

Chesuncook Village Church
Union Evangelical Church - Greenville
PO Box 368, Greenville, ME 04441
December 2014



Dear Friends,

As many of you may already know, the little church in Chesuncook was built in the prosperous logging days of 1924 and served as the focus of worship, social activity and as a school for 30 years. As the village declined, the church fell into disrepair. In 1975, a renewed spirit motivated the members of the Union Church in Greenville to take on the Chesuncook Church as a mission project. At that time it was rededicated and has continued to be a light in the woods for all who live and travel through the area.

In August of this year, the Greenville Union Church finally became the official owners of the Chesuncook Village Church Building. Although the ownership was presumed by many for several years, it finally became official last August. The State of Maine gifted the ownership to the Greenville Union Church after a long legislative process that required the efforts of many, many people. What a blessing that was! Now that we are the official owners, the real work begins!

Our goal has always been to preserve the little church in the woods so that it can serve the spiritual needs of all who live or travel by. While the village year-round residents continue to be small in number, its summer residents and visitors continue to grow. During the summer months we are blessed by many who come to worship and visit the church.

Through the years both the church and the parsonage have fallen into a bit of disrepair ... the parsonage more than the church. Over the past few years, while ownership was being established, many small church projects have been completed. However, it is now time to plan for and begin the long-term revitalization of both buildings. In 2009 some emergency bell tower roof repair was done on the church. While that is holding firm, the entire roof will need to be re-shingled sometime in the next few years.

In opening the parsonage for the summer season, we noticed that the separation between the two "joined" buildings had become so significant that we lost the adjoining wall on one of the buildings. It finally succumbed to the weather and rot and needs to be addressed. The roof shingles had also separated providing us with running water on the inside ... but not of the desirable kind! The immediate, temporary fix was to tarp the roof.

Due to these and other conditions, we decided to seek some professional advice. This fall Charlie Carter accompanied a foundations expert and a building contractor into the Village to obtain their assessments of the conditions and advice for the most urgent repairs. Expecting the worst, we were pleased that both gentlemen gave us less drastic answers than we were anticipating. In addition to the church roof, we were becoming increasingly concerned about the church foundation. The foundations expert agreed the foundation needs immediate attention but believes proper ditching around the entire building could adequately prevent future concerns. He also strongly advised the removal of the church chimney as it has not been in use for years and is starting to become loose. So, we have our immediate plans for the church.

With respect to the parsonage, the building contractor advised us not to try to connect the buildings in the future but to treat them as two distinct buildings with a short connecting walkway. Jacking the buildings up and re-doing the sill work is a must for both buildings. Given the soil, slope of the land, and mother nature, he believes any attempt to connect the buildings will just repeat the same problem in the future. He also

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believes that with proper ventilation below the buildings, the two original Great Northern Paper boom-houses can be repaired / preserved and not replaced. For those of us interested in preserving as much history as possible, this information was encouraging.

This summer we were blessed with four different visiting pastors/speakers who conducted seven services in our little church! We've also received many positive comments and thanks from folks in the village. During the summer every service had guests in attendance and financial gifts were given. Although these gifts are small, they are constant and continue to trickle in as off-season guests visit the church. In addition to the financial gifts of our visitors, we are always grateful for the time and talents freely given by all the visiting pastors and numerous residents who help maintain the church and parsonage through many smaller projects.

We know our blessings are many – both financially and in time and talents - and we are ever hopeful that God continues to smile upon our little church in the woods. In an effort to sustain the church as one of the focal points in Chesuncook Village, we request your help. We know we are looking at significant repair jobs, in both the church and the parsonage, within the next few years. Please know the gifts of your time and talents are as important and as much a blessing as the financial gifts you give. Prayerfully consider how you may best be able to assist us in our efforts to sustain and improve our little church in the woods.

Please complete the form at the bottom of this note and return it to us (with a check, if applicable) in the enclosed return envelope. The generosity of people like you will keep the church vibrant and the focal point of the community. Thank you so very much and may you have a blessed Christmas!

Sincerely,

The Chesuncook Church Committee
UCC Union Evangelical Church

Return this bottom portion to the Chesuncook Church Committee

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

phone: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

e-mail: _____

Yes, I am able to financially assist with the Chesuncook church repair efforts. My check is enclosed.

I am unable to help financially, but I'd be willing to be contacted about donating my time or talents in the repair efforts.

I am unable to help in any way at this time but would like to be kept on the mailing list.