

VILLAGE SPIRE

May 2021



Reopening – Hallelujah!

Rev. Maureen Frescott, Senior Pastor
May 2021



Great News! We are excited to announce that we are returning to in-person worship in our sanctuary on **Sunday, May 2**. In order to be welcoming to all, our Re-opening Task Force has established some procedures to keep us safe as we gather. Page 9 has the details.

Creative Worship

Sunday, May 16
10:00 a.m.

“Enjoy This Life”

“Creative Worship” happens on the **THIRD SUNDAY** of every month, with special music, an engaging message presented in a creative way, and a focus theme to frame our worship. This year our overarching theme is **BE THE CHURCH**, the bold statements issued by the United Church of Christ to inspire us to live our faith in the world.

In May our worship theme is “Enjoy This Life.” This will also be our annual Children’s Sunday, and we will celebrate our Church School program along with the many ways we enjoy the gift of life that God has given us! We hope you can join us for this special service online. Our in-person worship will also focus on the theme, with some pieces shown on video.

The season of Easter is a fitting time to shout “Hallelujah!” as we celebrate the resurrection of Christ, but this Easter season we have even more reason to do so. On Sunday, May 2 we are reopening our sanctuary for in-person worship – Hallelujah, indeed! Thanks to the diligent work of our Reopening team (Susan Manchester, Dr. Keith Lammers, Kathy Skoglund, Paul Spiess, Kate Thompson, Doug Topliffe, Sue and Tom Werst, Pastor Kate, and myself), we have the necessary precautions in place to gather in our sanctuary as safely as possible. The team has put together a Frequently Asked Questions guide that lays out what to expect in regards to procedure and what worship will be like as we re-gather (you can find the FAQ printed in this *Spire* and on our website). Yet there may be some questions you have that we may not have addressed. I hope to answer a few of those wonderings here, but if there’s something we haven’t covered please don’t hesitate to reach out to me or to any one of our Reopening Team members!

Science continues to tell us that mask wearing and social distancing are key steps in limiting the spread of the Coronavirus until a large percentage of the population is fully vaccinated, so this will be our primary way of keeping one another healthy and safe as we gather. Masks will be required at all times within the sanctuary and church building, except for our pastors and our liturgist when they are speaking behind the Plexiglas shield mounted on the pulpit and lectern. When you arrive for worship, you’ll be asked a few intake questions (as we’ve all grown used to over the last year!) and then an usher will show you to your seat. We’ll be seating attendees in alternate pews, and you may choose to sit in the balcony as long as space is available. We’re estimating that 50-70 people will fit

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A “Drive By” to Help Foster Children

Please help the Woman’s Association meet the needs of children entering the New Hampshire Foster Care Program. When these children—babies through teenagers—move into foster homes after being removed from settings where they face abuse or neglect, they often arrive with only the clothes they are wearing. The volunteer “Pass Along Project” provides good used clothing as a starter wardrobe to give to foster families. They also provide new pajamas and underwear for these children.

Members of the Woman’s Association were inspired to help when they heard the founder of the Pass Along Project speak, so the group has organized a “drive by” donation opportunity for church and community members who would like to help provide needed items. There will be a drive-by drop off for Pass Along Project donations on **Friday, May 14 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.** and on **Saturday, May 15 from noon to 3:00 p.m.** in front of the church.

The only items needed right now are new onesies and outfits for preemies and newborns, all sizes of diapers and all sizes of pull ups, all sizes of new underwear for boys and girls (boxers for older boys) and new socks for all sizes of babies and children.

Questions? Contact Sally Bowkett (sbb46@hotmail.com) or 673-7409.

VILLAGE SPIRE

A Parish Newsletter
Editor, Andrea Cyr

The Congregational Church of Amherst, NH,
United Church of Christ
11 Church Street
Amherst, NH 03031

Sunday Worship Service 10:00 a.m.

Church school lessons available.

How to reach us:
Office Phone (603) 673-3231,
(603) 673-6848
www.ccamherst.org
Facebook.com/ccamherst

The church office is available
by phone and email Monday–Friday,
from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Send in all news by the
fifteenth of the month.

