UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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CHURCH OF CHRIST

CHAPEL CHIMES NEWSLETTER

"Sharing faith, lifting up, reaching out and growing together."



JANUARY 2021

FIRST NOTES

Like many of you, I am eager to put the year 2020 in the rear-view mirror. I don't have a crystal ball and no one calls me "Nostradamus," but I have the reasonable hope that things will be better in the coming year. Based on everything I've been reading, targeting health care professionals and residents of care facilities for vaccination should give us a good start to slowing down the transmission of the virus. Caseload rates and hospitalizations in Wisconsin have fallen in the last weeks, with no discernible spike in rates due to the Thanksgiving holiday. We will see if we have gone through the worst of it in this wave of the pandemic in our part of the county.

As of this writing, I have no firm idea, yet, on when resumption of in-person worship will begin. Just as no one calls me "Nostradamus," no one accuses me of being a riverboat gambler, either. We will have a better idea in the next weeks. I ask for your patience: these are never easy decisions.

One matter that we can't delay, as we head into a new year, is the business of an annual congregational meeting. We operate out of a "congregational" system of church governance, and ultimately members will make the decision of how we conduct the operations of the church. We are slated to hold our annual meeting on Sunday, January 31st and we will continue that practice in 2021. We may need to do some things differently and offer different options than we have in the past, but the church leadership believes that it is possible to hold that meeting. I present to you the blueprint for conducting our annual meeting as proposed by the Consistory (thanks to Marsha Meyer for the language of the draft):

In order to continue the work and ministries of the church it is imperative that we meet to discuss the business of the church. During this time of pandemic, while it is not safe for us to meet in person as we have, our church leadership is working to establish options to allow everyone's voice and vote to be considered. With that in mind:

Communications are expected to be sent to members of the congregation during the second week of January (constant contact to those with email and paper letter mailed to those without) notifying them of the Annual Meeting (date/time and agenda) and the options for 'attending' and voting. The following formats are being considered:

1. Virtually, by Zoom (access code to be included)
    a. Voting will take place by private chat feature
2. In person (with masks and social distancing in the sanctuary)
    a. Voting by hand signal as much as possible to minimize handling of paper ballots
3. Absentee voting options are also being considered for this occasion

If nothing else, the past nine months have taught us the importance of keeping on the business of moving forward. We've learned to do a number of things in new ways given new circumstances: I have every confidence we can handle an annual meeting.

I hope that the start of 2021 will find each of you and your families well.

Shalom aleichem—Peace be with you.

Rev. Jim Hoppert

Lectionary Readings

Sunday, January 3, 2021
Second Sunday after Christmas

Hebrew Scripture: Jeremiah 31:7-14
Psalm: Psalm 147:12-20
Epistle: Ephesians 1:3-14
Gospel: John 1:1-18

Wednesday, January 6, 2021
Epiphany

Hebrew Scripture: Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Epistle: Ephesians 3:1-12
Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Sunday, January 10, 2021
The Baptism of Christ

Hebrew Scripture: Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm: Psalm 29
Epistle: Acts 19:1-7
Gospel: Mark 1:4-11

Sunday, January 17, 2021
Second Sunday after Epiphany

Hebrew Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:1-10
Psalm: Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20
Gospel: John 1:43-51

Sunday, January 24, 2021
Third Sunday after Epiphany

Hebrew Scripture: Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm: Psalm 62:5-12
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Gospel: Mark 1:14-20

Sunday, January 31, 2021
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Hebrew Scripture: Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm: Psalm 111
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Gospel: Mark 1:21-28