COVID REOPENING UPDATE

* **Outdoor services are to be held every Sunday in May at 11:30** (Weather permitting)
* **Recent Progress on Reopening:**
  + The Reopening Committee met and updated our indoor and outdoor worship procedures to reflect changes in state rules and scientific confirmation that surface transmission of COVID is quite rare. Certain things were also adjusted to allow us to phase in various activities such as congregational singing, coffee hour, etc. as conditions improve without needing to have to documents re-approved. Changes to the procedures have been approved by Deacons and Church Council.
  + Indoor Sunday School procedures have been updated and approved.
  + The Reopening Committee recommended meeting these two criteria to resume indoor worship, and they’ve been approved by Deacons and Church Council:
    1. The town of Middlebury not be classified as "red" by the state health department for 2 consecutive weeks (this has been the metric we've been using since November)
    2. All staff with worship/Sunday school/childcare responsibilities are fully immunized (new recommendation.)
    - Staff with Sunday morning responsibilities will all be fully immunized in May. As of yet, Middlebury has been classified as red every week since November, but hopefully cases will soon fall.
* **Additional factors for reopening**
  + Howie, our Sexton, is currently on leave. So, we are in the process of securing alternative cleaning arraignments for the building. We can't reopen without bathrooms regularly being cleaned, etc.
  + As the building has undergone a lot of renovation and not been used for indoor worship this past year, there is a fair amount of tidying up and organizing that needs to be done to have things set for worship to resume.
  + The kitchen is still being renovated which puts the social hall out of commission as that's being used as a staging area for the project. Ideally, this would be completed before resuming indoor worship, but adjustments could be made to resume worship while the project is in progress.
* **Actions for May:**
  + We will use the month of May to prepare the building to resume indoor worship so we are ready to move indoors once cases fall in our town.