Announcements
for the Sunday bulletins
are due Thursday morning.

OUR CHURCH STAFF:

Rev. Maureen R. Frescott
Senior Pastor
pastormaureen@ccamherst.org

Rev. Katherine R. Kennedy
Associate Pastor
pastorkate@ccamherst.org

Andrea Cyr
Church Office Administrator
andrea@ccamherst.org

Sara L. Phelps
Director of Music
kalben1@comcast.net

Michael Havay
Organist
michaelh117@gmail.com

Wendy Valeri
Bell Choir Director
wendylazott@tds.net

Marilyn Gibson
Church School Coordinator
mgibson@ccamherst.org

Our Time, Our Turn: We Keep On Moving Forward!

Last month we reported progress on both our financial status and on the building projects, and you heard our request to fulfill outstanding pledges early if possible. Thank you! We received \$13,000 in March which is much appreciated. We ask those who still have outstanding pledges to fulfill your commitment early if possible, as we continue to honor a basic tenet of the campaign to only commit to a project when money is in hand. The longer we wait to receive full funding, the longer we have to wait for the last projects to begin. We anticipate receiving the outstanding pledges (\$77,000) between now and (hopefully well before) the end of the three-year campaign on December 31, 2021.

If you have ever undertaken a home improvement project, you know that it always takes longer than you hope. If you've done so in the last year during COVID-19, you know that it takes even longer! So it is with our capital campaign projects, but the good news is that we are still moving forward.

- The kitchen renovation will have started by the time you read this article. The kitchen has been fully gutted. The hood for the stove was delivered early April and the new gas range is on track for an on-time delivery. Watch for photos of the progress in next month's *Spire*
- A new painting contractor has been hired and will begin painting the exterior of the meetinghouse in late June.
- The window restoration project will be done as income allows.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed throughout this campaign. We are now down to our last three projects, and none would have been possible without your support and encouragement. We are looking forward to a grand celebration in 2022!



Adult Ed Series

A NEW Look at the OLD Testament

Wednesdays, May 5 and 19
10:00 to 11:30 a.m. on Zoom



Is the OLD Testament still relevant today? Who wrote it and why? From the Creation story to the Exodus, the stories of the great Kings and Judges, the writing of the prophets, the poetry of the Psalms, the wisdom of Proverbs, and the suffering of Job, the Old Testament is familiar yet mysterious to many of us. We'll take a NEW look at the OLD Testament through this video lecture series produced by the Great Courses. Each 25-minute lecture offers a fresh perspective and sheds new light on one of the world's most beloved books.

We'll gather on Zoom to watch the lectures together and have a group discussion afterward, facilitated by Pastor Maureen. This class meets every first and third Wednesday of the month at 10:00 a.m. All are welcome even if it's your first time joining us! Please RSVP to pastormaureen@ccamherst.org to receive the Zoom link, or access the link on our church website in the members section.

Reopening – Hallelujah!, continued from page 1

in our sanctuary while maintaining 6 feet of distance. Those from the same household are welcome to sit together, but those from different households will need to maintain distance, even if you're fully vaccinated. This is to ensure that we're keeping one another safe as we gather indoors, and to not unfairly burden our Reopening Team with the task of determining who is vaccinated and who is not. We're not requiring prior registration for the first few Sundays, but we may need to do so eventually should space become limited.

The service itself will be different than we're used to as we seek to limit our time in worship to under 45 minutes, and certain rituals and practices are not yet safe to do. Passing the Peace, passing the offering plate, passing prayer cards, sharing communion, and lingering in the sanctuary after worship are things we can't yet do. We've learned that it's fairly low risk to allow brief responsive prayers, so we will be able to participate in the Call to Worship, the Lord's Prayer, and the Offering Dedication together. Prayer requests may either be emailed to our pastors to be included in that Sunday's worship, or a Prayer Request card may be filled out in the pews and left in the offering plate to be read the following Sunday. While transmission of the virus through surface contact is low, it is still possible, so you'll be asked to pick up your own bulletin on the way in and bring it with you when you leave. After worship, our ushers will dismiss each pew, and while there won't be an organized time of fellowship you are free to greet the pastor and others outside, while masked.

