Reverend Veronica Walsh Don 603-878-1684 [www.masoncongregationalchurch.org](http://www.masoncongregationalchurch.org)

**Christmas Greetings, and blessing in the New Year to all.**

Elizabeth Orton Jones, a member of Mason Church for over 50 years, used to include little poems in her notes of thanks. Below is one I have saved:

May the blessed light

This Christmas night,

Be with you all next year;

And may this Christmas

Mark the birth

Of peace on earth

And end all fear;

May love and human brotherhood

Replace all enmity for good!

EOJ

Church is open for attendance

Sundays at 10 am Please wear a mask, but understand that the celebrants of the service—that is, the minister, the 2 or 3 choir and the organist will not be masked during the service, but have all been vaccinated.

* We can easily social distance by 6 or more feet by sitting in every other pew, and sitting at opposite ends from one another.
* There are hand sanitizers and masks at the door and all around, or you can bring your own.
* We will not be taking your temperature or asking you the “Covid” questions about recent exposure to Covid, symptoms, or current illness, since we know you will not come to church if you have been exposed or have any symptoms.
* No hugs, please, but an elbow bump is fun if you want to connect.
* We will make coffee but ask that you take it into Fellowship Hall where we have seating at appropriate distance.

We will continue to do a Zoom link and will happily include any Zoomers who would rather not make it to the physical building. We do not record services <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82121212979> Meeting ID: 821 2121 2979

**Our live Zoom is easy!** You can simply click on the blue link we send out, and a window will open inviting you to say yes, “launch Zoom,” and you are in. If it is your first time on Zoom, the software will ask you to download Zoom onto your device before opening the launch window. Email Reverend Veronica if you wish to be added to the email list so you will have the zoom link, the order of service, and the sermon.

When you enter Zoom, the host will let you in from the “waiting room.” You are automatically muted when you enter. Simply hover your cursor arrow over the bottom (or sometimes it’s on the top) of your screen, over the little picture of the microphone. If it has a red line, you are muted. Click on it, and you are unmuted! You can stay unmuted until the service begins, at which point we are all typically silent, so we ask that you be muted until the service is over. Then we “Zoomers” have our social time, and catch up with our news, or just sharing a time of fellowship.

Join Zoom Meeting.   Click on the link below or copy and paste the link into your search engine. Remember when you go to the link, you can also use your regular phone to call in, listen, and also participate. See you on Sunday! <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82121212979> Any questions, please call or text Michelle at 603 801-9140 for help!

**Upcoming Events**

* **Advent is here. Our advent wreath is 3 candles lit now.** Advent is the period of four Sundays and weeks before Christmas (or sometimes from the 1st December to Christmas Day!). Advent means **'Coming' in Latin**. This is the coming of Jesus into the world. Christians use the four Sundays and weeks of Advent to prepare and remember the real meaning of Christmas.
* **Christmas Eve Service at 7pm Mason Church Sanctuary Service and on Zoom** This year we will have a reading of a little book “**How Far Is It to Bethlehem”** by Elizabeth Orton Jones, known affectionately as “Twig.” Christmas carols will be woven into our worship service with the story. Twig’s 1955 story is about the children at Crotched Mountain residence for children with special needs, or as they were known then, handicapped or crippled children. Twig and her artist friend Nora Unwin volunteered their time to read and draw with the children there. Their hearts were touched in so many ways. They created a huge mural of woods, mushrooms, fairies, and more to stimulate the children’s imagination, and helped put on a Christmas play. She wrote about the children’s planning and performance of the Christmas story. Come enjoy this special appreciation of Twig, and of children with special needs who have so much to give!
* **Zoom into the Christmas Eve 7 pm service** Join Zoom Meeting  
  [https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86265166363?pwd=cGZ6aFVaaFpSZUY1NGZLeFdhNmJEdz09](https://www.google.com/url?q=https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86265166363?pwd%3DcGZ6aFVaaFpSZUY1NGZLeFdhNmJEdz09&sa=D&source=calendar&usd=2&usg=AOvVaw0coy7M4MPczPJxVhVPJzAp)
* **Nashua Soup Kitchen - News** [**www.nsks.org**](http://www.nsks.org) **603 889-7770** You can donate online! Support our local friends. Rich, one of the managers, tells me that they are back to serving dinners, and do need volunteers. They serve all food from the kitchen counter, where you are not less than 3 ft from participants, but you are in a crowded and not well-ventilated kitchen. So most volunteers are not yet back in service.
  + Their most recent newsletter “Bread and Board” expressed gratefulness in so many ways for the past year plus, and featured needed items on a wish list. At the shelters, they often host children. If there is a birthday, they love to have supplies on hand to “make a party,” so they can use party hats, balloons, cups and plates, and small gifts such as baby dolls, basketballs, craft sets, and gift cards for tweens and teens. You can drop these off at the soup kitchen.
* **St Vincent DePaul Food Pantry**  **Call 878-0518 or direct to Maureen 291-0022** This is our local food pantry that can always use your support. Each time you attend church, please bring an item for the food pantry! Remember, paper goods are welcome as well (toilet paper, wax paper, diapers, etc). There is a tote in the church hallway for items.
* **Still on Hold--Community Supper –** Team “CS” is looking forward to the day when we can cook, and share! Due to low vaccination rates in our area, the newest variants of the Covid 19 virus, and the ages of the average participants in the Community Supper, it is not feasible to start up again yet.
* **“Prepare to Serve” on Zoom from Feb 8 thru 17** This is the annual event of the Congregational Church Conference to prepare church leaders and ordinary attendees to serve the community and each other in so many different ways. It is inexpensive, even less so than usual, since it is online this year. Same great variety of workshops that they come up with each year. Check out the website!

