



The Spire

Congregational Church of Somersville
United Church of Christ



2020

Blacksmith Shoppe Reopens

The Blacksmith Shoppe will be reopening on a restricted basis beginning September 12 and will tentatively be open from 9 AM – 2 PM on Saturdays through October. Marilyn will definitely need some help this year; all will have to take precautions and stay socially distanced and limit the number of folks in the Shoppe at a time, use hand sanitizer, wear masks, etc. Donations have continued to come in and everything has been cleaned.

For those contributing baked goods, please note that nothing can be individually wrapped – ***all baked goods must remain in the pans in which they were baked.***

Share The Gift of Music

Anyone who has an interest in music and would be willing to share it with the congregation on any Sunday this fall, is urged to speak with Jason Stefanik, our organist and choir director. As we continue our attempts to be well and stay safe, our choir is remaining socially distanced and not singing as a group during worship.

Instrumentals, vocals, ... solos, duets, trios .. youngster to adult , any combination, we would love it if you'd be willing to share your gift of music.



From the Pastor

Greetings, Friends –

Beginning August 30th and continuing through the month of September, I will begin another sermon series. This five-week series will spring from the works of five poets from the 19th and early 20th centuries. *Note: All of the poems I will be reprinting are now in the public domain so there will be no copyright violations.* While the sermons will begin with a poem, the preaching will be grounded in scripture. For while I appreciate the poet's inspiration, their work is not the work of scripture. Rather, I hope their work will lead us into a deeper engagement with scripture.

But where, you may wonder, does this leave you if you do not know much poetry and have not had much success reading it in the past? Don't worry! You will be just fine, for there is no need to be a poet or even to have read any poetry in order to dive into this series. No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!

The poets we will sample over the next five weeks include Emily Dickinson, Christina Rossetti, Gerard Manley Hopkins, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Countee Cullen. Our first poet to help us start the series will be Emily Dickinson. To whet your appetite, I offer to you this poem from the days of the Civil War:

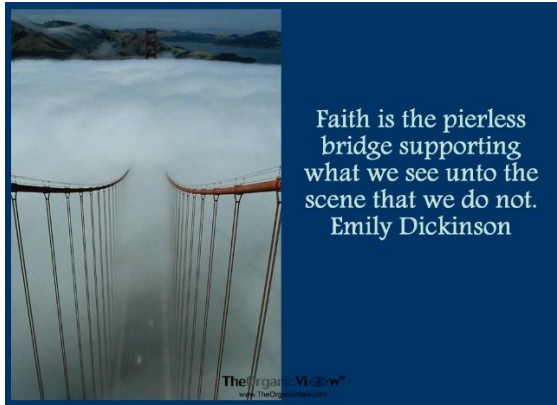
Faith – is the Pierless Bridge

By Emily Dickinson, 1864

*Faith—is the Pierless Bridge
Supporting what We see
Unto the Scene that We do not—
Too slender for the eye*

*It bears the Soul as bold
As it were rocked in Steel
With Arms of Steel at either side—
It joins—behind the Veil*

*To what, could We presume
The Bridge would cease to be
To Our far, vacillating Feet
A first Necessity.*



Thank you in advance for joining us for this sermon series on poetry, scripture, and faith. I hope you will be inspired by the great cloud of poetic witnesses who have gone before us.

Yours in Christ,
Graham Van Keuren

Thanks to ..

- .. all who contributed to the success of our chicken barbecue fundraiser in July and the meatloaf supper in August.
- .. Bobby B. for continuing to donate his time and energy in caring for the church building.
- .. those who continue to mow, weed-whack, weed, etc.
- .. all who continue to support the programs of the church.
- .. those who have provided special music this summer.



Thanks from ..

Eva Cohen ... To all my friends at church, Thank you very much for your prayers and well-wishes. I'm honestly blown away at the amount of support I have received and everything I've been gifted for my tenure as streamer; honestly, it's far more than I deserve for what I've done. I never thought of my work as particularly difficult or worthy of

everything I've been given, so I can only offer my sincerest thanks to all of you.