Unfortunately, singing is not yet safe to do, inside or outside, unmasked or masked, communal or solo. Given the size of our space, the limitations of the airflow, and the distance that projected air travels, even through a mask, this is not an activity that can be done until a larger percentage of the population is vaccinated and infection rates have dropped. This is possibly the most heartbreaking of all the restrictions that we're following, as our music ministry is so important to our congregation, and it is THE ministry that gives so many of you purpose and/or is the focal point of your worship experience. Initially, we will have recorded music only in our in-person worship, using the Prelude and Postlude and possibly other pieces that have been recorded for our online worship. Just as we would not ask any of you to attend worship before you felt comfortable doing so, we're allowing our wonderful music staff to return when they feel ready to do so. Meanwhile, our entire staff will continue to use their talents, creative energy, and guidance of God's Spirit to put together the recorded worship that so many of you have been enjoying, and which will continue to serve as the primary worship experience for those not yet ready to return.

Many of us are excited and eager to return to worshiping together again in our sanctuary (I know I am!). Yet especially during these early days and months of transitioning back into our space may we do so with grace. May we offer one another grace, if we're ready to return and wondering why others are not, and if we're not ready to return and feeling like others are leaving us out. May we offer one another grace, and understand that keeping our distance and wearing a mask allows all of us to be together without asking anyone to take an unnecessary risk to feel included. May we offer one another grace, as our staff and leadership take on extra duties to ensure that both our in-person worship and online worship are serving the needs of our congregation as a whole. May we offer one another grace, as we adjust to things being different for awhile, as we grieve the loss of the things we can't yet return to, as we come to understand how we might live into our mission statement with one another in this transitional time. May we continue to be grounded in God's love – in our words and actions. May we continue to serve our neighbors near and far – virtually and directly. May we continue to be welcoming to ALL – whether we are gathering as a community in body or in spirit.

Hallelujah, indeed!

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Maureen



New Members and Visitors ZOOM Info Session in May

Are you NEW (or not-so-new) to our church and interested in learning more about our congregation? Are you interested in learning more about becoming a member? Do you want to know more about the UCC? If so, please join us for a ZOOM INFO SESSION in MAY to learn more about all of the above! The exact date(s) of the session will be chosen based on the availability of those interested. For those who've already joined our mailing list and/or reached out to us about joining, you'll be hearing from us soon! If you've joined us for our online worship over the last year and are interested in attending a Zoom info session, please reach out to Andrea in our church office at andrea@ccamherst.org or 673-3231, or contact Pastor Maureen at pastormaureen@ccamherst.org

SHARE Food Pantry

The SHARE Food Pantry continues to be busy. Please know your donations are needed and truly appreciated.

May Pantry Requests:

Canned Ham,
Canned Meats,
Side Dishes
(seasoned pasta mix,
hamburger helper, etc.),
Ravioli & Beefaroni



Donations should be brought directly to the SHARE Center in Milford. Thank you for your continuous support!



Small Groups Bring Us Closer Together and Closer to God!

This year our groups are exploring **THE SHORT STORIES OF JESUS**. Using the book by Amy-Jill Levine as a guide, we'll explore the parables of Jesus and the many ways they have to guide, comfort, inspire, provoke, and change us. In **May**, our focus parable is **"The Mustard Seed."** This familiar yet short parable compares the coming "Kingdom of God" to a small seed that takes root and grows to a tremendous size. Last month we talked about seeds and the kind of soil that leads to their growth. This month we'll talk about what it takes to make them grow, and what the result of that growth will be!

May meeting schedule:

Sunday Group,
May 2, 7:00–8:30 p.m.

Tuesday Group,
May 4, 1:30–3:00 p.m.

June's Upcoming Group Discussion
Topic will be The Lost Sheep

If you're interested in joining one of our groups please contact Pastor Maureen at 673-3231 x11 - pastormaureen@ccamherst.org.

