As I was reading my morning meditation (February 20) from this year’s UCC Lenten devotional, I encountered once more the exchange between God and Abraham as they talk about God’s proposed covenant. Abraham’s words of worry about what would become of all his “stuff”—that it would go to a ‘mere’ servant since he had no legitimate heirs—really stopped me. God assures Abraham that he will have children, and taking him out into the canopy of night, God says “You will have an abundance of offspring, as many as the stars in this sky.”

What struck me is that Abraham and God are talking about apples and oranges. Abraham, like most of us human beings, is concerned about his accumulation of things in his lifetime. God is concerned about people, and relationship with them, and love among them. “Stuff” is truly immaterial to God. Using the stunning natural example of the millions of stars, God invites Abram to understand what abundance REALLY is about. God invites Abraham to be grateful that God is offering that non-physical but irreplaceably immense gift to him and Sarah. Abundance and gratitude. That’s God’s language.

Which language will you choose, human or divine, when it comes to your gift to the church?

Your Pastor,
Carrie
Rev. Carrie Bail
Interim Senior Minister
Worship And Music

- Less traditional worship experiences during the week and/or on Sunday
- New high school music experience

Continue to offer:
- Sunday worship at 8 and 10
- Special services such as Blue Christmas, Fifth Sunday lay led, youth and children’s
- Organ and choir music

Mission & Social Justice

- Participating in ecumenical summit on sanctuary (migrant justice)
- Intergenerational service projects

Continue to offer:
- Monthly – Dismas House meals, sandwiches for Small Potatoes, deliver MOW’s, Legal Clinic
- Ongoing – JUMP, Ronald McDonald House, Possibility Shop, mission contributions to National Conference, refugee resettlement work, James Hospital
- Seasonal – Christmas/Easter: special mission offering (recipients change each year), Share Christmas, alternative giving fair, walks for COTS, CROP Hunger, Vermont Pride

Buildings & Grounds

- Chapel entry and steeple painting improvements
- Fresh paint and decorative elements in Narthex, hallways, bathrooms
- Major kitchen renovations
- Planning more activities to take place on lawn
- Increasing signs of welcome to all

Continue to offer:
- Routine care of buildings and grounds

Faith Formation

- Reflection on personal strengths and collective purpose as a church during Noorha workshops
- Weekly Lenten gatherings offered at three different times and with different leaders
- Children and youth involved in writing the script for Christmas pageant
- YETS trips to Atlanta for high school youth to Wing and a Prayer Farm, Shaftsbury, VT for middle school youth
- New ways to grow in faith through music, prayer and scripture

Continue to offer:
- Sunday educational programs for children, youth and adults

Church Family

- Informational gatherings for those considering membership
- Reformatting “Faithful Friday” to better meet family needs
- Auction to support middle and high school trips
- Revitalizing connection with UVM’s campus ministry

Continue to offer:
- Partners in Pastoral Care
- Fellowship after worship, book discussions, men’s breakfast, Pick-A-Party gatherings
- Baptisms, wedding and funeral services receptions for special events, community and church dinners/meals