

# **LOCAL CHURCH PROFILE FOR SMALLER CONGREGATIONS**

(adapted from Maine UCC Conference Profile)

Chebeague Community Church  
258 North Road, Chebeague Island, ME 04017  
<http://www.chebeaguechurch.org/>  
[church.chebeague@gmail.com](mailto:church.chebeague@gmail.com)

Position:

**Part-time Settled Pastor**

*Inquiries may be directed to [egmuller@live.com](mailto:egmuller@live.com)*

***“God is able to provide you  
with every blessing, so that having all sufficiency  
in all things at all times,  
you may abound in every good work.”  
(2 Corinthians 9:8)***

## Summary Ministry Description

The Chebeague church council, trustees, pastor and membership led the congregation through a pivotal change in 2021 to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church to a community church model in order to create our own Chebeague Community Church...where all are welcome.

The Chebeague Community Church (CCC) is the only church serving Chebeague Island - the largest island in Casco Bay that is not connected to the mainland by a bridge. The year-round population of Chebeague has grown to nearly 400 and in the summer the population is estimated to surpass 1800-2000. Many of Chebeague's summer residents have deep ties to Chebeague going back many generations.

Our island community understands the value in making changes for the benefit of our year-round and summer residents and the needs and challenges of living on an island. We did the hard work of seceding from our prior municipality and becoming our own town in 2007.

We acknowledge that the Chebeague Community Church will take time to grow and evolve into a new version of what our church has looked like in the past. We understand that we need to be open to new ideas, beliefs, and traditions and that there will be some challenges and grief about change. We understand that there will be growing pains; we wish to honor what our church has symbolized for past generations, we wish for a safe-haven for today's challenging times, and for a sanctuary for peace, hope and joy for many years to come.

Our vision is that the Chebeague Community Church transforms into a home of worship that welcomes and respects beliefs and wisdoms from all traditions and of all people. Our vision is that we embrace the community's needs for all ages and meet them wherever they may be on their spiritual journey toward God, Spirit, Universe or within themselves. Our vision is that we can listen, grow, and evolve in order to help others on this human earth journey to feel less alone.

We see a thriving church community that has Sunday worship for all ages, that is inspirational, educational, full of music, hope, peace, trust and joy. We see a Parsonage as a home for a pastor to reside in; and possibly as a space that welcomes intimate groups for healing, grieving, reading and learning. We see a Parish House that brings people together to connect to their inner experience of God through creativity and community, a food pantry for those who need a helping hand, a place for gathering to share meals, grow, celebrate, grieve and remember together.

We see more rituals to foster and broaden community involvement, both new and well-worn, shaping us into what we are becoming.

## **Congregation's Mission Statement/Vision Statement**

### **MISSION**

We are called to be an inclusive, diverse and caring Christian community: worshiping, praying, witnessing, reaching out to all people on the Island and beyond, daring to grow and change as God calls us.

### **VALUES**

God knits this island into one family. Therefore:

### **COMMUNITY**

We seek to be a place of belonging and a harbor of mutual support and interdependence. We strive to share together, help and reach out to one another, grow in faith together, and live together in light of God's love.

### **FELLOWSHIP**

We enjoy being together. Whenever we gather, we do so in a spirit of friendship and love, as we share stories of the journeys God has called us on. We eat, pray, study, sing, and worship in ways that draw us closer together for the nourishment of our bodies and souls.

### **ROOTEDNESS**

We believe that new shoots come from strong roots. The winds of change may blow, but our roots sustain us and enable us to grow and flourish. Our traditions, faith, and connection to this island give us strength to pass on the seeds of love to the next generation.

### **CREATIVITY**

We honor God as Creator and are open to the many unique gifts we are given to serve and worship God. We incorporate the arts and the home arts into our life together to share peace, joy, and love with one another.

### **INCLUSIVITY**

We affirm the sacred worth of every human being, and so we welcome you. No matter who you are or where you are on your journey, you are loved and a child of God.

### **INNOVATION**

We seek to be in tune with the changing issues of our community and world and strive to serve the needs around us. God is always doing a new thing in our midst. And so, we try to incarnate the Gospel for this time, for this place, and for this people.