Church School

Marilyn Gibson, Church School Coordinator

Be The Church for May—Live Life

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6, NRSV)

Church school has nurtured faith and spiritual formation with multiple community service events forever. Pictured here (right), we have the Mill Apartments Thanksgiving Luncheon. Looking forward to fall of 2021 to revitalize our community service.



Brown Bag Lessons incorporate the theme for the month of May, *Live Life. Serve and Follow, A Rich Man's Questions, and Lazarus* are offered for faith nourishment. Parents, brown bag lessons will be distributed to those who have registered on SignUpGenius. SignUpGenius is waiting for you to sign up if you have not already done so:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0d4caea62ea1f8c25-church1>

Children's Sunday is May 16

Church School is creating the worship service (with guidance from our pastors Maureen and Kate, as well as our Christian Ed Team) for the end of our church school year. Having reimagined church school has brought creativity to the forefront. The faithful team of teachers' celebration will include the following: 1) Children participating in the worship service; 2) A photo slideshow of grades Pre-K - 7 children participating in church sponsored activities; and 3) Bible passage readings from our third graders. Children's Sunday marks the last day of the church school season.

CELEBRATE church school in the church back yard with friendship, games, crafts, and food. RSVP to mgibson@ccamherst.org. The contactless fun starts at 11:30 a.m., masks required. Updates for Children's Sunday will arrive in your email and snail mail.

Summer church camp - more information to follow. Meanwhile, upload your pictures of church school brown bag lessons being completed, pictures of children participating in church events (talent night, share collections, and such), to our church school blog or to me at mgibson@ccamherst.org.

Parents of third grade Bible recipients, please record your child reading the Bible passage - at home or in church. Church recording can be arranged by contacting Pastor Maureen through the office or at pastormaureen@ccamherst.org.

Financial Summary

(as of March 31, 2021)

	YTD <u>Actual</u>	YTD <u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Income	\$337,597	\$315,689	\$ 21,908
Expenses	\$309,941	\$326,467	\$(16,527)
Net Income	\$ 27,657	\$(10,778)	\$ 38,435

Numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole dollar; as such, some columns may not appear to total correctly.

We hope you are finding this information helpful. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to anyone on the Finance Team: Keith Lammers, Paul Spiess, Doug Topliffe, Todd Whitney and Tim Wiegand (Treasurer).

ANNUAL MEETING
Sunday, May 23
after worship



Hands-On Opportunity: Build Beds for Kids Who Don't Have Them

We've been told that many children go to bed hungry, even here in Hillsborough County. We know that the rising cost of housing has made it difficult for families to find places that they can afford to rent or buy. But did you know that there are more than **2,000 kids in our county** who do not have a bed of their own?

When the World Service team heard that statistic, they researched the nonprofit Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP). A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, it aims to provide free beds (bunks or twins), mattresses, pillows and bedding to children under the age of 18 who do not have beds of their own. Organizations like us sponsor Build Days by supplying funds and the manpower. SHP provides the equipment, oversight, and administration of the program.

On Saturday, May 22 (rain date May 23), you will have a chance to make beds for 12 children who currently sleep on the floor. Through the generosity of church members from our fundraising drive in 2019/2020, and the World Service budget, we have the funds in hand for the materials (\$2400).

Now we just need to get it done! What can you do? Volunteer! Join us for Build Day in the CCA parking lot. SHP will arrive with tools, lumber, fasteners, and even the electricity. Their Core Team of 20 will setup, train us, provide oversight to ensure a safe and successful outcome, and break everything down. From 1:00-5:00 pm, we will build 6 sets of bunk beds. The assembled bunk beds will be delivered either to homes or to a storage facility, awaiting a home. As there is a waiting list for beds, they won't be in storage for long.

You don't need to have any woodworking experience; the Core Team is there to help and guide you. Jobs are available for all ages and families are welcome. If you can't be there in person, consider providing food for the hungry workers!

Questions? Contact Terri Behm terri.behm@gmail.com (603-554-1754).

To sign up, and for more info about this program visit the SOS page: <https://www.ccamherst.org/sos/>



Prayerful Playgroup: A Group for Grownups with Kids!

