



Photo by Maurie Hill

“SpiritSpark”

**The First Baptist Church of
Manchester Center, VT
P.O. Box 1049, Main St.**

802-362-1555

www.fbcmanvt.org

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**Pastor: Rev. Dr. Theresa
Taylor**

SEPTEMBER 2026

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR THERESA

Psalm 65:11

*You crown the year with your bounty,
and your carts overflow with abundance.*

Happy September! We praise God for all the blessings He pours out on First Baptist. He is so mighty and faithful. Of course, we live in a fallen world, and that means there are also challenges. I praise each of you individually and as a family for your steadfast determination to keep moving forward. We may be small in number, but collectively we are making a difference.

One blessing is that the roof replacement will begin this month. Thanks to all for their patience and a great deal of gratitude goes out to the preservation members, that even through several obstacles, you press on. Thanks, Lorraine for leading this project. God is so good and faithful!

We also hope to offer a different outreach event each month. In September “The Singing Men of Texas” will be performing a choir concert for us. Please join us and bring a friend. There are more details below.

We also hope to start a prayer meeting once a month. This will solely focus on corporate prayer. More details will come later. Our normal activities will also begin and please check the calendar at the end and join us and consider bringing a friend with you.

There is a great deal of pain and hopelessness confronting our neighbors and as a “Beacon of Hope” let us make a point of welcoming them to find a safe space within our fellowship. We cannot fix all the issues, but God will direct each of us on to discover the deep and endless supply of joy that only He promises.

I count each of you as a blessing and I would love to hear from you on ways to reach beyond our walls. Thank you for who you are and how you add your gifts to the family. Each of us need to continue to look up for divine guidance, as we reach out our hand to others, to be Jesus with skin on.

Here is a picture of First Baptist Church on the mural on the River walk.



THE SINGING MEN of WEST TEXAS

Come join us in our sanctuary on September 23rd at 6:30 for a special concert! This amazing group of men is gifting us with their passionate love of God by providing for us a free concert!

The following is a message explaining who they are and what they do.

The Singing Men of Texas - West is a choir affiliated with Texas Baptists, comprised of ministers of music, pastors, and laymen actively involved in music ministry.

The choir performs an average of eight concerts per year throughout West Texas, featuring a variety of musical styles including Gospel, Hymn arrangements, and Contemporary Christian, with soloists and instrumental accompaniments.

Through the years, they have taken Mission Tours to various locations, including New Mexico, Southern California, Kansas/Nebraska, New England, Greater West Texas, Ukraine, Vermont, and New York City.

In May 2023, the West Texas Chapter completed a recording project titled "Worthy Of Our Praise," which was released in November of the 2023-2024 concert season.

Members participate in concerts using their vocal, instrumental, and ministerial gifts to offer worship and praise to God through singing and music.

In our monthly concerts, churches do love offerings which help with purchasing music and goes towards efforts like traveling to Vermont. All of the men participate of their own expense or with the help of the church they serve. We are grateful when a church helps with a meal and don't ever expect love offerings when we travel. We are honored if people would like to help toward this ministry if they would choose to.

An added personal note from them:

We are very excited and looking forward to it!

After I came in May, I changed our plans to stay all week in Manchester Center.

Our basic schedule is in town and with y'all Wednesday.



UPDATE for MARY & MARTHA FELLOWSHIP

The Fellowship met in June when they invited the congregation to a breakfast celebrating Father's Day.

Pastor Theresa has asked Lisa Towslee and Mary & Martha Fellowship to make arrangements for the dinner to welcome the Texas Choir that will be holding a concert at our church. This dinner is planned for Sept. 23, 2026. Ham will be part of the dinner and salads and desserts will be solicited. Lisa has already organized the kitchen help.

There is information elsewhere in this newsletter with details about the concert. It is a free concert and all who can fit into our sanctuary are welcome.

At our next meeting the Chicken Pie Supper will be discussed.

Mary & Martha will be meeting on Sept. 13, 2026 at **8:00 A.M.**

Martha Thompson, Secretary

SEARCH COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Search Committee has reviewed the questionnaires that were completed by members of our congregation. The results will be used to update our Church Profile. Our next meeting, on August 31st will be time well spent with our Executive Minister, Rev. Jay Noll from American Baptist Churches of VT and NH. We plan to share the results of the questionnaire with Jay and discuss what he feels is the next step in our search process. We are eager to know the availability of current Pastor Profiles that we may ultimately review. It is always interesting to see how Church Profiles and Pastor Profiles come together. We still have a lot of work ahead of us and we know that God will guide us as we move forward.

