



# Messenger

## Emmanuel Congregational United Church of Christ

### Lead Story Headline

In 2007, our church was struck by lightening and it took 2.5 years to rebuild. As I watched it literally go up in flames, I assumed that would be the most difficult time in the history of our church. I would never have guessed that in just 13 years we would be facing the challenges that come with a global pandemic.

Fortunately, we had learned that it is not the building that creates and sustains a church. It is the people. I know many of you have waited patiently at home, making phone calls and connecting with others. That is the most life giving thing you can do to support our church family at this time. Thank you for reaching out to others.

One of the most amazing things has been our connection through electronic media. As many of you know, we stream our services every Sunday at 11 am. Up until this point, if you watch from home, you only see what is actually on the screens at church. We are in the process of purchasing a good video camera so that we can show some live worship as well as the screens. Give us a few more weeks and we will be there, I promise. If you have not experienced our live worship on YouTube, you can access it at:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/EmmanuelCongregationalUCCMassenaNY>

If you subscribe to our YouTube station, you will receive alerts whenever we go live.

As always, our services are aired on WMSA every Sunday at 11 am.

The connection most appreciated during this time of isolation is our meetings via zoom. Our prayer breakfast never skipped a beat. Last year we had purchased a zoom subscription in order to allow folks who are home bound or out of town to participate in small groups. So, our prayer breakfast is held at the same time, but we are in our individual homes and connect by zoom. We do miss the delicious food, but we can still pray together and that is most important. Our prayer team has even grown during this time! Our

***The Church never closed,  
we just relocated.***

book study groups have continued in the same manner and it has been wonderful to stay connected. We also have a coffee hour Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. just to check in with one another. The link to join our zoom meetings is the same every time. If you don't have internet, you can always call in, and then put in the meeting id number to connect by telephone. Here is the information to connect via zoom:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/822999822>

Meeting ID: 822 999 822

Dial by your location

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York) - then enter ID when prompted: Meeting ID: 822 999 822

Feel free to call me if you have difficulty with this. My cell phone is 315-391-8944.

### Recent sermon points:

- To be yoked with Christ is to allow him to share the burden of our daily lives, to allow him to take off our shoulders the weight of trying to solve our problems alone.
- God is present in every place and situation. Even when you have no awareness of it.
- Life is hard. Especially in these present times. I think it is good to acknowledge this, but then, not let it define us.

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## Messenger

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### Streaming



We remain committed to improving our streaming worship live on Sunday morning. We received a generous gift to purchase a camcorder to enable us to add a live video feed. Right now, all you see at home is what is on our screens.

People have given us feedback that they want to see whoever is speaking or singing and they miss seeing the sanctuary.

The computer we use is approaching the time when it is not powerful enough to accommodate all the video effects.

If you are able to donate something to help us purchase a more robust computer to help in streaming we would appreciate your help. We estimate a computer with the features needed will be around \$1,000.

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### Ready 4 School 2020



Each year, we have supported the Back to School Event organized by Massena Central School.

This distribution will be by appointment, instead a large event. If you are unable to shop, they will gratefully accept monetary donations as well.

The items they are in need of the most are:

**Face masks (especially children's sizes)**

**Backpacks**

**Glue Sticks**

**Crayons**

**Items can be dropped off at church until Aug. 17th**

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### Small Groups

Throughout the summer we have had small groups meeting via ZOOM. Prayer Breakfast continues to meet and pray on Tuesday mornings at 9 a.m.

Book study groups meet either Tuesday morning at 10 a.m. or Wednesday evening at 7 p.m.

Informal Coffee hour is Thursday morning at 10 a.m.

We will begin a new book soon. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Judy.

Each one will be responsible for obtaining the book. We will meet via the same zoom link we have been using.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/819676693>

Meeting ID: 819 676 693

## Re-gathering in our Building

So, we waited for months wondering when it would be safe to gather in person to worship. We re-opened the building for in person worship on July 12th. About 1/3 of our usual number has attended the during the month of July. Others are still watching our live stream on YouTube or listening on WMSA. Please, if you have any health concerns or are not comfortable gathering with others, we urge you to continue to connect from your home.

If you are wondering what the worship experience is like, we have greeters at the outside doors, taking a quick temperature, gathering names (in case we should need to trace who was at the church), and distributing masks if you should need one.

