



Easter in a Time of Pandemic

First, I think it is important to acknowledge that while the church building is closed, the ministry of the church goes on! It is amazing and inspiring to see all the ways in which you, the good people of Langley UMC, have connected with and cared for each other while maintaining a safe and responsible physical distance. It is a blessing, as well, to see how you are serving in the community and gathering (virtually) in prayer. It is a valuable reminder to us all that the heart of the church is not the building, but the congregation.



Second, I want to thank everyone for their participation in and support of our online e-worship. Obviously, this is not something that I was trained for in seminary or have had call to do in my pastoral career, nor is it something any of us have much experience in. I appreciate the musicians and all of those who have sent in videos, prayers and poems to help make worship meaningful. Amazingly, some of those videos have been viewed close to 400 times, which is fantastic and leads me to think that we need to offer on-line worship even when we return to worshipping in-person.

Third, please know that Easter will happen. Even if the pews in the churches are empty, Easter will happen. We know this because Easter really isn't dependent upon there being a church service or certain hymns being sung. And while I grieve that we won't be physically together for our first Easter together, it brings me great comfort to know that Easter will still happen. The people and Langley UMC will join with other followers of Jesus around the world (most of whom will be in their homes as well) to celebrate the Risen Christ and the resurrection hope it brings us. And while our Bishop has decreed that our church buildings remain closed through April, we can and will celebrate and experience blessed togetherness as we share the blessings of "Happy Easter!" with our families and through the marvels of modern technology. Again, this is a wonderful reminder in the persistence of grace and the power of the Christ story in our world, that even something as serious as what we are experiencing can't stop Easter from happening. It will be a joy, then, to gather with you in Spirit on that day!

Last, please know that I and the rest of the church family is here to support you. As the shelter-in-place drags on, many of us are going to struggle with isolation, boredom and depression. Please know that none of us are going through this alone. We have been given the gift of one another to help to share the burden of another's pain and frustration, and to hold each other tightly in love and prayer. If you are in need of support, please know that we are here for you with no judgments.

As always, be gentle with yourself and with one another and may God bless you all with peace! I look forward to celebrating Easter with you!

Blessings

Rev. Rich

GIVING BAG

Food nourishes and connects us. Connection offers comfort. Comfort heals us.

The team at Portico Bistro in Langley has created *The Giving Bag* project to deliver delicious meals to anyone in need during this crisis. Whether it be financial hardship, isolation, struggling circumstances or anxiety, no one will be left out.

Each *Giving Bag* will include a wonderful meal, a thoughtful note, a sprig of flowers, a small gift, and any add-ons customers choose.

You can help in several ways:

Eat Up! Starting April 9th, Portico will re-open from 2-7pm for both takeout of their delicious, homemade food as well as the opportunity for customers to help others by:

Contributing customary tips to *The Giving Bag*

Donating one or more meals for someone in need @ \$25/meal (incl. delivery fee)

Become a Benefactor for a \$150 contribution that guarantees delivery of four meals and a "Thank You" take-out dinner for the Benefactor and a guest on Saturday.

Gifts – We want to add small gifts from locals including struggling retailers. Gift ideas include chocolate, arts & crafts, virtual yoga coupons, small books, etc. Have a gift to give? Contact us.

Recipients - We have started a list of those in need and are accepting requests for meal delivery. If you know of anyone who would benefit from a Giving Bag, contact us.

Together we can get through this. This is the phrase of our time and it is true. We are creating solutions that spring from the heart, are generous in nature, and assure that no one in our community feels alone. We look forward to working together.

The Portico & Giving Bag Team, 360-221-8141, porticolatinbistro@gmail.com

Submitted by Patricia Friedman

NEW INTERCESSORY PRAYER GROUP

Prayer knows no boundaries or limitations. It connects us with God and with each other in powerful ways that cannot be fully understood. This makes it an especially important practice during times of social distancing.

Thus, we have formed a new group at LUMC which will be praying for the concerns of church members and the community at large.

Please submit prayer requests to Eve either through email or call to the church office (Monday through Friday). Please let Eve know if you would also like to have a member of the group call you for updates or support.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

I have good news to share regarding our church budget. Through the month of February, we had an operating surplus of about \$2,200 for 2020. Then March happened, and we only worshipped together for the first two Sundays of the month. However, due to your faithful continued pledge support, we ended up receiving over \$19,300 for the month, which is only about \$200 less than our projected income for the month.