# Photographs

Sanctuary

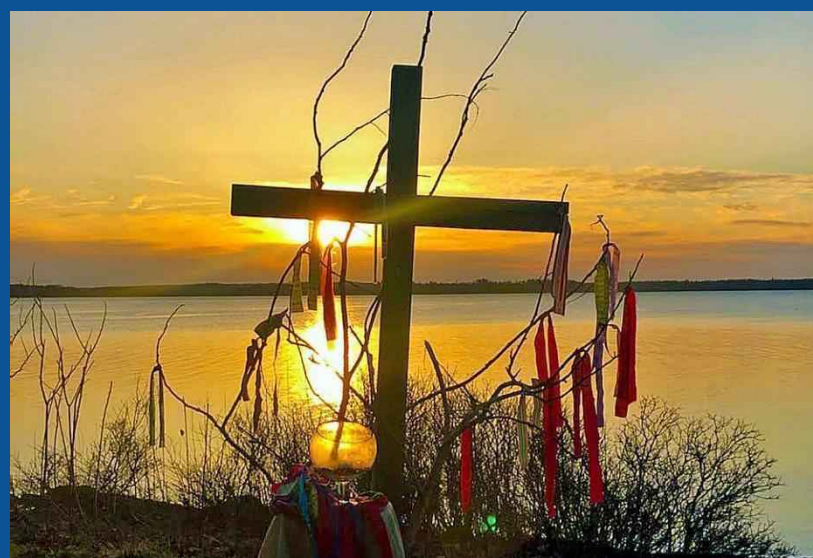


Parsonage



Parish House





## 1. WHO IS GOD CALLING TO MINISTER WITH US?

*(Select the expectations of the church's next pastor using the list below. Additional goals for the pastor may also be included here. Expectations should be reasonable based upon the compensation level selected below.)*

### **EXPECTATIONS:**

- \_2\_** Worship Leadership, Preaching, Service Preparation
- Church Administration, Newsletter, Communications, Staff Supervision
- Leadership with Church governing body and committees.
- \_3\_** Pastoral care, visitation of hospitalized, homebound, and members in care facilities.
- \_1\_** Special services (weddings, funerals, liturgical year services)
- Teaching – Bible Studies, adult education, confirmation
- Maintain collegial and denominational relationships.
- Mission and service involvements
- Other expectations:

*These expectations come from the community-wide survey concluded in February 2023 and a review of pastoral priorities by CCC members in January. Funerals and Celebrations of Life were ranked as the most important services provided by the church to the community. Community outreach was cited by survey respondents when asked how the church can better serve the needs of the island.*

### **Describe the ministry goals you envision your next minister co-collaborating with the congregation to achieve:**

1. Connect to our existing members, especially related to preferred worship experiences.
2. Create a caring model of outreach to community members, supported by pastoral care.
3. Engage community members in order to provide diverse opportunities for spiritual transformation.

## 2. SUPPORT AND COMPENSATION

**A. What is the expected living situation for your next minister (e.g. parsonage, living nearby with a housing allowance, living elsewhere to commute as needed)?**

**If your church has a parsonage:**

Location: **255 South Rd, Chebeague Island, ME 04017**

Finished square footage: **1960 sq. ft.**

Bedrooms/Bathrooms: **3 bedrooms, 2 studies, 1 ½ baths**

Available for minister residence: **Yes**

Expected minister residence: **We are flexible.**

Condition of structure, systems and appliances: **Good**

Entity in the church responsible for review and needed repairs: **Building and Grounds Committee reporting to the Church Council.**

*The Chebeague Community Church owns a parsonage located adjacent to the Parish House. Please see the description below and the pictures in this section and in the beginning of this profile. Our hope is that our new pastor would choose to live on Chebeague in the Parsonage. However, we understand that a part-time pastor may need to live elsewhere and we are open to discussions about appropriate compensation. Should the new pastor need or choose to live on the mainland, CCC can provide office space for the pastor in the CCC Parish House.*

**B. Describe all buildings owned by the church:**

The property consists of three buildings on North Road, Chebeague Island, Maine.

