

Welcome and announcements – May 31

Welcome to worship on this Shavuot – Feast of the Weeks or First Fruits of the wheat harvest. Though we normally do not celebrate Jewish feasts we celebrate this one every year – by its Greek name, Pentecost. It is helpful for us to remember that our faith springs from Judaism (after all, the Messiah was Jewish) and our roots go deep into that faith and culture.

Council met last week and set June 21st as the first Sunday for worship onsite in person. We will block pews off to allow for more physical distancing, ask that you sit on the aisle edge of the pew to allow for more lateral distancing and require masks. We will not resume normal Communion for the indefinite future.

We will continue to watch what happens around us – many states are experiencing new peaks in COVID 19 infections/hospitalizations as the country endeavors to reopen. We have seen this week what that meant in South Korea where they had to shut down dozens of schools that had just reopened. Closer to home there are areas of our country where outbreaks are occurring and hospitals are overwhelmed again. In our own state we see hospitalizations increasing, more ICU beds in use for COVID19 and the fatality rate plateaued since April. Oxford County infections remain low – something on the order of a half dozen active cases. Androscoggin has over 100 active cases and CMMC once again has a handful in the hospital. While those cases are likely clustered in denser areas of Lewiston/Auburn, we have to be aware that they exist and that community transmission is taking place there. Stay safe and practice good public health – wear masks when inside public places and stay away from crowds. Now that the black flies have lessened , enjoy the outdoors!

Let us prepare to worship.