

NCC Weekly Newsletter

Pastor's Pondering April 17, 2020

Good Afternoon Church:

A Word about our Sunday Service 10AM

I hope you can all tune in to Sunday morning service at 10AM , which you'll find on YouTube by clicking on this link: <https://www.youtube.com/c/NewmarketNHCommunityChurch>

We will talk about Jesus appearing to the disciples eight days after he rose from the tomb and his proclamation of faith without *seeing*. We surely have lots of opportunity in our current times to build our faith without seeing; without seeing a cure, a vaccine, a light at the end of the tunnel.....and yet, we have hope; and gosh, it is more important than ever, isn't it? I hope you can join Dave Talmage and I as we live stream once again. And, speaking of that, I want to *sincerely* THANK YOU for the kindness and gratitude we have received from all of you about our services.

We are new to this and there have been snags along the way, and while we continue to work on these things, (this week we're taking steps to improve sound quality), **you** have been very kind and supportive through every step of it. It feels like you can see beyond the technology snags and see what is in our hearts and you know that we are trying really hard. I can't tell you how much that means to both Dave and me, and also to Jim Marsden and Kyle Lewis who have been working so hard as producers and A/V specialists throughout the last five weeks or so. Thank you for your support and your encouragement. Thank you also to the new folks who are now joining our services who hadn't previously been able to do so. Recently I had someone share with me that she hadn't been to a church service for nearly 50 years, but she is joining ours now and feels at home and is really happy to be able to join in this way. God is so good, through these challenging times, we've been able to reach more people than ever before and we've opened new ways of "being" church which will continue even after social distancing protocols have lifted.

God is Moving in our Midst

Even with COVID-19, lots of good ministry is happening at NCC and I'd like to take some time to update you about it here. As you read all of this wonderful news, I hope you are as inspired as I am to see that God is on move, even in these challenging times living through this pandemic. May we never, ever lose HOPE and remember that God is with us each and every step of the way.

As I close for today, please remember that you are not alone and you are a beloved child of God. I love you so very much my dear church and really look forward to when we can BE together again.

With Love, Peace, and Prayers,
Pastor Patty

NCC News to catch you up on what is happening at YOUR church! Check it out!

LCHIP Grant Work in the Sanctuary Completed Soon

You may have already noticed the large tent in the sanctuary to the left of the chancel area in our weekly services as the restoration work (part of the LCHIP grant award) is underway. Over the past several weeks the old plaster in that left side corner has been taken down and this past week new plaster has been applied. Within the next week or so repainting of the entire sanctuary, (walls and ceiling) will begin with a nice fresh, bright white paint. While this work was previously scheduled for this time before we knew anything about COVID-19, it has worked out well that it is occurring while the sanctuary is closed for regular use. We are hopeful that the work will be done by the first part of June and that the sanctuary is bright and spiffy when we are able to open it and worship all together once again. *(Please note, the date of reopen is still TBD and will be determined following the recommendations of health and safety protocol for NH and the direction of our Executive Board)*. Please join me in thanking the Trustees for their hard work overseeing this project; (Skip Manseau, Steve LaPrise, John Terlizzi, Greg Fuller, Jim Marsden, and our Treasurer, Dan Bilodeau).

End 68 Hours of Hunger Moves to New Location

NCC has provided space to the End 68 Hours of Hunger project at our 10 North Main property for the last five years as part of our feeding ministry mission. Earlier this year, we asked the End68 team to move their operation to our location at 137 Main Street as our Thrift Shop (TS) is growing out of its space. Our TS ministry has been limited due to space constraints, limiting our ability to help people, and the prime retail space used by End68 was under utilized. Beginning April 18, the End68 program was to move to 137 Main, where we also planned to expand our support of the program by sharing food pantry resources.

This past week, Melani Taillon leader of End68, let us know that they have decided to move to a different location in town which they believe will better fit their program. While we are sad to see them go, we will continue to partner with their program to help feed Newmarket families to the best of our ability! Stay tuned for more news about our Thrift Shop expansion in the coming weeks.

Food Pantry Support is Strong

We are so thankful to everyone who has supported the Food Pantry, so we can continue to provide support and relief to families in our area. Whether you've donated money, food, hard work and time, or prayers, every bit of support has made a difference! The community has also really stepped up to help us in many ways! Newberry Farms is now allowing us to order food at wholesale, while also donating the first \$1,000 of ordering to us free! This is a huge help to our feeding ministry! We have also received large financial donations from the Polish American Club and Ready Rides, home made soup in quart size containers from the Oak House, fresh locally grown produce from the Three Rivers Farmers Alliance, and lots of financial donations from church members and community members. Every little bit helps and is so inspiring! We truly live in an awesome community and I am so thankful to each and every single one of you!

