



# Malone: Centenary United Methodist Church

Upper New York Conference of the United Methodist Church

Rev. Heidi R. Chamberlain, Pastor  
Northern Flow District

March 28, 2021

Dear Beloveds,

So many of you have asked, "When do we get to worship together in person again?" **I wanted to let you know that we will plan to have our first in-person gathering on Easter Sunday, April 4<sup>th</sup>!** Please join me in prayer toward that end!

We will however continue to experience some changes in how we gather:

- Those at greatest risk of infection [Frail elderly 65+, Immuno-suppressed persons or family members, etc.] should carefully consider remaining at home utilizing the digital resources Centenary UMC provides on our website: [www.malonecentenaryumc.org](http://www.malonecentenaryumc.org) or by utilizing our Sermon by Phone at [518-216-0092](tel:518-216-0092) for the weekly message.
- Malone: Centenary UMC encourages that as each group of people qualify for immunization, make an appointment to be immunized as soon as possible.
- Until all are immunized and the public mask mandate has been lifted, we must wear masks and continue to observe social distancing of at least 6 feet for non-family groups.
- The front entrance will be the only access into Centenary UMC so that each person can be greeted and attendance taken. [Parking in the Village Office lot or on Main Street will give us the safest access.]
- We plan to worship in our Sanctuary in designated areas to maintain social distancing.
- We will utilize greeters at the church entrance to record attendance, check temperatures, and maintain social distancing on the entrance staircase or in the lift.
- In the sanctuary, ushers will greet you to safely seat you before the service and they will also dismiss you from worship in an orderly way to maintain social distancing.
- We will again use a "digital" bulletin rather than pass paper to one another.
- The offering plates will be stationed at the back of the sanctuary for your gifts, tithes, and donations, rather than passed hand to hand.
- We will utilize quieter responsive readings and singing, with masks, during worship. (The CDC has continued to caution that normal choral activities can have an aerosol effect and can be an infectious practice if not moderated.)
- We will schedule and observe communion with the same adjustments in our practice as we utilized in the fellowship hall – communion wafers without a shared cup for now.

My goal continues to be "safety first" for all of us as we come back to an in-person faith community. We need to faithfully observe this "new-normal" for the foreseeable future.

But even with the all the changes, it will be so good to see one another face-to-face! This year has been so challenging, I know that going forward will be worth a spirit of cooperation from all of us.

Beloveds, the promise of Spring has begun to offer new hope for the future. Your sacrifice these past months has not been in vain. In fact, keeping our community of faith as safe as possible from infection has led to an active phone tree growing in our midst this season. The team has worked hard to stay connected with everyone on a weekly basis. I already hear a greater sense of community in spite of our distance... imagine what fruit this tree will bear in the months ahead!

Our LCM Lunch program restarted in the New Year thanks to our faithful volunteer staff and new procedures aimed at keeping both volunteers and recipients well.

With better school protocols in place, the BOCES New Visions Class has been successfully meeting in their classroom space here at the church this semester.

Our first small group – Soup and Prayer – has also begun to meet on Mondays from Noon – 1:00 pm starting just last week.

Which brings me to a final thought, even during this time of social isolation, the work of the church has continued. As such, we are asking for your continued financial stewardship and on-going prayers. You may have noticed that we have included the following information each week in our digital worship resources:

Please mail your tithes and offerings:

**Malone: Centenary UMC**  
**345 W. Main Street**  
**Malone, NY 12953**

We have done so as some may not have realized that our church expenses have continued even though our building has been quieter this last year. Let me say “Thank you” to those who have helped to meet those expenses and for those who will come along side now. Your dedication and discipleship are the backbone of our church! We are indeed the Church! A time of isolation can never change that!

Coming back to our sanctuary on Easter Sunday is one more step in a year long journey that has been challenging to say the very least! Looking forward to seeing you soon!

In love and thankfulness,



Rev. Heidi R. Chamberlain