea has done great things at National Life in this regard.), people temporarily taking in those who lack adequate housing, four-day work weeks, volunteer transportation networks, child care cooperatives, shuttle bus expansion, more food drives, free financial planning services, etc.

I am sure we will have many discussions and strategizing sessions at OMH in the next few months as “mission” takes on even more urgent dimensions both locally and (inter)nationally. [Note the Missions-sponsored Sort-a-Thon at the Food Bank on Sept. 27.]

That's all the news I can dredge up to print. I wish you all God's grace, peace and comfort as you continue together in this challenging year of growth, change, and hope.

Salom,  
David

## Greetings from Bamako!

Today marks three weeks since we arrived in Mali. It has been a busy time with Jenna and Gus both starting school, Randy being immersed in the work of trying to get a new school built, and Stacy trying to keep all the pieces moving. We have tapped the knowledge of experienced teachers and Embassy families to get our bearings, and done some exploring of the local market and neighborhood. Fortunately, our house is right down the street from the school because the classes start at 7:30 sharp!

We have yet to learn Bambara, the dominant local tongue, but the French learned years ago is coming back; English doesn't get you very far outside the School and Embassy communities. Randy has found all sorts of Fulfulde speakers who are amazed to hear their language coming from an obvious foreigner.

Only after arriving here did we learn that Bamako is currently considered the world's 6th fastest growing city, and after only a short visit here that statistic is not a surprise. The city is just bursting in all directions. Areas that only ten years ago were fields of millet are now sprawling suburbs and construction is everywhere. In fact, seeing completed construction is more of an anomaly than the norm. But the real gauge of Bamako's growth is most evident on the city's streets, which are completely clogged with thousands of small motorcycles, mopeds, scooters weaving about every car and truck creating complete chaos. Although we have a car we have been timid in our exploration so far.

We have started a blog at [www.brownsinbamako.blogspot.com](http://www.brownsinbamako.blogspot.com) to share some of our experiences thru stories and pictures. While our day-to-day experiences will be Bamako-based, we hope to do lots of weekend traveling outside the urban areas to see some of Mali's beautiful places and cultural areas.

We think often of home, of Vermont, of our community at OMH and greater Montpelier, and we hope that you are all savoring your final days of summer.

Love,  
Randy, Stacy, Jenna and Gus Brown

## Interim Administrative Assistant Job Description

When Margaret McCoy found a full time job at the beginning of the summer and had to resign as our Administrative Assistant, Barb Ploof generously offered to step in for a few months. She would like to be finished as soon as possible, so we are again seeking applications for Administrative Assistant. If you are interested in this position, please contact Ann Stanton at: [Profstanton@aol.com](mailto:Profstanton@aol.com) or 223-5321. Please note: The responsibilities for this position are subject to change in the months ahead as we examine all the staffing at the OMH.

This is a part-time position averaging 10 hours per week. Some of the work may be done at home on the telephone and on a computer with Internet access. An office space is provided at the Parish House of the Old Meeting House. The Administrative Assistant reports to the pastor. No benefits are provided for this part time position.

### RESPONSIBILITIES

The Administrative Assistant assists the pastors in administrative functions and is responsible for carrying out the activities of the administrative office of The Old Meeting House. Specific duties include but are not limited to:

- Preparation and copying of bulletins for Sunday services and other special services; maintaining copier and office supplies;
- Scheduling meetings and activities of the church and church committees, and communicating this schedule;
- Acting as agent for the church in arranging for rentals of the church property;

- Overseeing the use and condition of the Old Meeting House buildings;
- Maintaining files and data bases and web site; copying and mailing; distributing incoming mail;
- Responding to inquiries and requests for information; writing thank you notes, letters and other correspondence.
- Facilitating the compilation and editing of the electronic newsletter on a monthly basis.

## QUALIFICATIONS

Strong communication skills (written and oral), excellent interpersonal skills, excellent organizational skills. Proficiency with use of the Internet and word processing. Experience in office administration and record keeping preferred. Ability to be at the Parish House several times a week, to collect and distribute mail commitment to confidentiality is essential.

## *From the Christian Ed. Committee* Secretary Needed

The Christian Education Committee (CEC) is in need of a secretary to take minutes at their monthly meetings. The minutes are actually “notes,” not formal word-for-word minutes. The CEC meets the first Monday of every month from 5:45 to 6:45 at the Parish House. Please contact Edna Martineau, Chair of the CEC, at scoop53@verizon.net or 476-8555 to learn more about the CEC and its mission of assisting children on their spiritual journey.

## A New Class for Parents and Infants Offered at the Old Meeting House *Parents & Infants Together*

Becoming a new parent is wonderful and challenging. This class is a place for new parents to meet with other parents and learn about their children in a nurturing and supportive environment. We will share ideas on sleep, food, care giving, play and other topics along with songs and lap games for babies. We will create one or two simple toys for your baby.