In an effort to simplify the administration of the pantry and keep our volunteers from burning out, while still meeting the needs of our community, we now have open walk up service hours on Tuesday from 12-2PM and Thursday from 12-2PM & 4-6PM. We offer delivery services all day on Tuesday and Thursday as well. Of course, in addition to all of this, we answer the call for urgent food delivery needs any day of the week when people call us for help.

Donations Mean So Very Much & Bring Hope

Thank you so much for continuing to send along your donations/offerings to the church, even while we're not able to be together. Whether it be online through our website or through the mail, every single donation matters and is what is enabling us to continue with our ministry; whether it be through our Sunday services or our outreach ministry, everything we do is fueled by all of us contributing.

Last week, a new feature was enabled on our online donation process through our website enabling people to increase giving by 2,5% to off set the processing fees associated with online giving. Many of you have already chosen this option! Thank you for doing this, because truly every little bit helps!

Over the past several weeks, we've also started several Facebook fundraisers which are a wonderful tool for NCC because we can invite more people to donate than ever before and also there are no fees for nonprofits, meaning we receive 100% of every dollar donated. If you're a Facebook user, I bet you've notice that the Deacons have started a new fundraiser to raise \$8,500 and if we raise this amount, I've promised to spend the night in the steeple! This idea sprang from our Easter Sunrise service in the steeple and a news article Carl Hindy found about a pastor somewhere else in the US who promised to sleep in the steeple if his church raised \$8,500. I read the article and proclaimed, **I'd do it!** Well, here we are, just four days later with over \$2,000 raised towards that goal, Carl and I were interviewed by the newspaper yesterday for an article that should be in the paper next week, the Newmarket Scouts have tagged on promising to provide me with camping equipment, and I'm wondering what I've gotten myself into, (are there bats up there????) Ha!

But, in all seriousness, I received the most heartwarming email today from someone in our community who wrote;

I donated to your cause as I was inspired to. SLEEPING IN A STEEPLE! REALLY!! 😇🥰 I admire your tenacity and courage. You give us HOPE .

I'm happy to do whatever I can do to help our church which I love so very much, and Lord knows we need the financial support now more than ever. However, it is the fact that this crazy idea brings someone, even if only this one soul in our community, **HOPE** during these challenging times, that inspires ME to keep on going, to sleep (or try to sleep) in the steeple, and do whatever I can to ease the pain of our current reality for others.

If you'd like to donate to this fundraiser, but aren't on Facebook, you can do so by mailing a check and writing sleeping in the steeple on the memo line or you can donate on our website online at www.newmarketchurch.org and make a donation to the general fund and write STEEPLE SLEEP in the 2nd address line. I surely hope we get to this goal before it gets too hot outside!

GBAC Opens its Doors to Help!

The Blood Drive that was scheduled for May 6th at NCC will be moved to Great Bay Athletic Club (GBAC) thanks to the generosity and community minded leadership of our member and NCC Trustee, John Terlizzi. If you've been following the news, blood donations are needed now more than ever, but people are nervous about giving blood with COVID-19 risks.

The American Red Cross created new processes to ensure everyone's safety so people can come out and help in this way which is so very much needed. The new processes require much more floor space, which we do not have at NCC, but there is TONS of space at GBAC!!! Please join me in thanking John for his community support and keep your eyes open for more information about the blood drive and how you can get out there and donate a pint to save a life!

The Garden of Eatin' is Ready to Get Plantin'

Our Community Garden Committee is up and running, (with all proper social distancing protocols in place of course) and seeds are going in the ground at 10 North Main soon! Committee members Bob Selfe, Addie Tarbell, Cris Purdum, Kate Clough, Debra Straussfogel, and George Willant are pulling it all together so that even with COVID-19 challenges, the Garden of Eatin' will provide fresh produce to the Food Pantry this summer. We are also excited to share that Kennebunk Savings Bank has awarded a \$1000 grant to this project for the purchase of shed to safely store our tools and supplies. Thank you to Kate Clough for her work in completing that grant application. Sean Murphy, part of Newmarket Scouting, is also helping out as he is repairing the water collection system so it is ready to go for our spring planting.

If you would like to learn more or get involved in this vital ministry of the church, (once it is safe to do so), please contact Bob Selfe at flyboy565@comcast.net. Please also join me in thanking these wonderful people for their good work, solid vision, and tenacity to keep going on this project in a safe way to provide food to our community this summer!