1. The Church at 258 North Road,
2. The Parsonage is located at 255 North Road, and
3. Parish House at 259 North Road.

\*The Parsonage and Parish House are located adjacent to each other, and the Church is across the street.

## THE CHURCH



The Church is approximately 1,930 square feet. The building has wood clapboard siding on the exterior walls and asphalt shingle roof. The foundation is mortared stone with an insulated basement and crawlspace. The church was constructed in 1855, the front entryway, narthex, balcony, and belfry were added in the 1890's.

The church has been well maintained. In the last decade the following repairs and improvements were completed:

- A new roof installed
- The basement/crawl space insulated
- Dual York propane furnaces installed
- A paver courtyard installed in front of the church
- The carillon was updated
- Pews installed in the balcony,
- A new handicapped ramp installed
- The stained-glass windows were removed and renovated

The church also has a Yamaha baby grand piano, wired and wireless microphones, a sound system, and a bright high-resolution projector and screen.



## THE PARSONAGE



The Parsonage was built in 1886 and is classic Greek Revival architecture. It has two sitting rooms, a porch, a fenced back yard, 3 bedrooms, 2 studies, and 1 ½ baths. The washer and dryer are on the first floor. It is currently unoccupied and undergoing routine repairs and maintenance.

## THE PARISH HOUSE



The Parish House was constructed in 1936 and is now approximately 1,830 square feet. The addition on the left was constructed in 1973 and contains the kitchen and bathrooms. The addition on the back was constructed in 2008 and contains the church office and storage. This building was extensively renovated in 2010 including updated electric, insulation, new oak floors, and new windows. New heat was installed in 2018.

**C. Which spaces are accessible to wheelchairs? (worship space, pulpit, fellowship space, facilities, etc.)**

*The Church and Parish House are accessible to wheelchairs.*

**D. State any incentives (e.g. school debt reduction, retention bonus after a certain number of years in position or Sabbatical after 5 or 7 years): negotiable**

**E. Describe peer and professional supports available for ministers in your association/conference:**

We are currently part of a small network called the Movement of Inclusive Methodists. We are four formerly UMC churches, banded together for mutual support. Meetings of MIM include clergy and laity. The network is new and planning to grow. Strong bonds have been formed among the clergy members.

CCC appreciates the functions and advantages that affiliation with a denomination can provide. The 2023 CCC Community Survey devoted several questions to this topic. Our recent independence did not come easily nor did it come without tangible and intangible sacrifices. However, the Chebeague community supported disaffiliation and demonstrated that support through their words and with their treasure. Our open and affirming commitment is unswerving. CCC will make every effort to ensure that our pastor has the best possible peer and professional support. If CCC decides to explore affiliation with a denomination that shares our theology and values, we will conduct a thorough and open discernment process.

**F. If applicable, describe how your church will adopt part-time adjustments in the pastoral schedule to support a minister's bi-vocational employment:**

We've been a part-time pastorate since 2002. One former pastor was a family Nurse Practitioner with a busy practice nearby in Yarmouth, ME. Another ran an office-cleaning service in Portland, ME. Both pastors had spouses who worked on the mainland. Transportation on the Chebeague Transportation Company ferry from Cousins Island in Yarmouth to Chebeague is often described by pastors as a beautiful ride filled with opportunities to catch up with friends and neighbors, or to simply experience the beauty of Casco Bay. CCC provides the pastor with parking on Cousins Island and ferry tickets.

### 3. WHO IS GOD CALLING US TO BECOME?

#### **A. Who is God calling you to become as a congregation?**

The Chebeague Community Church conducted a 2023 Community Survey in February 2023. We were encouraged by the 121 people who took the time to provide CCC with valuable feedback through this online survey. The results of the survey can be found [here](#) and will act as the guide for CCC's planning for the future. Our vision statement also encompasses who we believe God is calling us to become as a congregation.