Are you a person with little people at home? Are you navigating parenting in a pandemic? Do you seek spiritual refreshment that is relevant to your life, with people who are also in the midst of raising kids?

Then come to Prayerful Playgroup! Every first and third Thursday of the month, from 10:00 to 11:15 a.m. on Zoom, parents of faith come together to share the joys and trials of parenting, reflect on a spiritual topic for the day, and pray together. This is a welcoming space, open to people who attend our church, or any church, or none at all! For more information, email Pastor Kate.



Senior High Youth

SHYG is meeting outside, in person in the month of May! SHYG will meet most Sunday evenings from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. for check-ins, games and spiritual connection.

One Exception: Levi Sunday! May 16 is Levi Sunday at CCAmherst. Meet at the church from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to help spruce up our church for spring! Wear work clothes and bring a rake to enjoy some time serving our church family.

SHYG is a semi-weekly youth group for teens from 9th-12th grade. All teens are welcome to SHYG, whether or not they attend our church (in other words—friends are ALWAYS welcome at SHYG!) Come for connection, spiritual exploration, and deep, long term friendships at SHYG.



Middle High Youth Last MHYG of the Program Year! DATE CHANGE

MHYG meets this month on **May 23** from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. Come join your friends for our year-end celebration.

Service opportunity: On May 16, come to church at 11:30 a.m. with your family to participate in Levi Sunday! Levi Sunday is the day when we do our spring cleaning at the church. Come in your yard work clothes, bring a rake, and join in the fun.

MHYG is a monthly youth group that welcomes all 5-8th graders, whether they go to this church, or any church, or none at all! All are welcome to attend this gathering focused on fun, fellowship and faith. Reach out to Pastor Kate for more information!

Painting the Amherst Congregational Church

By Robert Rowe

I noticed in a recent *Spire*, that one of the ACC capital projects is the painting of the exterior of the church and steeple. In the past 50 years of my church membership, I have been involved in the project twice. Both occasions brought an element of historic drama and entertainment to our members and the citizens of the town.

The first occurred in the early 1970s, I was a trustee and requested bids for painting of the church and steeple. The trustees accepted one bid and the contractor commenced the project. First, the window shutters were removed and set aside to be repaired and painted at the end of the project. As the work commenced the contractor became aware that he had grossly underbid the project. On September 11, 1975 all but a small portion of the steeple and the painting and rehangng of the old shutters had yet to be completed. Ironically, it was on this date that President Gerald Ford visited Amherst Village. President Ford walked down Carriage Road, stopping for lunch at the home of George Winthrop Brown's (Sally Bowkett's father.) The lunch had been prepared by the Woman's Association of the church.

While President Ford was enjoying his lunch, his Secret Service detail traveled the path that President Ford would walk after lunch. When they reached the church and noted men on ladders, they became concerned for the safety of the president. The painters were ordered to remove the ladders and leave the site for the remainder of the day. And the painters did leave, never to return. The work unfinished.

A description of the event is further described in *Amherst Historical Moments*, page 106, and pictures of the shutters on pages 11 and 12.

The second painting event occurred years later when I acted as the attorney for the church. This was at a time when the Selectboard was suffering through an outcry from the citizens as to the size of their property tax bill. Normally in the past when the church was to be painted, we provided the town with the cost to paint the steeple, the property of Amherst, and the town would pay their portion. The steeple cost was always much greater on a square-foot basis than the church siding due to the height. This time, however, the members of the Selectboard played it safe. They put the cost on the warrant and let the voters decide. At the Town Meeting, the painting of the steeple became a major discussion item. After what seemed hours of debate, I presented a question to the chair. "Since the steeple, clock, and bell are the property of the town of Amherst and may present a hazard to the citizens if not maintained, is it possible that we, the ACC members, could request the town to remove them from our property?" The chair referred the matter to Attorney William Drescher, the town attorney and he replied that this was a possibility. Almost immediately, the question was moved and the warrant article passed.

For more information on this unique separation of property between the town and church see *Amherst Historical Moments*, pages 11 and 42.



Steeplejack Photos
Top—Mystic, CT
Below—Vernon, CT



Saying “Yes!”