We ask that everyone maintain a 6 ft distance from others (with the exception of those you came to church with). The chairs in the sanctuary are spaced 6 ft apart, and there are chairs seated next to each other along the outer sides for those who have more than one in their household. People from the same households are welcome to sit together. We still pass the peace, but do so without making contact with others. Kathleen Baker is singing during worship, and both she and I have plexi-glass barriers in front of us so that air borne particles are stopped from traveling. You are encouraged to hum along if you like, but it is recommended the congregation refrain from singing.

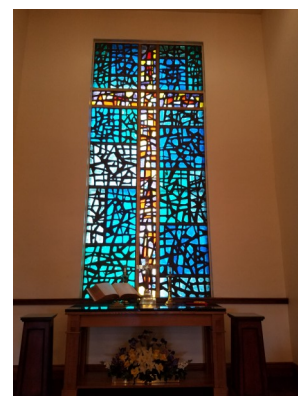
As folks leave, they are kindly allowing the 6 ft distance to remain. The collection is received by folks dropping their offering into collection plates at 4 different locations in the sanctuary at your leisure. Despite these accommodations for social distancing, it is good to be together once again. A big thank you to Glenn Jacks for installing the plexi-glass and his wife Sara for the masks she has made for the congregation to have. We also received some donations of white cotton masks and hand sanitizer from the county. It is truly a blessing to live in a rural area where people care for each other in this way.

The safety of our congregation is always our first priority, and should the numbers begin to rise at an alarming rate, and our status in St. Lawrence Co. change, we are prepared to close our building. Should that happen, we will reach out to you by email, our website or facebook page.



If you are wondering what it is like at church now, this is the sanctuary with chairs spaced 6ft apart on all sides.

Sara Gleason has brought in an assortment of masks for anyone in need. They are located near the entrance at side of building.



Everyone misses out beautiful windows. Here is one of the favorites.

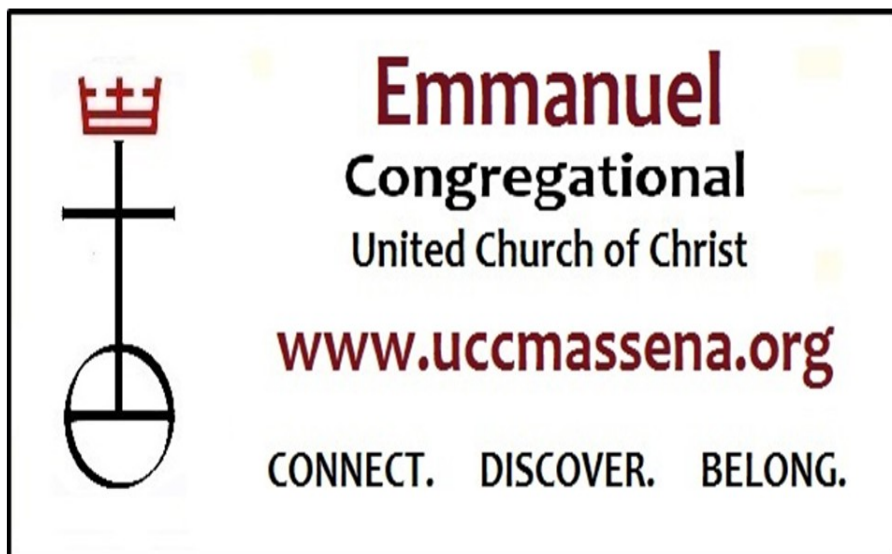
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*We're on the Web:*

*uccmassena.org*



No matter who **you** are or **where** you are  
on **life's** journey, you are welcome here — to explore  
your **faith**, to meet new **people**, and to  
strengthen **your** personal **relationship** with God.



Connect by Zoom:

[https://uso2web.zoom.us/  
j/819676693](https://uso2web.zoom.us/j/819676693)

Or dial by your location  
+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)  
Meeting ID: 819 676 693

Tues: 9 am prayer breakfast  
10 am Book Study

Wed: 7 pm Book Study

Thurs: 10 am Coffee Hour

When you feel overwhelmed by life's  
struggles, know that you are not alone.  
Even as you turn to Jesus in prayer, find  
comfort and healing within your faith  
family.