#### **B. Describe how God is calling you to reach out to address the emerging challenges and opportunities of your community and congregation. *For example, describe two experiments your congregation has initiated or engaged in the past year, what were the results and where do you see your next steps?***

1 – Disaffiliation. We successfully disaffiliated from the United Methodist Church on September 1, 2021. We successfully raised the funds from the community (approx. \$95,000) to be able to pay our fees to disaffiliate. The community rallied around the church – understanding the need to be more inclusive and the awareness that the now Chebeague Community Church would be the owners of the Church, Parsonage and Parish. Volunteer efforts were high. We see CCC as an integral part of the community.

2 - Lobster Roll luncheon, July 2022. This was our first in person gathering since the start of the pandemic. With over 50 people in attendance, we had music from our local musicians and a range of ages in attendance. Our friends from The Island Commons – an assisted living facility of the island – were also in attendance. Volunteer efforts were high. We see CCC as an integral part of the social engagement of our community.

3 – Community Quilt. When a member of our church, who served on the church council, became disabled by illness, the community rallied to bring pieces of fabric together and made a quilt for her. Volunteer efforts were high. We see CCC as an integral part of the well-being of the community.

*Next steps: identifying projects that serve the community – both year-round and seasonal people. Our greatest success is when we have a PROJECT that serves the community directly.*

## 4. CONGREGATIONAL REFLECTIONS

### **A. Describe several strengths or positive qualities of your congregation.**

1. Congregation members and friends form a remarkable lay leadership group. Strong lay leadership is manifesting itself impressively during this time of transition with no pastor and no administrative assistant. This is not a recent phenomenon, but is currently being challenged by the sheer number of island non-profits and finite volunteer resources.
2. Although protective of long-standing traditions of the church on Chebeague, the congregation is amenable to current methods of worship and varying leadership styles. This flexibility has been helpful during the past several pastorates, with pastors in several stages of life and with quite individual pastoral styles.
3. The congregation unites in solidarity when tragedy or crisis strikes the island, and offers unfailing assistance to those in need. The response to the Covid pandemic is a recent example.
4. The congregation strongly supports a thriving Food Pantry available to anyone on the island.

### **B. Describe what worship is like when your congregation gathers.**

*For example, where does worship take place, and what is it based around? What was a recent baptism like? What are some words used to describe good preaching?*

1. Usually in the sanctuary. Winter in the Parish House. Rarely outside or on the beach.
2. Usually, a traditional worship service based on lectionary readings. Sometimes a seasonal series.
3. Recent baptism included three grandchildren of a long-time member. The baptism liturgy was similar to UMC's.

### **C. Describe how your congregation is organized for ministry and mission.**

*For example, how are decisions communicated in your church? How are teams or committees organized? Where does your church struggle for vision?*

- **When it comes to decision-making, how many hours are spent in meetings per month?**
- **Think of a time when action had to be taken quickly, for example when a crisis or disaster occurred. How was that accomplished?**

- **Can you provide the next minister with a copy of bylaws and/or annual report to further explain the patterns of the church's activity and governance? [Yes/No]** YES, BOTH. The bylaws and annual report can be found on our website [here](#).

Briefly, we offer three levels of membership for year-round and seasonal members. Two yearly Membership Meetings are scheduled: one in January for business and budget; and the other for fun in the summertime.

The Church Council (currently nine members) administers the church. The pastor is a voting member of the Church Council which currently meets once a month on the second Sunday at noon. Most meetings are held at the parish house and also on Zoom as several of our Church Council members are seasonal residents of Chebeague. We strive to complete Church Council meetings in one hour.

We have six standing committees: Buildings and Grounds, Finance, Human Resources, Member Care, Nominating, and Worship; and two on-going programs: Food Pantry and Ladies Aid. For decision-making we are using a consent process adapted from Sociocracy For All.



