

Greetings Hartland First Congregational Church, UCC members and friends,

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” [Proverbs 3:5,6] Ah...if it was only that easy. I wish we could simply ask God to tell us what to do to safely regather for worship, and in the morning find a little note under our pillows providing the plan. But it wasn't that easy for the Israelites wandering in exile, it wasn't that easy for the disciples trying to figure out how to live in the post-resurrection era, and it's not that easy for us.

Thankfully we do have experts who provide us with informed insights about health considerations, structural and liability considerations and how to move forward as safely as possible. The ad hoc committee charged with gathering the information and developing a plan for our church has prayerfully considered this information and offered recommendations to the trustees.

However, we feel that it is important for our next steps to be informed not just by the experts. We want to hear from you during a time of discussion at the Church Council meeting on October 18th. You are welcome to express your opinion and raise questions, but it is important that you **read the attached Fact Sheet before the meeting** if you wish to speak. In that way we can provide more opportunities for people to participate because you will already be familiar with the foundational information...kind of like the Ten Commandments for the Israelites. Those facts are the basic building blocks on which we want to create our plan.

If, after reading the document you have questions that might require some research, please feel free to email them to me at cmoser.824@gmail.com and I'll do my best to get the answer prior to the meeting. Also, you will note that the Fact Sheet has information for links to connect you with the original documents. You will need to cut/paste to activate the link.

We recognize that there are a wide variety of feelings on the topic of regathering, but we are a community of faith. And so I close with words from a familiar hymn.

*Teach us, O Lord, your lessons, as in our daily life
we struggle to be human and search for hope and faith...
Let your acceptance change us, so that we may be moved
in living situations to do the truth in love;
To practice your acceptance, until we know by heart
the table of forgiveness and laughter's healing art.*

With hope and a smile,

Connie Moser

Chair of Ad Hoc Committee on Church Use During Pandemic