

Sweet Harmony

If the 2006 Manchester Music Festival brought “sweet music” to town, then the First Congregational Church of Manchester was one of the sweetest places around.

As part of the Young Artists Series that provided a six-week summer session of study and performances, musicians were buzzing in and out of the church from 8 am to 10 pm for instruction and practice. During each week the students shared the fruits of their labor with the community by performing at the Southern Vermont Arts Center, the Riley Center for the Arts, and FCC.

Such a partnership among non-profit organizations is almost as sweet as the music. “We are part of a vital community that is interdependent,” commented Dr. Steven Berry, the Pastor of FCC. “What better way to recognize this than to open our doors to and help each other when opportunities arise?”

In the small community of Manchester many non-profits are discovering the benefits of pooling their resources together. The Manchester Music Festival is perhaps one of the best examples of a non-profit organization's ingenious cooperation with several non-profits at once.

“We are committed to providing opportunities for the enrichment and well-being of the larger community,” said Dr. Berry. “We love having our facility buzzing with activities and thanks to Ari Rudiakov and Robyn Madison the MMF young artists program gives us the lively presence of gifted artists seven days a week throughout the summer.”

In uncertain times, many non-profits will find that partnerships such as FCC and MMF are key to the future.

To find out more about First Congregational Church or the Manchester Music Festival, visit their web sites: <http://www.manchestermeetinghouse.com/> and <http://www.mmfv.org/> .