## 5. CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP, BUDGET & LEADERSHIP

**# Current Membership:** 53 Full Members, 3 Associate Members, 16 Friends

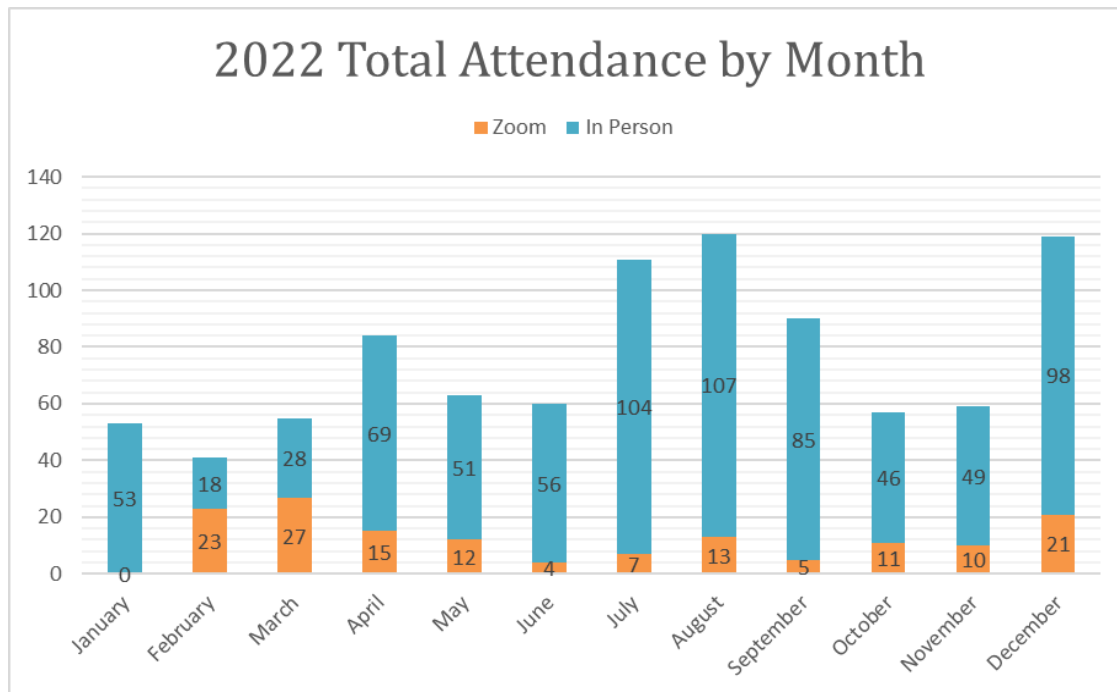
**# Membership 5 years ago:** 60 Full Members, 3 Associate Members

**# Average Weekly Worship Attendance:** 19 (2022)

**# Participating in Weekly Adult Education:** Varies

**# Participating in Youth Ministries:** 0

<b>2022 Month</b>	<b>Via Zoom</b>	<b>In Person</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>January</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>February</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>April</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>May</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>June</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>July</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>111</b>
<b>August</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>September</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>October</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>November</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>December</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>119</b>



**Current Year Annual Church Budget:** (2023) \$73,900 (income) \$78,008 (expense)

**Current Year Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM):** \$ 0

*Through the United Methodist Church we gave \$2000 to \$3000 annually for world and New England missions through 2021, but did not during 2022.*

*Historically, we've had strong connections with a mission in Guatemala. Locally we advocate for those with addictions, the hungry, those who need help with heat, and providing clothing to refugees.*

**# Pledging Units:** 36

**Average Annual Pledge Amount:** \$1181.11

**Income producing/invested funds:** \$245,198, an additional \$102,344 is in designated/working capital. All figures as of 12/31/2022

**What is the church's current indebtedness?**

**Total amount of loan debt:** \$0

**If a building program is projected or underway, describe it, including the projected start/end date of the building project and the total project budget.**

We are not building a new building, but two of the three buildings were built in the 1800's, the third in the 1930's. This year we are making updates/repairs to the Parsonage while it is empty. The funds for this will come from our invested funds, it is not in our operating budget.

## 6. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### CONGREGATIONAL HISTORY

#### **A. Name one to three significant happenings in the history of your church that have shaped the identity of your congregation in the past 10 years:**

The Methodist Church of Chebeague Island dates its beginning back in the year 1802. Our current church was built in 1855. The Parsonage, which is located across the road, was built in 1885. To date our church has been served by 91 ministers.