Fall Session: Wednesdays, October 1st through November 19th  
 Time: 10:30 am – 12:00 noon  
 Location: The Old Meeting House, Center Road, East Montpelier  
 For: Parents or caregivers with babies birth to 12 months and parents-to-be  
 Cost: \$100 for eight week session

Registration required. Class size is limited. To register please call the Orchard Valley Waldorf School 456-7400.

This class will be taught by Joan Kahn. For more information on the class contact Joan at 223-3005 or jkss@pshift.com

## *From the Onion River Food Shelf* Volunteers Needed for Sort-a-thon

The Old Meeting House Missions Committee is looking for volunteers to participate in a Sort-a-thon at the Vermont Foodbank in Barre on Saturday, September 27, from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Volunteers will sort, re-pack or build Commodity Supplemental Food Program boxes in the Foodbank warehouse or work in the Community Kitchen. Volunteers are not required to stay for the entire four hours; it is typical for volunteers to help out for about two hours. Volunteers need to be at least 14 years old to work in the warehouse; 14 or 15 year olds need to be accompanied by an adult. Also, no open-toe shoes such as sandals are allowed in the warehouse for safety reasons.

Volunteers can designate a local Foodbank-affiliated food shelf to receive \$2 toward the purchase of food for every hour they work. For every \$1 received, the Foodbank’s Network Partners can purchase 3 pounds of food, so those dollars add up to lots of food for hungry Vermonters. Saturday Sort-a-thons are an important means for many of the Foodbank’s agencies to receive the food they need to feed people in Vermont communities.

If you are interested in volunteering, please so indicate by September 21 on a sign-up sheet in the Parish House or contact Tim Noonan (223-6216). The Foodbank is located at Wilson Industrial Park, 33 Parker Road, Barre.

## Children's Art for the Parish House

Dear Friends,

We have been fortunate to have Jane Eakin's beautiful quilts hanging in the Parish House all summer. I am continually amazed at the talents that hide in our community. Don't be shy, if you have some art you'd like to display, please let me (Wendy Soliday) or Cherie know.

Our hope is to welcome everyone back in the fall with some children's art so we can all get to know our church family better. As of now, we only have two pieces to hang. So please call!!!!!! It may be your own, your child's, or your nephew's. It would be great if you have it framed. (If you don't, you should; you'll someday be glad you did and they'll be flattered.) Next to each picture will be a sentence or two about the artist. Paintings can be dropped off at my house (885 Murray Rd, a mile at most from the church) and I'll take care of hanging. I'm hoping to hang them the 2nd-5th so please call. 229-9594. I will be away from the 25th through 1st but you can leave your number and I'll get back to you.

I welcome your ideas for future exhibits. It is prime space and we encourage artists who sell their work to make a donation to OMH.

## Notes from Barbra Ploof

Many new books on tape and on CD were recently added to the collection in the Blue Room. Come look them over and sign out any you may want to listen to at home or in the car.

The church could use a podium; a desk-top one is preferred. It seems like nearly every year we have a use for one and have to improvise. I just wondered if anyone knows where there might be one no longer in use. Or would someone like to build one?

## Gathering Sunday Produce Sale

The third annual garden sale will be on Gathering Sunday, September 7th, following the worship service at the Old Meeting House. Church Members who are gardeners have been growing for you all summer tomatoes, cucumbers, beets, carrots, squash, onions, leeks, pumpkins, and other produce. You may leave vegetables and fruit at the church after five p.m. on Saturday, September 6th or before worship on September 7th. All proceeds will go to the church budget. See you at the sale!

## Families of the OMH

- Congratulations to Carol Krokenberger and Dexter Lefavour who were married at the Old Meeting House on 8/8/08.

- Congratulations to John Thaddeus Kress who was baptised at the Old Meeting House on August 10. His parents are Dawn Angney and George Kress and his grandparents are Alice and Richard Angney.

- Prayers of thanksgiving for Laura Brown's healthy new granddaughter!

- Prayers of thanksgiving for Connie Hare's recovery from her accident.

- Continued prayers for Nancy Strong, Jim Hanna, Deb Reed, and Tony French.

- Blessings on Susan and Charlie Kittredge in their new home in Shelburne.



# A Blue Ribbon Pie

## *The Secrets for an "End of Summer Pie"*

Last year the OMH held a Gather Sunday celebration that consisted of games, live music, fresh produce, and home made pies. As you may remember I was fortunate to receive the blue ribbon for my pie. Now, a year later I offer my secrets to success . . . how to bake a blue ribbon pie.