I have spent many Sundays over the course of my life in church, whether it was tipping my chair back and falling during Sunday School or trying not to burn myself with candle wax during the Christmas Eve service (almost never succeeded). I met my best friend there and was in a play for the first time there. Throughout my life, the church community has always been so wonderful. Every Sunday School teacher I ever had, person I interacted with, everyone. Again, I cannot thank you all enough for the time I've spent with you. Church has ever been a constant in my life, and I've known many of you for as long as I've been alive.

As you all know, I'm not a woman of many words. If I were to thank everyone individually, we'd be here all day. So to every Sunday School teacher, every choir member, every fellow member of the congregation...

Thank you.

Rich Carey ...I thank you all for your cards and prayers; surgery was a success.

The Suzuki Talent Education Partnership (STEP), an interfaith music ministry I direct, wants to thank the church, Pastor Graham and Eric Elley their continued support and for making possible our June fundraiser for the Open Pantry of Springfield. We couldn't have done it without you! Graham and Eric spent hours adjusting the streaming/sound system during the rehearsals prior to the concert. Then on the concert evening Graham helped with his calm support and everything from getting clothespins to keep our music from blowin' in the wind, to managing the mic during the concert. Eric gave us his time, his streaming finesse and technical savvy in streaming. This was our first livestreamed concert, and gave STEP wider exposure to the Greater Springfield and Northern CT community, for which we are also grateful. For more about STEP's mission and ministry, please visit www.suzukitalented.com.



Because the church already had marked out socially-distanced seating and had CDC protocols in place, students' families felt comfortable enough to participate in the socially-distanced concert, "String Music to Soothe the Soul", which you can still watch on the church's website. The concert opened

with a contemporary Christian song written and performed by Kevin Sharpe, a well-known WMass gospel musician, choir director and jazz drummer, about the racial wounds we need to heal, with God's help. Then the STEP quartet performed classical masterworks by Bach, Mozart and Pachelbel, along with folk songs and solos performed by two younger STEP students. I played the Bach/Gounod *Ave Maria* to offer a prayer for help, for us to see our country as it is and to realize that one of our great strengths is our diversity. The concert ended with a jazzy rendition of *The Entertainer* by Scott Joplin, the famous early 20th-century African American ragtime composer. Thank you for your continued support, and for being an answer to prayer by making this concert happen!

Report of the Treasurer (submitted by Dave Pinney)

Budget vs. Actuals: 2020 Budget - FY20 P&L
January - July, 2020

	Jun 2020		Jul 2020		Total	
	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Income						
Collections					0.00	0.00
Loose	156.00	184.00	124.00	183.00	764.00	1,283.00
Pledges	7,654.02	7,834.00	5,689.00	7,833.00	51,242.05	54,833.00
Total Collections	\$ 7,810.02	\$ 8,018.00	\$ 5,813.00	\$ 8,016.00	\$ 52,006.05	\$ 56,116.00
Dividends	50.52	84.00	89.74	83.00	566.25	583.00
Total Donations	\$ 75.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,839.10	\$ 250.00	\$ 5,719.10	\$ 3,250.00
Endowment Input		5,000.00		0.00	0.00	5,000.00
Facility Contributionsc	90.00		45.00		135.00	0.00
Fund Raiser	2,322.00	2,500.00	2,848.00	2,500.00	10,634.00	15,500.00
Interest Income		1.00		2.00	0.93	12.00
Miscellaneous		50.00		50.00	30.00	350.00
Total Income	\$ 10,347.54	\$ 16,653.00	\$ 10,634.84	\$ 10,901.00	\$ 69,091.33	\$ 80,811.00
Expenses						
Bank Service Charges	101.29	16.67	101.89	16.67	351.42	116.69
Total Christian Education	\$ 0.00	\$ 175.00	\$ 165.44	\$ 175.00	\$ 1,086.97	\$ 1,225.00
Total Committees	\$ 192.81	\$ 112.50	\$ 150.00	\$ 112.50	\$ 862.30	\$ 787.50
Total Compensation	\$ 7,194.21	\$ 7,366.42	\$ 5,970.71	\$ 7,366.42	\$ 50,600.79	\$ 51,564.94
Total Fees	\$ 1,474.00	\$ 1,063.00	\$ -132.00	\$ 1,550.00	\$ 4,694.00	\$ 5,713.00
Fund Raisers	314.00	333.33	519.00	333.33	1,679.00	2,333.31
Total Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 67.60	\$ 104.17	\$ 74.93	\$ 104.17	\$ 622.95	\$ 729.19
Total Mission Outreach	\$ 0.00	\$ 1,245.83	\$ 0.00	\$ 245.83	\$ 67.71	\$ 4,220.81
Total Office Supplies	\$ 648.10	\$ 470.84	\$ 121.00	\$ 320.84	\$ 3,310.55	\$ 2,395.88
Total Repairs and Maintenance	\$ 1,856.74	\$ 750.00	\$ 299.19	\$ 750.00	\$ 7,025.75	\$ 5,250.00
Telephone Expense	141.86	150.00	141.86	150.00	1,025.68	1,050.00
Total Utilities	\$ 1,038.10	\$ 1,174.99	\$ 684.87	\$ 1,174.99	\$ 9,260.55	\$ 8,537.43
Total Expenses	\$ 13,028.71	\$ 12,962.75	\$ 8,096.89	\$ 12,299.75	\$ 80,587.67	\$ 83,923.75
Net Operating Income	\$ -2,681.17	\$ 3,690.25	\$ 2,537.95	\$ -1,398.75	\$ -11,496.34	\$ -3,112.75