Respectfully Submitted, Jim Comar

CHURCH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

The Council met on August 12, 2026 at 5 P.M.

Pastor Theresa and Ken reported manning a table at Street Fest, distributing water and snacks, and they made a few contacts.

Jeremy Crumb will not be able to run the sound system after January 1st. He has written a job description. If a member of the congregation would consider doing this job, please contact Jim Comar at 802-362-1751.

The Council reviewed our Building Use Policy and Fees for non-member use of the church spaces.

After the roof is completed there will again be a guest book at the front entrance. Lorraine Wilkins is working on small welcome gifts for worshippers.

Members of the church are aware that we have a pigeon problem. The Council has consulted our pest control person, Harvey Iris. He will suggest some methods of getting rid of the pigeons.

New Business

Pastor Theresa reports that Sunday School will resume on Sunday, Sept. 20th and will offer a class for children aged 4 to 10.

The church service will continue to start at 9:30 A.M. until the time changes in November. Worship Time change (9:30, 10:00, 10:30, or 11:00) will be voted on at a church meeting to be held sometime before November.

The crab apple tree on Bonnet Street will be cut down before the roofing begins. (Pictures on page 7.)

Russ Taxter is creating a manual of information about our church building i.e. sanctuary lights, baptistry plumbing, boiler, etc.

Project List

*The front steps have been repaired, one small spot left to fix.

*Joe Mylott is sharing his expertise on the window in the hall on Bonnet Street.

*There will be a work party soon to clean in back of the organ.

*Window sills in sanctuary need help.

*Don't forget the Sign-Up sheets in Fellowship Hall. These are ways to help that can be done one time - such as worship assistant, communion server, hosting Fellowship Hour or contributing food or pitching in on clean-up.

How can you help?

The next Church Leadership Council meeting is scheduled for Sept. 9, 2026 at 5 P.M.

Martha Thompson, Acting Secretary

SEPTEMBER WISH LIST from the COMMUNITY FOOD CUPBOARD

Rice & Pasta Meal Mixes
Canned Soup, Stew, or Chili
Canned Tuna or Salmon
Canned Vegetables
Pasta Sauce
Cooking Oil
Dishwashing Soap & Sponges
Paper Towels

THANK YOU!
from CFC

INTERFAITH COUNCIL of the NORTSHIRE

Father Jeremy Means-Koss is the new chairman of the Interfaith Council following Rabbi Scott Buckner. Father Jeremy came to St James Episcopal Church as priest-in-charge in Sept. of 2022 after serving in Virginia and he quickly became active in the Interfaith Council.

He has an impressive educational resume, receiving his Masters of Divinity from Wesley Theological Seminary, related courses at King's College in London and Anglican Studies at Virginia Theological Seminary. On February 16, 2026, he was installed as Rector of both St. James in Arlington and St. Peters in Bennington, called a Constellation of churches.

He and his husband, Brendan, and their dog, Charlie, live in Arlington.

In addition to his other services, Father Jeremy leads a service once a month at St. James called a Taize service. This service is a quiet time for meditation, prayer and spiritual reflection, sometimes with music.

Some other interests he enjoys include crocheting, gospel music, Star Trek and "all things Quebec".

In November of 2025, Father Jeremy Means- Koss became chairman of the Interfaith Council.

The Interfaith Council of the Northshire will meet at the First Baptist Church in Manchester at 12 noon on Thursday, Sept 3, 2026.

~submitted by Martha Thompson

BUILDING PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

Yes, it is FINALLY happening! A new roof is on the way! Scaffolding is scheduled to be started on Monday of this next week with the roof replacement beginning September 8th. I don't know about you, but I couldn't be more excited!

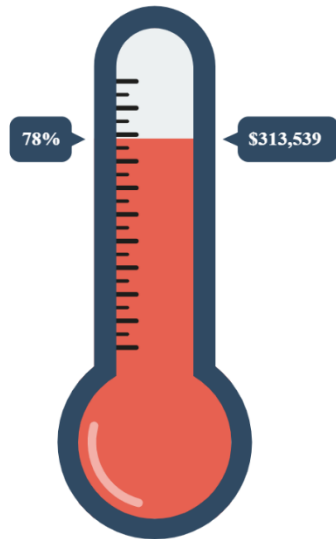
A HUGE thank you to Alvie, Ken, Russ and Glenna. Cutting the stumps down to level the area where the shrubs were was no easy task! Alvie, I can only imagine how frustrating it was for you to have to keep fixing the chainsaw, but you persisted and got the job done. Ken and Russ had clean up duty. Glenna watched "the boys" to make sure they were okay and of course, she did clean up too!