The theme this year is from the scripture passage: 2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation is come. The old has gone, the new is here!*

**Prepare to Serve will be held as an online event featuring 12 workshops from February 8-17.**

Some of this year's workshop topics include: How to do Hybrid Worship, Copyright Compliance and the Local Church, How to Become a Creation Care Church, What It Means to be Open and Affirming, How to Become a Racial Justice Church, Thinking outside the box to address shrinking church membership and finances, Dealing with the intensified emotions of grief and loss during the pandemic. Registration will open on January 3, 2022. [www.nhcucc.org/caring-for-congregations/prepared-to-serve](http://www.nhcucc.org/caring-for-congregations/prepared-to-serve)

* **Trails in Mason** Mason Conservation Commission has trails for you to explore! Try the newly trimmed up Bronson Potter Trails off Greenville Road, or the Florence Roberts Trail off Valley Road. Go to the Town website, and find more info under the Conservation Commission tab. This is a way to refresh your soul in nature, and to energize your body.

 **Remember our church family in your prayers, a call, or a card. Loneliness can be relieved by caring and connection, at least temporarily, and price of this “gift” is mostly free!**

* **Harry Spears**  Harry is home again, but still waiting for resolution of his medical problems. This is all taking too long! Encourage him by calling or sending a card, 204 Starch Mill Rd, Mason, NH 03048 cell 603 878-1688
* **Jenny Greenwood** We are once again near lockdown with our elder citizens fearing crowds, and avoiding gatherings resulting in more-than-usual isolation! Jenny likes company, so come by for a visit, or call her 878- 2485
* **Karin Eisenhaure**  Her funeral service was on Dec 4. Karin struggled for the past year to become more mobile and get out of the wheel chair, but could not overcome health problems which plagued her. She is at peace now. Her church family appreciated her many contributions as church secretary, gifts committee, help with every so many coffee hours, and her voice in our choir. Thank you Karin. Contributions in memory of Karin can be given to the Mason Church.
* **Susan and Jim Suokko** Jim has been having increasing memory issues, and moved to assisted living at Summerhill early this month. His direct line is 1-603-924-9955. His address is: **Summer Hill AL, 183 Old Dublin Road, Peterborough, NH 03458**. He is allowed visitors, but you must call Jean at 603-547-7292 to make an appointment to visit. Susan plans to go to Florida sometime in January. She and Jim talk every night! Florida address is: **8814 28th Ave. Palmetto, FL 34221**.

Massachusetts address for Susan: **50 Brooks Pond Rd, Apt 104, Leominster, MA 01453.**  Call Susan or text at 941 920-0270 email: usercat2@comcast.net

* **Prayer Shawl Ministry** Speaking of Susan Suokko… she has long been the backbone of the Prayer Shawl Ministry, but has passed the baton to the Mason Church Diaconate. We continue to have calls from members, friends of friends, or relatives of friends who want a special shawl. We can mail these out, so please request through Pastor Veronica or a Deacon. We sew on a 3-inch crocheted cross, if requested, and adapt the Prayer Shawl poem with the person’s name, and the names of family members if indicated. **Knitters needed!** We can provide yarn and patterns for any knitters. Contact Michelle 603-878-1680 or [miscott39@gmail.com](mailto:miscott39@gmail.com).
* **Peg Schuster/Morrison** was a Mason Church member until her death in 2010, and offered rides to shut-ins and anyone who needed help. She would have been one of the first to volunteer for Community Volunteer Transportation Services, CVTC! See below. Follow in the footsteps of such a special person by helping get those who can no longer drive to where they need to be! Honor Peg by signing up to be a driver…

 **Get a Ride, or Give a Ride: EVERYONE BENEFITS**

Right down the road, right now, someone needs a ride to somewhere essential. And volunteer drivers for Community Volunteer Transportation Company (CVTC) drive people where they need to go.

When riders can keep their essential appointments, they stay independent, and can live at home in peace. Riders can request to be taken to their doctor’s or social service appointments, post office, bank, pharmacy or grocery shopping; all non-emergency. A five business-days’ advance notice is all CVTC needs to enter a rider’s trip request in our Trip List system. And for the rider, it is more than just the free ride. Our drivers are courteous and trustworthy, willing to converse and engage. Sometimes even new friendships are made.

Once our vetted volunteer drivers choose which trips best fit their schedule, they call the rider to verify pick-up times and, when they return home themselves, they track their total mileage for reimbursement from CVTC. Drivers select when, and to where, and for how long they are available. By making this difference in a rider’s life, drivers contribute to the health of the Monadnock Region, one person at a time.

Please call CVTC for more information at **1-877-428-2882 x 5.**