Readers in September

9/06 – Sharon M
9/13 – Wayne S.
9/20 – Mavis C,
9/27 – Allison M.



Christian Education (submitted by Pastor Graham & Lani Bortfeld)

The Board of Christian Education hopes you all have enjoyed some re-creative time this summer, despite the continuing limitations, and are ready to learn more about God and Jesus this fall. Our Sunday school resumes meeting at 9:50am at the Mill Pond when the weather is suitable and at 11:15am on Zoom when it's not, beginning Sunday, September 13th and continuing as long as possible. Once the weather turns cold, we anticipate going completely online. Families are asked to bring the usual items when we meet at Mill Pond Park: your church school bag with your Bible or children's Bible, folding chair, and mask. Please speak with your child/ren about our intention to keep them safe and instruct them to follow the guidance of our Sunday school teachers and adult chaperones.

Families with children and youth, Sunday school teachers, and all others are invited to join us on Friday, September 11th at Connor's Place Pavilion in Field Road Park (Somers) at 6 p.m. for a Rally Celebration. You are encouraged to bring a picnic dinner if you'd like. The Board of Christian Education will provide ice cream, cookies, and beverage. The celebration will include the faith banner show-and-tell by participating Sunday school kids, an awards presentation, a teacher appreciation presentation, a brief message, and fellowship. Come early or stay late to play on the playground! (Note: the sun will set on that day about 7:15 p.m. The park closes at sunset.)



CE tried something this spring which was very successful: we divided up the list of families among the board members and Pastor Graham, and called church school families to check in on how they were doing with the challenges of the pandemic, and to ask what suggestions they had for CE on the church school format. One mom suggested meeting outside at the Mill Pond Park, an idea which has been great for all who've attended those

sessions. The board is going to continue to check in with families by phone after each CE meeting to update you on upcoming events and catch up with your family's joys and concerns.

If you are interested in teaching, please make yourself known to any member of the Board of Christian Education: Lani Bortfeld, Shirley Bracken, Marj Butler, or Graham Van Keuren. We'd love for new folks to join our dedicated teachers in this rewarding work.

Bible Study

Two sessions are offered each week: Wednesday and Thursday mornings beginning at 9:30 AM and running until 11-11:15. The study content is the same both mornings; however, on Wednesdays we remain socially distanced in the social hall without wearing facemasks. Masks are worn during the Thursday class. The studies are open to all; you are welcome on either morning for the situation you find most comfortable for yourself – or come to both!



Missions (submitted by Pastor Graham)

2nd Mile Missions

Our September Second Mile Mission partner will be Heifer International. Our church has had a long and productive history with this partner, as many of you can attest. Heifer focuses its great work on rural development in countries around the world, including in the United States. Some information about our mission partner's beginnings are below:

Heifer International History: The Origins and Early Years (History Provided by Heifer International)

For more than 75 years, Heifer International has worked with people all around the world to end hunger and poverty and care for the Earth.

How Heifer International Began

In 1944, Dan West began outlining a simple but groundbreaking plan to tackle hunger around the world. West, a farmer from the Midwest and Church of the Brethren member, had recently returned from feeding weary refugees during volunteer service in the Spanish Civil War.



