

Dear Friends,

Is there anything better than summer in Vermont? After months of hibernation, the whole state wakes up from its rest and joins together in all kinds of joyful celebrations. From the Jazz Festival to the PRIDE Parade, we really show up for each other.



The magic of summer is something we've leaned into over the past few years at First Church. This year is no different. We're hosting Sambutacada and the Onion River Jazz Band on Jazz Fest weekend, sending our youth to Philadelphia, kicking off another year of Peace Camp, joining for Fellowship Breakfasts, Let's Lunches, and Craft Circles – not to mention rowing together as a Dragon Boat team...

Do you notice what all of these have in common? None are solo activities.

As human beings, we are created for connection, but in a world where loneliness is a rising epidemic, it takes intention and effort to build relationships. Jesus was a master community builder – reaching out to people in love and offering genuine friendship to those who decided to join. He prioritized relationship above all else. I would argue that is how he changed the world.

So this summer, we've created a **Summer Together Bucket List**. On it are all kinds of activities designed to help you lean into community. [CLICK HERE](#) to download it, call your friends, and see how many you can check off! We'll have hard copies available at the church as well. Let's enjoy this season as our Creator intended: *together*.

With Joy,

Ava Bilton,
Director of Congregational Life