

United Church Herald

Spring

April/May 2020

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- CHURCH UPGRADES
- FOOD SHELF & COMMUNITY MEAL
- COMMITTEE REPORTS



Office Hours and Staffing

Jenna's office hours
Mon-Fri 10AM- 2PM

James Merriam -
Call for Appointment
Janet Wiseman -
Call for Appointment

802-334-6033

OFFICE@UNITEDCHURCHNEWPORT.ORG
WWW.UNITEDCHURCHNEWPORT.ORG

GREETINGS BELOVED BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST,

This has been an Easter season unlike any other and all of our lives are much different than we anticipated. We are needing to find faith and assurance in unexpected ways and, very literally, in unexpected places. I am very grateful to Martha, Viv, David, Jenna, and Kendall for their incredible work on our worship services. I am also immensely proud of our church family and the support and aid we have extended to one-another and to the support of the ministry.

We have a new feeling for the longing the apostles must have felt to be gathered together in community. We also have a new understanding of the solidarity that a community can express through many small individual actions which, together, protect and support the weak and create the kind of love and unity that has marked the church for generations.

I will see you again soon, of that I have great faith. But until then know and remember that though the disciples were hid behind locked doors, Christ was still among them. Let this be a time for celebrating that God is in all things and is with us to give us what we need. Take heart, keep safe, and stay in touch.

-James

The women's retreat is rescheduled for September 11th-13th. If interested, please contact Valerie via email: VKRemail@msn.com.

The office is still open but we ask that you do not come in to help reduce the spread of this Virus...

To send in your pledges and Sunday contributions, you can mail them to the office:
United Church of Newport
63 Third Street
Newport, VT 05855

If you or anyone you know is in need of food, we do have food bags available for pick-up. Please call ahead of time and we can arrange to set the food outside the door for you to pick up.



We have decided to suspend in person worship until further notice. But, that doesn't mean there's no "Church". Join us for music, news, and stories of faith on Public Access.

New UCN Worship Services will be on NEKTV channel 17 every week, Sunday at 9am & Wednesday at 6pm.

Also find us on YouTube! Our YouTube channel is: "The United Church of Newport"
We will also have frequent extra online content on the church website and Facebook page.

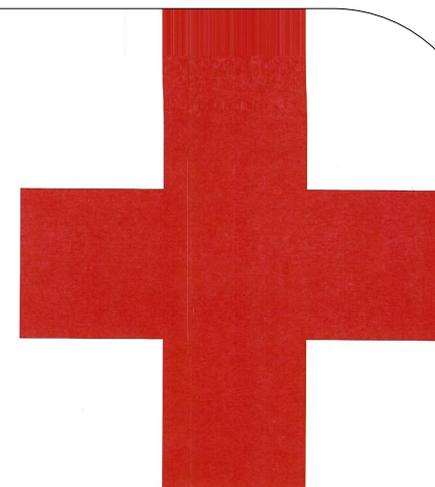
COMMUNITY MEAL

****It is with regret that we must cancel the community meal next month (May). This decision was not an easy one but we are doing this in the best interest for you all and ourselves. Thank you all for your understanding and help during all of this.****

Give blood.

Every 2 seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood.

American Red Cross



Blood Drive Newport Community United Church of Newport

Church Hall
63 Third Street
Newport, VT 05855

Thursday, May 14, 2020
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Place Hosted by Newport United Church

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: united to schedule an appointment.

Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment.



Scan to schedule an appointment.

1-800-RED CROSS | 1-800-733-2767 | redcrossblood.org | Download the Blood Donor App

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Food Shelf~~

The food shelf has been up and running thanks to our wonderful volunteers. We have been able to continue to serve our community thanks to all of those who have been donating their time to help! Although no one can come inside the building, we managed to find a way to still make sure the commodities were served. Bag of food were handed out the window into the parking lot of the church and thanks to the beautiful weather, we were able to set up a table for vegetables, fruits and breads.

If you or anyone you know is in need of food, we do have food bags available for pick-up. Please call ahead of time and we can arrange to set the food outside the door for you to pick up.



Many, many thanks to all of our wonderful Volunteers who came to help unload the food truck, pack the food bags and also hand out food bags on Food Shelf day! Also many thanks to Merle for all that you do for the food shelf!!



STANDING IN NEED OF PRAYER:



FOR HEALTH:

- Susan Jewett
- Carl King
- Edith McNeal
- John Ward Sr.
- Robin Comstock
- Brenda Hayden

THE WIDER COMMUNITY/ NATION/ WORLD:

- The Wider United Methodist Church
- Church's everywhere serving in the time of crisis
- Those without Health Insurance
- The newly unemployed
- Those living in fear
- Those struggling with loneliness
- Prisons across the country
- Communities unable to mourn because of the Virus
- People who are far from home because of work or quarantine

FOR JOY

- Time with family
- Those who are recovering and reconnecting
- Our wonderful community
- Beautiful spring weather!