He'd seen firsthand that giving people food was a short-term solution, whereas providing them with animals offered a steady supply of nutritious food for an entire family.

His philosophy still inspires Heifer's work today. Partnering with farmers across a range of different livestock and crops, we create unique solutions to local challenges. Together, we build inclusive, resilient economies, so communities can develop effective ways to end global hunger and poverty in a sustainable way.

These days, Heifer International generally provides animals to participating families through local channels in the countries we serve. But early on, the organization shipped livestock from the United States to other countries. During their travels, these animals were cared for by "seagoing cowboys": ranchers and farmers who aided Heifer in its mission by lending their expertise in animal husbandry and agriculture.

The Seagoing Cowboys: A Key Part of Heifer History

In the years following World War II, more than 7,000 men and women accompanied shipments of cattle, pigs, goats and other livestock across land, sea and air to deliver them to families in Europe. For many of them, these trips presented a series of firsts — the first time setting sail on a ship, the first time crossing the ocean and the first time visiting another culture. For many of these seagoing cowboys, their faith was tested as they witnessed the devastation of the war, but came away with a renewed sense of hope and purpose after helping families in need.

[Our Missions Outreach Board invites you to contribute generously to this month's 2nd Mile Mission Partner, Heifer International.]

Food Share

Members of our church help distribute food every other Wednesday from 1-1:30 in the parking lot of the Somers Congregational Church. If you are willing to assist, speak with Marge Morgan. September dates are the 2nd, 16th, and 30th.

Clothing Shed on the Green

Donations to the clothing shed at the parking lot for the green cannot be accepted at this time; St. Pauly's has temporarily closed it due to the toll taken on their business by Covid 19.



Church Without Walls

Church Without Walls, which meets at noon every Sunday in Court Square across from Symphony Hall and City Hall in Springfield, MA



Our church participates once a month (the 4th Sunday) as Pastor Graham conducts the service there and our Missions committee makes peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and provides fruit and a snack which are handed out after the service. If anyone would like to contribute or assist on September 27, please speak with Jean Langan.

KIVA (submitted by Linda Longueuil)

It has been an active summer for KIVA loans. We were able to make 6 loans during July and August. The first loan went to Oscar Andres (Nicaragua). He will use his loan to purchase a better form of transportation to sell his products. The second loan went to Bernarda De La Cruz (Colombia). She will use her loan to purchase stationary, toner, staplers etc. for her photocopying business. The third loan went to Mohamed (Jordan). He will use his loan to purchase a deep freezer so he can stock frozen foods in his grocery store. The fourth loan went to Madioula of the Nfemc Group (Senegal). Her loan will enable her to purchase 100 chicks for resale. The fifth loan went to Sinaly from the Benkadi Group (Mali). He will use his loan to purchase high quality rams for his sheep breeding business. The last loan went to Neema from the Jehovah Jireh Group (Congo). Her loan will allow her to purchase men's clothing in bulk for resale.

In spite of the pandemic affecting most of the world, 13 loans were repaid during July and August. The following loans were repaid in full: Felix (Timor-Leste), Stephen (Kenya), Esmalyne (Papua New Guinea), Fay (Samoa), Hoa (Vietnam), Lizbeth (Puerto Rico), Vladimir (Albania), Marta Lidia (El Salvador), Alma Mercedes (El Salvador), and Oscar Andres (Nicaragua). Note: Oscar took his loan in July and repaid in August which is awesome. Three loans lost a small amount of money due to the currency exchange rates. Salustiano's (Mozambique) loan lost \$1.49. Munar's (Kyrgyzstan) loan lost \$.46. Edith's loan (Damas Emprendedoras Group in Paraguay) lost \$1.16.

Ladies Aide Society

Luncheon Location Changed

Okay, ladies, after sending out an email to some of the more active in the group (and who have email), it has been decided to go out to lunch at 12 noon on Tuesday, Sept. 8 at Joanna's at 145 Main Street in Somersville. The main reason is that Manchester Pizza is only putting up orders to go at this time. Please rsvp to Ardie if you would like to attend ~ email ardis_carey@comcast.net or call 860-416-5853 – by Friday, Sept. 4. At the luncheon, Marilyn will provide some “rules” for the Blacksmith Shoppe.