Our church has beautiful stained-glass windows which were removed, reglazed and rededicated a few years ago with the proceeds donated from Island and summer residents. Many men and women have dedicated time and expertise to keep our Church in good working order over the years, whether it be painting, repairing, re-roofing, planting or decorating. For instance, a very large and much-loved hand crocheted Lord's Prayer was made and donated to the Church around the mid 1930's by an Island woman (Elizabeth "Lizzie" Curit) and remains there today. Islanders and summer residents alike are very proud of our Church.

One stable organization of our Church community has been the Ladies Aid. We can document their work back to the early 1900's. We even have photos that reflect at one time in those early years, their husbands would attend! To this day, these dedicated women continue to meet weekly, give of their time and earn money through their Fairs for our Church's needs. The Ladies Aid uses the Parish House (which is also across the street from the Church) as their meeting place. Through their financial help, a new kitchen was added in the mid-1970's and a back room that is used for storage, office space and Food Pantry items was built in 2008. Before our Island Recreation Center was established on the Island, the Parish House was also used for a place for pre-teens and teens to go on weekends.

Between 1945-1950, the Sunday School, Choir and Youth Fellowship became extremely active under the guidance of Rev. Oldridge. Records show that in 1981 we had 30+ children in Bible School. Over the last two centuries, our records reflect that active church participation and/or membership has ebbed and



flowed. As of now, we unfortunately do not have a choir or a children's Sunday School, due to the years of the Pandemic. When our Sunday School was active, the Church offered scholarships for the Island children to attend a Methodist summer camp at Mechuwana in Winthrop, Maine.

More recently, Rev. Linda Brewster led Church Members via the Works of Grace, (a local non-profit organization) to Guatemala on two separate missions. A few islanders are going to be traveling there again this year in November! Our Church community helped monetarily with travel funds and also with purchasing meds that were then provided to those in need. Many pancake breakfasts were held in our Parish House to help raise funds to assist with travel costs. Also in recent years, we have gathered hats, coats and mittens which are sent off the Island for the homeless and immigrants in the Portland area.

The Church has had a Food Pantry for many years and provides people who need financial assistance with the means to purchase their own food. During COVID, because we did not want our elderly or those with health issues to leave the Island to shop for their groceries, we decided to "step it up a notch". We had multiple donors who gave significant money for us to be able to provide fresh produce on a weekly basis for over two years. (We averaged spending \$900.00 weekly!) And finally, when we learned of a neighbor who had COVID, we provided them with a box of easy to cook foods and over-the-counter medications. Chebeague has a very caring community.

In closing, we would like to quote our Island Historian, Donna Damon, who recently has given two lectures on our Church's history... "Knowledge of the past, informs the present, while we plan for the future."

**B. Describe a specific change your church has managed in the recent past:**

Already dealing with the challenges of being a new, independent church, leadership was hit with a new challenge when our pastor resigned in the fall, effective December 31, 2022. Although we knew it would happen sometime, it turned out that now was when we would learn about the process of finding a pastor instead of receiving a pastor appointed by a bishop. The laity stepped up and pulled together.

We learned about what a pastor does by doing many of those tasks ourselves. We continue learning about our community and about ourselves as we grow into what God is calling us to be.

## MINISTERIAL HISTORY

*(include all previous ministerial staff for the past 30 years)*

### **A. All were appointed by the bishop of the UMC New England Conference**

1989-93 George Tripp

1993-95 Bettina Higgins

1995-02 Bob Leon

2002-07 Glenn Coombs

2007-12 Linda Brewster, part-time local pastor

2012-12 Katherine Russo

2012-13 Priscilla Dreyman (filled in for approx. 6 months)

2013-15 Mary Jane O'Connor-Ropp

2015-22 Melissa Yosua-Davis, part-time local pastor



## 7. COMMUNITY VISION

### **A. How do the relationships and activities of your congregation extend outward in service and advocacy?**

*For example, which service activities has your church participated in this past year? Where has the church participated in global connections of care and justice? What is currently transformational in your church's engagement with neighbors near or far?*