To bake a blue ribbon pie the baker must be aware of what pie is in demand for the season. In autumn there is nothing more satisfying than layers of warm apple pie and cinnamon; winter calls for nuts and spices to bring out the scent of the season. Then, as the leaves come out and flowers bloom, everyone is eager for a tart with fresh rhubarb topping. Summer is the time of year when pies are dependant on which fruit is perfectly ripe. We near the last of our summer days and the morning fog is settling creamy and crisp in the sky, the end of the season calls for berries not too sweet and the juiciness of a golden peach. Thus I chose my pie.

Every pie starts with the crust. Butter, flour, ice water, and salt are the simple and essential ingredients. If crust is made without butter, then the judges shall starve. The basic dough for many pies is the pate brisee, which means, "Short pastry". This is a rich, flaky dough that can be used for sweet and savory pies as well as tarts. To begin pate brisee, you will need a food processor, 2 1/2 cups of flour, 2 sticks of unsalted butter; a teaspoon of salt, and 1/4 cup of ice water is needed. First combine the flour and salt in the food processor - pulsing. Make sure you remember to put the top on! I forgot the first time and ended up with le mask de pate brisee.

Add the butter while the processor still pulses and until the mixture looks crumbly and bulky. The ice water goes in next keeping a slow and consistent and slow flow. Do not leave the processor on for more than 30 seconds after the ice water turns the dough wet and sticky, the dough should not fall apart when you pinch it with your fingers. Handling the dough as little as possible will make the crust solid and the butter will not melt away in the palm of your hands. Divide the dough in half and roll it out on a clean surface in flattened discs. Put these in the refrigerator for an

hour. Only put the dough in the freezer if you are an extremely organized pie baker and wish to serve the pie a month from now. Speaking from experience this crust does not take experience, just focus and paying attention to details. In the end no one can resist butter and flour.

When constructing the perfect seasonal filling the baker can improvise with whatever fruits or spices match their taste buds, as long as she has the right balance of sweet and tart. My German grandmother always tells me to cut all sugar measurements in half. Sugar is an ingredient that distracts the taste buds from the flavor of the fruits and leaves the judge with an unsatisfying bellyache.

The crust may be what makes you place in the contest, but crust is simply the foundation for the bouquet of fresh filling. I knew from the beginning that I in fact wanted to make a peach, apricots and cherry pie. However, the season told me otherwise and I replaced apricots and cherries with blackberries and raspberries. I was actually quite pleased with my decision because apricots and cherries are much richer and sweeter fruits, while blackberries give balance to the sweetness of the peaches. The fruit filling is really about texture and color. The peaches need to be soft to the touch, pitted and cut carefully into wedges letting the red of the inside show. The blackberries should be dark and plump and ruby red raspberries will do the trick. Be careful not to put in the moldy ones! That will really give the judges a sour face. In a large bowl toss the selected fruits, adding sugar, cornstarch and lemon juice while blending together with your clean hands. Now put the fruit mixture in the fridge to let cool while the juices mix and create flavor.

The dough needs to be rolled out to a 12 inch round and lightly coated in flour. Remove the excess flour with a dry pastry brush fit the dough into your grandmother's favorite 9-inch glass pie dish. Chill the other dough disc for about 30 minutes along with the dough in the glass pan. This toughens the dough up and prepares it for the ultimate bake.

Now remove the dough from the fridge and cut it into 1-inch wide strips using a fluttered edge pastry cutter for presentation. Spoon the filling into the pie dough along with its juices. Dot the top with butter and

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brush the edges with cool water. Now weave the strips tightly over the top with equal spaces in between. Whisk together the egg yolk and cream to brush the crust - this creates a golden honey hue when baked. For the blue ribbon, take some extra time to cut simple designs like flowers or butterflies for an edge decoration. Generously dust the dough with sanding sugar for crystallization.

When the aroma of late summer came pouring out of the church ovens, I set the stage for victory. The ingredients in the pie brought back memories of late summer nights and immediately hit the judges' soft spot. When I received the ribbon I realized that anyone can follow a recipe, but it takes the imagination and determination of a young girl to win first place.

Izabel Nielsen



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IS AVAILABLE FOR  
DOWNLOADING AT:

*[www.oldmeetinghouse.org/newsletters.htm](http://www.oldmeetinghouse.org/newsletters.htm)*

DEADLINE FOR SEPTEMBER  
ISSUE:  
**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**

PLEASE SEND ALL  
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*[newsletter@oldmeetinghouse.org](mailto:newsletter@oldmeetinghouse.org)*

BE CREATIVE!  
SUBMIT PHOTOS, POEMS,  
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MOVIE REVIEWS, OR ARTICLES  
ON ANY TOPIC OF INTEREST  
TO THE CONGREGATION.

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
PLEASE CONTACT  
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