

## Pastor's Report to Council June 2021

In the following report I summarize a few items related to in-person worship, online worship, and a few special services on the horizon. I also provide more details regarding the team I envision to help facilitate the vision process.

### June Worship

- 10am in sanctuary will continue to be recorded, edited, and posted to our website and Facebook via Facebook live at 7pm.
- The online version will be a shortened version of the in-person worship as we will eliminate prayers from the pews (for confidentiality purposes), items that have to do with in-person logistics and activities immediately following worship. Some items may be shortened, and others eliminated to address the needs of the online viewers, licensing, etc.
- A consideration for those making announcements is to include information when applicable so people online might respond/participate as well, e.g., "see the article in our newsletter on our website, check out our face book post, see our home page, send an email to..., call the office, etc."
- There is a memorial service planned for June 19 at 1pm for Gladys Carol Westerberg. We originally worked on this service as an outdoor event, however with the return to in-person use of the sanctuary we plan to hold this service in the sanctuary following the same protocols as we do for Sunday worship. The family plan a reception with snacks to follow and will do so outside as we have for coffee hour.
- Baptism for Katy and Katie's twins will occur during Sunday worship June 27. Coffee hour that day will be outside the church as the Lyman's have offered the family use of the summer house for a private gathering (as the twins do not do well with crowds).

### July Worship

- 9am At FCCW with East Woodstock joining us. Clergy student Danielle Arnett Keller will be offering the message and we will have a deacon from each congregation assisting.
- We are still working through logistics for the online services.
- July 10 Memorial Service in sanctuary for Linda Wilmot (time TBD)

### August Worship

- 9am at East Woodstock with First Congregational Church providing the messages.

### September Worship

- Sept 5 will not be a union service. We will hold worship at FCCW at 9am
- Sept 12 Home coming Sunday and a return to 10am worship.

We will NOT send a Share newsletter for August and will combine summer activities into a single July/August newsletter. We will continue to send weekly emails and post announcements in the worship bulletin.

I plan to take the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> week of July off and will use the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> week of July primarily for advanced planning for worship, the vision process, etc.

### **Recruiting a "Music Minister"**

It is time to begin the conversation regarding how we identify and recruit a music minister/choir director. What has been effective elsewhere is to:

- Poll the congregation, choir, and other musically gifted persons to identify hopes and needs.
- Updating the job description and posting the opening in several places, including the UCC job – board, local media, indeed, and our website.
- Forming a small team representing diverse voices to agree to must have and nice to have criteria; screen applicants; interview candidates and come to consensus on finalist.

I envision work on the first two points over the next couple of months and the last point to begin mid-August to have someone in place by October 1.

### **Recruiting the Vision Team**

The transition team consists of 5 or so people who:

- 1) Work closely with the pastor to shape and facilitate the process to explore our identity, values, mission, and vision.
- 2) engage diverse formal and informal sub-groups who are part of the congregation.
- 3) sense how the congregation is experiencing the process and offer helpful insights regarding the congregation's history, challenges, and culture.

The team will consist of a cross-section of diverse people representing differing levels of involvement and history with the congregation. The team will report to the Council through the Pastor.

The overall goal is to move the congregation forward in healthy, sustainable ways by:

- Engaging the congregation in creative ways and open conversations to reveal our core values, ministry, mission, and purpose.
- Fostering a more responsive and engaged culture where every member can explore their gifts, passions, and ways to put their faith into meaningful action.
- Helping us align our ministries, decisions, and priorities with our values (principles) and beliefs, as well as God's vision and mission for the community.

### **Roles**

- **Leader/co-leader** – To oversee the process, coordinate activities, maintain timeline, etc. (for duration of effort)
- **Values Team members** –To establish and facilitate the process, plan related conversations and events, and work to integrate the initiative into the life of the congregation.
- **Communications** – To work on messages to invite and excite the congregation about what is happening, how this works and to report back to the congregation and board about status, etc. (for duration of effort – greatest need at very beginning and near end)
- **Community Research**– To gather prior work of the congregation and analyze and report on emerging demographic information (since Covid?) about our community.