150th Anniversary (submitted by Johanna Karbonic)

We are still sorting out projects and schedules for our 2021- 150 Anniversary celebration. We have a lot of ideas to think about and work on. Photos are still being collected for scanning, so please submit pictures to the church office with year and names of the people in the pictures. Does anyone have any 1871 recipes? Please share them with the committee. Johanna Karbonic, Marj Butler, Ardie Carey, Russ Meyer, Genny Farnham, Graham Van Keuren.

Nominating Looking to Fill Vacancies

It was announced in June, that for health reasons, Rich Carey resigned from his positions as moderator and member of the property committee effective immediately.

If there is anyone willing to “step up”, the property committee position runs through 2021; Everett Morrill's term runs through 2020. While there is always support from Millie, Nick, Doug, and others, we do need someone to fill the vacancy.

OPEN POSITIONS



There are just a few months remaining for the current moderator's position, but a candidate could expand on the opportunity since the “job” is listed as elected for 3 years.

Don't wait to be asked; speak with Johanna, Gwyn, Joan, Donna, Jack or Pastor Graham.

Fundraising Suppers (submitted by Ruth Bruch)

Roast Pork on the Menu

Our next curb side take out dinner will consist of roast pork and gravy, along with oven roasted potatoes, glazed carrots, tossed salad, homemade breads, and peach dump cake. This delicious dinner will be served on September 12 with pick up available from 5-6:30 PM . Reservations are now being accepted; please contact Ruth in the church office (860-749-7741 or email somcong@aol.com). Cost is \$12 per person.

Anyone willing to contribute supplies (or funds to purchase ingredients - or to assist at) should sign up in the in the hall outside the office or contact Ruth. Some of the items still needed (or ways you can help)

- 1/2 bushel full size tomatoes (\$15 will cover)
- 4 9x13 pans peach dump cake
(recipe posted)
- \$40 for potatoes
- 6 lb. butter
- monetary donations for other ingredients
- 8 loaves peach or zucchini bread
(suggested) (recipes posted)
- help with prep work Friday and Saturday mornings
- assistance dishing up food at the dinner
- 2 to package breads and desserts



Peaches will be provided for the dessert; speak with Carlese. If anyone is willing/available to help her pick them on Thursday, please speak with her.

Chicken Barbecue Recap

A big thank you to all who contributed to the great success of this dinner this year. Special thanks to Patrick, Nick, Phil and Wayne for slaving over the hot grills for the better part of the day as they cooked up 250 chicken halves! Even though food quantities were upped from last year, we still ended up having to turn away at least 50 dinner requests. Calls just kept coming in – even into the afternoon of the dinner. This curbside pick-up dinner was scheduled to run from 5-6:30, but cars started lining up at 4:20. Once all our food, and servers were ready to go, we did start dishing up and running meals out to waiting vehicles ahead of schedule.

At the end of the evening, we had taken in \$2848 and then spent \$519 on the chickens.

Meatloaf Supper Recap

We held our first supper in August since 2011; the meatloaf supper we would have prepared in April was put on the menu for the 15th this year. So many folks called/emailed indicating they have been waiting for that entrée to come back – and the feedback has been filled with delicious reviews. We used 65 pounds of hamburger to make 13 large loaves which were complemented with mashed potato and fresh corn (off the cob), fresh native tomatoes and cucumbers and delicious jello poke cake (which people are raving about on calls I've received) . A number of folks let me know they were unable to pick up meals this month, but we prepared 167 dinners and took in \$2361; we spent \$260 for the meat. Cash donations covered the cost of other ingredients.

About our Members and Friends

September Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy birthday wishes this month are sent to:

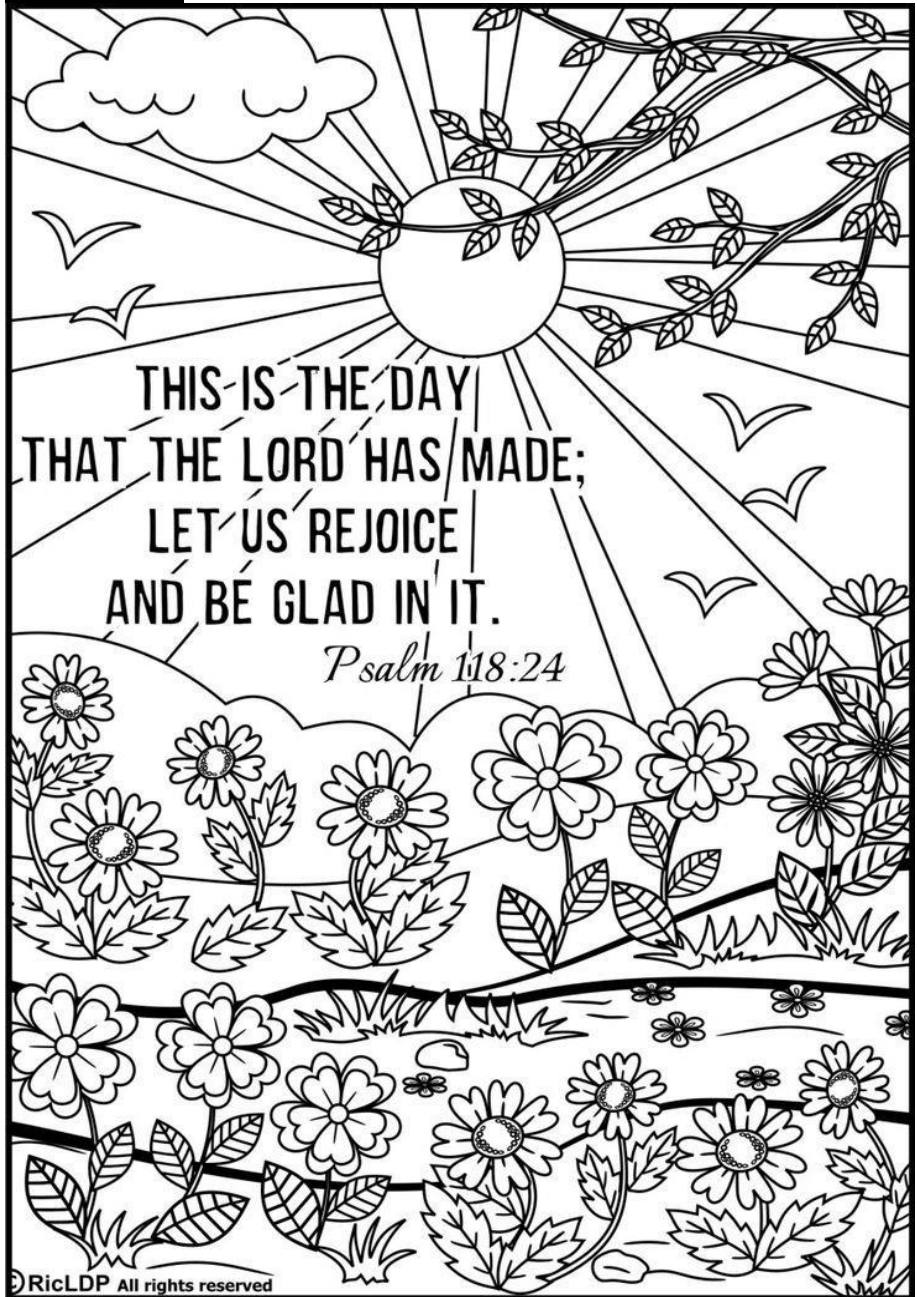
Eric Elley, Yvonne Wood (80+), Pat Eastwood, Michaela Scully , Mark Ceppetelli, Pat Scully, Shirley Bracken, Pam Stevenson, Wayne Steely,



Conrad Stebbins, Tim Keeney, Sue Wavada, Millie Morrill, Al Andrews (80+), Erica St. John, Angel Harrison

Those celebrating anniversaries this month include Darren & Melanie Stevens, Graham & Eric, Everett & Millie Morrill (60th)

If there are others who are celebrating of whom we are not aware, we wish you a wonderful day as well.






















THIS IS THE DAY
THAT THE LORD HAS MADE;
LET US REJOICE
AND BE GLAD IN IT.

Psalm 118:24

Hidden Pictures for the Young at Heart – Picnic Day



- | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ice-cream cone | tennis racket | wedge of lemon | arrow | umbrella | ladder | crayon | egg | bell | book |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |
| fish | crown | envelope | balloon | flashlight | broccoli | baseball bat | strawberry | paintbrush | |

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