Inside The Church~~

Hello Everyone,
During this time, some of us have been busy beautifying the inside of the church. We've been painting here and there. We've been cleaning this and that. We've been making small adjustments and moving things around. So far all of this has been done with donations. But, the donations are running low...

!!!! We Need Your Help !!!!

to continue this project. If you would like to donate to the beautification of the church, it would be greatly appreciated!! Send your donation to the Church with a note stating it is for the "Project" We the workers, thank you!

-Lorraine Whipple

Executive Board~~

With the Executive Board meeting being cancelled, we collected the following information so that folks can see that our church is busy during this time of virus lock down.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

TREASURER-

Total church income in March was \$15,152. (Sunday Collections were \$10,152.) Total expenses were \$13,533 leaving a net gain of \$1,619. Checking account balance was \$5,483 and the end of march and the checking account has been reconciled.

FINANCE-

In the first quarter of 2020, (Sunday Giving totaled \$34,179.27) and (total income was \$39,579.27). Total expenses were \$42,207.98. The ledger balance at the end of March was \$5,483.28. Giving in the first quarter has been outstanding because the average giving for the first quarter has been \$23,825.54 during the interval 2012-2019. Thanks to all of you who have contributed so generously. A special thanks to the folks who are mailing in contributions during the COVID-19 crisis. During the first quarter, UCN used only \$5,000.00 from the Trust Funds, while the average has been \$10,000.00.

However, we cannot be complacent, because a large part of the first quarter increase in giving was a single donation intended to cover a pledge for half of the year. It will not be repeated in the second quarter. With a number of our members returning to Vermont from their winter quarters, UCN needs solid giving in the second quarter to meet our expenses. Historically, giving in the second quarter has been about \$2000.00 higher than the first quarter. Continued solvency is within reach. First quarter expenses were a bit below the average of \$44,000.00. Typical second quarter expenses are about \$41,000.00.

The other major financial item is that church is applying for a forgivable loan under the Payroll Protection Plan of the

SBA (Small Business Administration). A forgivable loan becomes a grant, if properly administered.

BUILDING & GROUNDS-

The most notable upcoming need is the church roof. Efforts are underway to gather bids and assess both the cost and methods of repairing the roof. More information will be forthcoming soon.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION-

Jenna is sending out 2 Children's Bulletins in the mail each week along with the regular Sunday Bulletin. She is receiving a lot of positive feedback. We will plan to keep it up at least through the summer. Then make a new plan after that.

SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP-

James has a following outside of our members on NEK-TV and he can be found on YouTube. Positive feedback all around.

PASTOR/STAFF-

Although not having been able to hold meetings, members of the Pastor/Staff have been busy addressing the different needs of the church during this stressful time. We are sending notes to church members to try and keep in touch, as well as notes to nursing home residents, who have limited family contact. Other members of the committee are meeting with James to assess what can and cannot be done in a three-quarter time position, and to produce a report on the

outcome of those conversations. Yet others are cleaning, painting, and polishing parts of the church's interior in preparation for when we re-open. There have also been several meetings/ conversations with James and Jenna to determine how to work through the new processes that this unique situation demands. These are ongoing, but to date both James and Jenna report satisfaction with the arrangements, and have demonstrated willing flexibility in their implementation.

PASTOR REPORT-

Worship has been pre-recorded for NEKTV and YouTube. Indications are that more people are "attending" worship now than before and we have received plenty of positive feedback and constructive criticism about how to improve (especially the sound). We are working on improving.

Other area churches are having a tougher time and we may work to assist them with food bags or other programs. Nothing specific to report now, these are early conversations.

Individuals and families have been talking on deep cleaning and renovation work in the church building. We hope to show off the excellent state of our building when in person worship resumes.

Jenna has adjusted wonderfully and handled the heavy workload of her first

Holy Week extremely well.

I have been staying in touch with wider community response efforts but as of yet there isn't anything in particular that the church can help with.

I have had a new liaison assigned from the Vermont Conference, the Rev Lee Moore. I look forward to working with him.

The UCC annual meeting has been cancelled and the worldwide Methodist meeting has been postponed until next year. We don't know if the New England Methodist conference will be able to go forward later in the year.

Please keep both denominations in your prayers.

Payroll Protection Program~~

Through quick and professional work by the finance team UCN has been able to secure a grant for the Payroll Protection Program to help with expenses over the next 8 weeks. We are grateful to everyone who has helped secure the financial future of the church with continued pledges and the many different gifts you have shown in this time of unprecedented challenges.

A "New" Church

Many wonderful things have been going on in our church since you all have been away! We have been working hard to brighten up the church. We hope everyone will enjoy the new look and see all the hard work everyone has been doing. Many thanks to Alan & Kathy Aiken, Lorraine & Val Whipple, Valerie & Paul Rittershausen.



COUNT YOUR
BLESSINGS.
NAME THEM ONE BY ONE.
COUNT YOUR
MANY BLESSINGS
SEE WHAT **GOD** HAS DONE.

United Church of Newport
63 Third Street
Newport, VT 05855

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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