

July 2 Message from Church President Jeannette Hodge and Vice President Joe Aresco

Dear Fellow Church Members and Friends:

As we enter the fifth month of life with COVID 19, there are a few informational items we want to share with you.

The Phasing Forward Task Force is charged with making recommendations for moving forward as a congregation during the COVID 19 pandemic. Just as the country is re-opening in phases, schools and churches are doing the same. The Task Force (Jeannette Hodge, Joe Aresco, Marcie Clark, Jenn Renk, Jan Poet, Mike Enright, Lindsey MacDonald, Sandie Lavoy, Diane Burgess, Jane Hawken, Ann Labby, Kasha Breau) is taking into account the most up-to-date information and data as we consider the best path forward for our church.

At its June 23 meeting, the Church Council unanimously approved the Task Force recommendation for the church building to remain closed through at least August 31, with access limited to only those who have checked in with Joe Aresco. There will be no indoor meetings or activities during this time. A cleaning checklist is being developed for anyone entering the building for any purpose. This precaution will ensure that consistent practices are being followed to clean and disinfect the environment.

Worship services will be offered via YouTube through at least Labor Day weekend. The earliest date that we might gather for in-person worship service is Sunday, September 13.

It is clear that when we again come together for in-person worship services, the experience will be different from what we have known in the past. We are fortunate that the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ has provided extensive resources and information for local churches to consider when preparing for phasing forward. We will keep you updated as the task force continues its work throughout the summer.

Our task force has concluded that providing a live stream or a recording of the entire service will be desirable, so that those who are unable to attend in person can still be a part of the worship experience. To this end, an IT (Information Technology) Committee will be formed to research and develop a plan to make this possible. ***If you have***

expertise or experience in this area, WE NEED YOU !!! Please respond to this email to let us know of your willingness to assist in this important endeavor.

It is easy to grow weary of the restrictions, the predictions, and most of all the isolation many of our parishioners are experiencing. Please take the time to reach out to someone you haven't seen for a while, just to say Hi and to check in. Hearing the voice of a fellow parishioner may be just what that person needs today!

We close with a feeling of incredible gratitude to the many members who are finding ways to "be the church" when we can't "go to church".

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