1. The Church served as the sponsoring non-profit for on-island COVID testing. Also during COVID, our pastor co-chaired the town sponsored Community Advisory Response Team (CART). The funds for COVID testing were received from the Recompense Fund (a Chebeague non-profit). The testing was conducted by year-round and seasonal residents in the medical profession. This made it easier, safer, and less worrisome for many in the community at the height of COVID. People were less anxious knowing they did not need to leave the island and/or ride the ferry and potentially expose others to be tested. Volunteer efforts were high. CCC is an integral part of the community and people believe in the church on the island. For more details please see the [2023 CCC Community Survey](#).
2. Food Pantry success during COVID: We have a robust food pantry to which many in the community donated at the height of COVID (financially). A large portion of our community sees this as vital to the well-being of the island. The food pantry made it super easy for ALL people to access food at the height of COVID to avoid leaving the island. Volunteer efforts were high. CCC envisions expanding our community of care on Chebeague and continuing to work in concert with other Chebeague non-profits.

### **B. Describe your congregation's participation in meetings, relationships and activities connecting the wider association / conference / national setting.**

1. As mentioned on page 10, CCC is part of the Movement of Inclusive Methodists (MIM), a network of four former UMC churches, one in Pennsylvania and three in Maine. One of the group's projects last year was the development of a process for ordination. Last April two representatives from our church traveled to Lancaster, Pennsylvania to celebrate MIM's first ordination. Representatives also attended a four-day leadership retreat in October in New York state. Also, CCC hosted a laity-led book study group via Zoom with members of the network. Additional connectional events are planned for this year.

## 8. CLOSING PRAYER

***Include here any prayer or dream for the minister you imagine journeying toward you... a poem, for example, or a Scripture passage or a piece of music that is meaningful to your Search Committee:***

Creator God,

Please support us through this time of change within our Chebeague Community Church and with our desire to be a welcoming and safe home of worship and prayer for all wherever they may be on their spiritual journey. We ask that you please guide us as we look for a new Pastor to help us meet our community's needs in today's challenging world.

Wells, springs, source, water, life. Water is essential to human life. So essential to Chebeague Island. There is a story of Jesus at a well in the Gospel of John, Chapter 4. Jesus is traveling through Samaria and goes to the well for a drink. So basic. His way to the well is not diverted by the presence of a Samaritan woman at the well, even though culturally appropriate behavior prohibited Jews and Samaritans sharing space. Jesus asks her to give him a drink of water from her cup.

Creator God, let our church be the "well" of this community, the life-giving source gratefully shared. Let us model Jesus's behavior—freely sharing this sacred space and honoring the needs of our neighbors. Help us to remember that all living things need the water of life to survive and may we always have open doors for all to worship in spirit and truth. Amen.



## STATEMENT OF CONSENT

The covenantal relationship between a church and those called by that church to serve as pastors and teachers and in other ministerial positions is strengthened when vital information is openly shared by covenantal partners. To that end, we attest that, to the best of our abilities, we have provided information in this profile that accurately represents our church. We have not knowingly withheld any information that would be helpful to candidates.

As the committee charged with the responsibility for identifying and recommending suitable new pastors for our church, we have been authorized to share the information herein with potential candidates. We understand that a candidate may wish to secure further knowledge, information, and opinions about our church. We encourage a candidate to do so, recognizing that an open exchange of relevant information builds the foundation for continuing and healthy relationships between calling bodies and persons seeking a ministry position.

**1. Which individuals and groups in the church contributed to the contents of this Local Church Profile?**

CCC Pastoral Search Committee, the CCC Treasurer, and other members of the CCC Church Council.

**2. Additional comments for interpreting the profile:**

The Chebeague Community Church is unique in that it is the only church that serves the population of Chebeague Island. Although our heritage is with the Methodist tradition, many of our members and the Chebeague community have a different religious heritage or none at all. CCC is highly valued by the Chebeague community. [The 2023 CCC Community Survey](#) contains important insights into how the CCC is valued by the community as well as how CCC can better serve the community.