An interview with Todd Whitney
By Sue Spiess

Sometimes you just have to ask for help. Sometimes you just need to say “yes.” In Todd Whitney’s case, he has been asked often, and almost always says “yes.” Todd Whitney’s introduction to volunteering at CCA began with a phone call, asking if he would serve on the World Service (WS) committee, and he agreed. The next year Vicky Leknes asked if he would be secretary for WS. Thus began a long and continuing involvement in church committees.

Then Art Leknes needed help with ticket sales for the car raffle. He knew that Todd’s wife Jen handled ticket sales for the many theatre productions that their daughter Hannah was involved in, so he called the Whitneys. Todd answered the phone, and said yes.

As co-chair of the Christmas in Amherst Village house tours, Susan Holden knew she needed a team to manage the ticket sales. Who to call?? Jen and Todd! Together they handled all sales for the next five house tours. First sold only at retail outlets or via mail through the church office, online tickets soon became the best way to reach the most buyers. Whatever the method, Jen delivered tickets and Todd tracked everything on spreadsheets and made it all go smoothly.

Todd’s background is in computer science, and by his own admission, he likes to keep things organized and enjoys being busy. He enjoys “the sense of community and working together as a group toward a common goal.” His dry sense of humor has lightened up many a meeting.

While serving on the Long-Range Planning Team for four years, Todd and the team realized the need for a capital campaign. Asked to join the capital campaign team, Todd again said yes. As Treasurer of both the campaign and the building team, Todd and his spreadsheets continue to keep us informed and on budget. He also currently serves on the budget committee. He still finds time to do what he also loves, volunteering as a New England Fusion travel softball coach.

When asked what originally drew him and Jen to CCA, Todd told a familiar story. Originally from Catholic and Unitarian backgrounds, they were searching for a church home that was different from what they had experienced. Looking for a local church in which to raise their three children, they heeded the advice of friends, the Cissels and the Redways, and found a home at CCA and got involved. Todd continues to say “yes” when called upon. Asked what advice he would give to others, he says “Don’t be afraid to volunteer. Those who have come before you will be there to help.” That has certainly been Todd’s mantra and our good fortune.



Come by after morning worship and help us clean up our grounds. No inside work is being planned—all work is outdoors.

Projects include cleaning the parking lot of sand, cleaning church and parsonage flower beds and garden areas, general grounds clean up, spreading bark mulch, repairing rear fence (between parking lot and playground). Bring tools for the jobs you’d like to help with.

Many hands make light work!

Take Me Out to the Ballgame



Wednesday, June 16,
Game time is 6:35 p.m.

The church Men’s Group is organizing another informal night out. Join us for a Fisher Cats baseball game at Northeast Delta Dental Stadium in Manchester. Families and friends are welcome. Tickets cost \$12. (If the group purchase exceeds 20, ticket cost is reduced to \$9. The ticket and food special is \$11.25 which includes a large drink, hot dog and chips). Unless the state guidance changes we will be sitting in our own socially distanced pod. Contact Roger Hooper at Rhooper673@aol.com for tickets or with questions.

Altar Flowers Always Needed



Donated altar arrangements are always welcome. Flowers can be given to remember a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion. The donor arranges with a local florist to have their chosen flowers delivered, or can create their own arrangement and deliver it on Saturday. After the service they may take the flowers home or donate them to a shut-in. There are many openings in the coming months. Please call Anne Krantz (673-9684) to schedule a Sunday.

Little Free Farmstand “Grow & Give”

We are thrilled to provide more information about this exciting initiative. This summer, we are partnering with [SHARE](#) in Milford to make fresh produce and eggs readily available to the community. We invite local growers from Amherst and Milford (and surrounding towns) to share their excess produce on Sunday mornings. Families will come partake of the farm stand on Sunday afternoons, and anything not taken will go to the SHARE food pantry for their clients to select from during the week.

Taking advantage of the farm stand is a great way for families to try new products without cost/risk, involve children in selecting healthy options, and foster a greater sense of community.

What type of produce is needed?