Almost 90% of our monthly church income comes from the 66 individuals/families who have made financial pledges this year. In March, we received almost all of our expected income from pledges, and also some significant one-time gifts, which led to our income for the month almost meeting "normal" expectations. After we finalize our expenses for March, I will send another update on where we stand after the first quarter.

I would like to thank everyone for their continued financial support of our church. Our building may be closed, but our church and its ministries remain open. With our ongoing building closure through at least April, we are concerned about the future, but I am confident that with continued pledge support we can continue our mission. As Eve has stated in e-news, you can mail your pledges to the church, or go online to make a gift. If you would like to make a pledge this year, and have not done so, please contact Eve.

Tom McCullough

IMPORTANT LINKS

[Island County Public Health](#), [WA State Department of Health](#), and [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Coloring Book “Prayers for When You are Anxious”

<https://www.illustratedministry.com/flattenthecurve>

Pick the link that says illustratedministry.com

[Link](#) how to get restaurant food on South Whidbey (this has been changing but it does give you contact info!)

[Link](#) to fun things to do 6 feet apart!

Island Transit is now on Emergency Service Schedule go to www.islandtransit.org or 360-678-7771 for more information.

I watched this video about bringing food into your home during this crisis. It is very helpful.

Here is the youtube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjDuwc9KBps>

Paul Morris

General Conference 2020 has been postponed

[more info](#)

Mission u study event in July has been canceled due to concerns about COVID-19.

Western Jurisdiction United Methodist Women event has been postponed from April to Sept. 11 - 13, 2020 in Tempe, Arizona.

"Stay Home, Stay Healthy" <https://coronavirus.wa.gov/whats-open-and-closed>

Temporary closure of WA State parks- <https://parks.state.wa.us/>

Island County Parks: are open, but some parks / uses have been limited.

<https://islandcountywa.gov>

South Whidbey Parks and Rec- limited use – <http://swparks.org>

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WhidbeyHelp.com was created on March 13, 2020 in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis for the purpose of helping our neighbors in need on South Whidbey Island.

In response to the COVID 19 pandemic, we have created an online Family Resource Center for South Whidbey.

Find the local support you need from food to fun at home, housing and resources to help with finances.

Check it out! www.readinesstolearn.org

The Whidbey Community Foundation has established a COVID-19 Community Resilience Fund and made an initial contribution to the fund of \$25,000.

You can get information about the fund, how to donate including how grants will be awarded on the WCF website: <https://www.whidbeyfoundation.org/wcf-launches-covid-19-community-resilience-fund-with-25000-seed-funding/>

Island Senior Resources <https://senior-resources.org/>

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 7 Dana Kelly
- 9 Dillon Potter
- 13 Leneen Carr
- 13 Seren Füss
- 15 Betsy McCullough
- 17 Saranell DeChambeau
- 17 Marcia Dunigan
- 19 Nancy Roger
- 20 Irene Bullock
- 21 Judy Furukawa
- 22 John Worthington
- 23 Marilyn Furman
- 23 Johan Iversen
- 24 Joan Benson
- 26 Drake Loeser
- 26 Nancy Tipton
- 26 Amanda Potter

IMPORTANT THANK YOU!

All the information I've been including in the church e-news has basically come from 3 sources and I think they are doing a great job keeping us all informed. This is so important during this really stressful time. Information is power!

Ann Prusha, Environmental Health Technician, Island County Public Health Natural Resources.

City of Langley and **Drewslist**

AND A HUGE THANK YOU TO ALL THE GROCERY WORKERS!

I shop at Payless and they are setting up good social distancing practices and doing this all with good humor.

There are many others to thank, medical workers, bus drivers.....But the Payless folk are impacting my life in a good way during this time.

Let me know if there are people you want to thank publicly?

[Eve](#), church admin

The church building is temporarily closed but the ministry goes on.

Worship at 9:30am

Nursery available
Sunday School for
Kids at 9:45am
Fellowship Time
following worship
Adult forum at 11am

Office Hours
Tue. thru Fri. 9am to 2pm
Closed Monday



*"Followers of Jesus
on a journey of love"*

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Pastor Rich Füss