Once again Bruce came through for the church and together with Chris Towslee, cut down our crab apple tree and hauled it all away to make room for the scaffolding. Who knew getting the roof replaced had so much preparation, not to mention conversations with the town! THANK YOU to both Chris and Bruce for your time and effort to get this job done just in time for the work to begin.

If it wasn't for the dedication of our church family, this whole preservation effort would not have gotten off the ground. Thank you to each one of you for all of your efforts to get things done and especially for your financial support. We still have much to do to get our wonderful little red brick church on the corner in "tip top shape", but we have a good start.

Lorraine Wilkins, Chairman
Building Preservation Committee

GOAL: \$400,000



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\$313,539.45!

Getting closer!
Thank you to all who have
contributed.
We feel blessed by your
generosity.

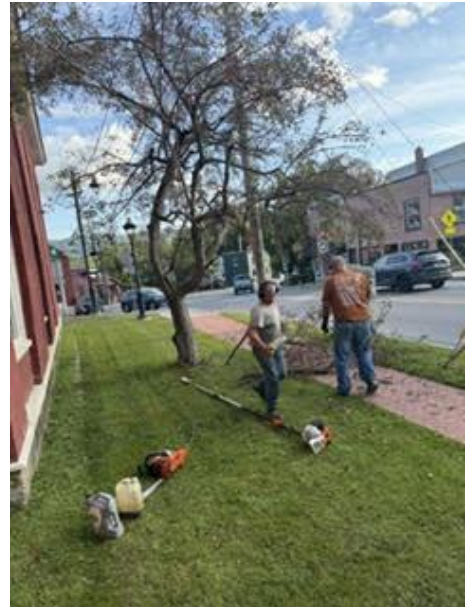
BUSH and STUMP REMOVAL

Pictured are Alvie McKinstry, Ken Taylor and Russ Taxter (who is behind Ken).



Going! Going! Gone!

The tree at the side of our church had to be removed. Now the scaffolding can go up and the roof can go on!
Thank you to Bruce Fielding and Chris Towslee for the amazing job of removal and clean-up!



FBC AUGUST PICNIC at the REC AREA

Front Seated: Martha T. Front Row: Theresa T, Ken T, Lorraine W, Cheryl H, Glenna T, Alvie M,
Middle: Barb T, Joyce S, Ruth K, Cathy C Back: John H, Dottie S, Jim C, Paul B, Lisa H, Lisa T, John C.
(Jim W not pictured) (Russ T behind camera.)

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Rev Dr Theresa Taylor: (802) 535-7710

First Baptist Church: (802) 362-1555

Website: www.seektheson.org

My office door is always open for visitors. Here are my office hours:

Mondays - 12:00-4:00

Tuesdays - 9:00-1:00

Wednesdays - 9:00-1:00

I would also delight in home visits. Contact me if you are interested.

Text or call: (802) 535-7710.

Email: revtheresa67@gmail.com

CHURCH EVENTS for SEPTEMBER

3 - InterFaith Council meeting at FBC at 11:45

6 - Worship service w/communion & Millie Ryan Dedication at 9:30 am

7 - Labor Day

8 - Feed Your Soul at FBC at 11:30

Prayer & Study Group Ch. 1 & 2 from *Unoffendable* via zoom at 7 pm

9 - Worship team practice at 10:00 am

Church Leadership Council meeting at FBC at 5 pm

13 - Mary & Martha breakfast meeting at **8 am**

Worship service at 9:30 am

14 - Preservation Committee Meeting in the church at 1 pm

Uplift Cancer Support Group at 2 pm

16 - Worship team practice at 10 am

20 - Sunday School at 8:30 am

Worship service at 9:30 am

22 - Feed Your Soul at FBC at 11:30 am

Prayer & Study Group Ch. 3 & 4 from *Unoffendable* via zoom at 7 pm

23 - Worship team practice at 10 am

Men's Texas Singing Choir concert at 6:30 pm

26 - Men's breakfast at 9 am

27 - Sunday School at 8:30 am

Worship service at 9:30 am

28 - Uplift Cancer Support Group at 2 pm

30 - Worship team practice at 10 am

FLOWERS

Sept. 6: Jenny Sprague

Sept. 13: Martha Thompson in memory Joe Stannard

Sept. 20: Lorraine Wilkins in memory of Jackie Perry

Sept. 27: Martha Thompson in honor of friend, Carole McClure