We are seeking nice sturdy shelf-stable veggies like tomatoes, squash, potatoes, onions, garlic, peppers, eggplant, carrots, green beans, cucumbers, zucchini, etc. View [Suggested Vegetable List](#). Grow em', buy em' or donate and we'll work with [SHARE](#) to get them to families that need em'!

How can you help?

- ◆ “Grow & Give” - share extra harvest from your garden
- ◆ Purchase extra produce when you shop
- ◆ Donate local farm fresh eggs
- ◆ "Farmstand Greeter" - help setup/staff the farm stand on Sunday afternoons
- ◆ Transport produce from the church to SHARE
- ◆ Help prepare, plant, and maintain the church garden**



[“Grow & Give” Signup](#)

Faith Promise Update



Our new fiscal year **Stewardship Campaign** is ongoing. As of Tuesday, April 27, we have received pledges from 96 families, totaling \$271,463. Thanks to all that have responded so far. To those who are still considering your pledge, you can email your intents to Andrea

at andrea@ccamherst.org, mail in your pledge intentions, call Andrea (673-3231) or go to the church website <https://www.ccamherst.org/stewardship-pledge/>.

For more information visit [Little Free Farmstand](#) webpage

** Please contact [Bruce Manchester](#) (673-8148) to help with the church garden

Spam Emails Circulating



We continue to see on occasion spam emails circulating that disguise themselves as being from Pastor Maureen. If you receive one of these suspicious emails, please do not click on any links or reply to the email – just delete it.

This spam email is one that many pastors and churches are dealing with these days. The scammer takes public information and pretends to be someone you trust.

If you are unsure if an email you received appearing to be from us is fake, just hover over the sender's name/email with your mouse. If it is legitimate, the return email address will show that is from @ccamherst.org. If you don't see that, it is not from us.

We are sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused.

FAQ's

As We Regather for In-Person Worship

1. What COVID-19 safety precautions can I expect?

Throughout the service, all attendees will be required to wear a mask* and practice social distancing. We will be seating people at a safe distance, and our pastors will be preaching behind a plexiglass barrier. The church will also continue to be regularly cleaned.

*PLEASE NOTE: It is required that masks be worn throughout the church building at all times until further notice!

2. What do we do when we get there?

When you arrive at the church, you will be greeted by a member of our re-opening team, who will ask you standard CDC questions and gather information for contact tracing. Then an usher will guide you to the next available seat in the sanctuary. **Please arrive early to allow extra time for these procedures.**

3. Can I sit with members of my immediate family?

Yes, of course! Ushers will be seating by groups by household, so that we can best utilize the space in the sanctuary.

4. What will the service be like?

In order to keep our services safe, some aspects of worship will be different than you remember:

- The service will start at 10:00 a.m., and last no longer than 45 minutes.
- Bulletins will be available at the entrance of the church. Please take them home with you after worship.
- For now, music will be pre-recorded and there will be no choir or congregational singing.
- Children are *always* welcome at CCA! At this time, children will remain in their seats with their parents throughout the service and there will be no church school or nursery care. The child-in-church basket activities will be available every week.
- We will continue to practice communion in our online worship service, but there will be no in-person communion until it is safe to do so.
- At the end of the service, please remain in your seat until an usher dismisses your row.

5. Will there be an offering?

Yes! Offering plates will be located at the front and rear of the sanctuary.

6. How do I submit a prayer request?

If you would like your prayer request lifted up during worship, please submit your prayer request through our website in advance of the service. You are also welcome to fill out a prayer card during worship and leave it in the offering plate for our pastors **after** the service.

7. Will there be a fellowship hour?

Unfortunately, not at this time

8. Will restrooms be available?

Yes, all restrooms will be open for use.

9. If I'm not ready to come back, can I still worship online?

YES! Online worship will continue as it is now.

10. What if I have a question that is not addressed here?

Please do not hesitate to reach out to any member of the Re-opening Task Force with any other questions you may have about in-person worship: Susan Manchester, Doug Topliffe, Keith Lammers, Kate Thompson, Kathy Skoglund, Sue and Tom Werst, Pastor Maureen Frescott, Pastor Kate Kennedy

The Congregational Church
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