



May 2020

the
SPIRIT

Salem Lutheran Church

shalom - salaam - salem - peace

A Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation

Easter During the Pandemic = A Limbo between Lent and Pentecost

Dear Salem Family,

When God raised Jesus from the dead, God turned the whole world on its head. Jesus was alive! And kept magically popping up now and again among those who believed! For forty days those first disciples “sheltered in place”, hiding behind locked doors for fear they would be caught and killed just like Jesus had been. Of course they were beyond ecstatic that Jesus was alive, but they were still living in a kind of limbo. Their old life of following their leader was gone. Things would never go back to the way they had been before. And what would their new life look like? No one could quite imagine it.

During Holy Week, we were dealing with as much fear and grief as those first disciples. Now, as we “shelter in place” after Easter, we are dealing with as much uncertainty over the future as they were. When will we reopen? How will things be different when we reopen? How long will these “different” things continue? Will we ever get back to “normal”?

As of today, health officials are recommending that we don't reopen too soon, many advising that we wait until at least the end of June. Even after we are given the okay to open, will people feel safe enough to gather? And of course when we do reopen things will be very different. My fellow deans and I will be meeting with the bishop within the next week to discuss some of these different practices.

But what I can tell you is this: Pentecost is coming! The disciples did not have to stay in that locked room forever. They prayed and prayed and then one day God poured the Spirit into them in a way that was so dramatic and powerful that it changed not only what they said and did, but who they were! The tongues of fire that lighted on their heads made their way into their hearts and set them on fire with so much love and joy that they simply could not keep the experience to themselves. They had been infected in a powerful and life-changing way, and the infection was contagious. As they told of their experience, as they healed people and performed miracles, others caught what they had and the infection spread throughout the world.

Pentecost IS coming! I believe that God is at work in and through this pandemic to heal a broken world, and to raise the church to new life. The world will never be the same. But why would we want it to be the same when God has something new and more wonderful in store for us? It has been said that the church is not dying, but is being reborn. Yes, the pain of childbirth can be awful (believe me, after 30 hours of labor and 4 epidurals I know!) but the result is the amazing gift of new life.

As Christians, we know that Pentecost is coming, but meanwhile we

wait. And while we wait we need to make as much of each and every opportunity as we can.

It's going to be awhile before we are face-to-face again, so PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, join us for worship online. We are still posting our worship on Facebook Live and are now also posting on YouTube. For help accessing worship, see the next page for instructions, or call Karl and he would be glad to assist you.

And PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, join us for coffee hour online as well, which we are having through Zoom. You do NOT have to have a computer or a smart phone to join us. You can simply call the phone number towards the bottom of the invitation from your flip phone or landline. If the number is a toll call for you, just let us know and we'll reimburse you. We miss you and don't want anything to keep you away from your Salem family!

If you can't join us in cyberspace, just let us know and we will mail you a copy of the Sunday bulletin, sermon, newsletter, and anything else that you need. Conversely, if you are receiving a mailing and don't need it, please let us know that, too.

Even though we are not gathering in person, our mission continues – with worship and fellowship and meetings online, and with a Council of Churches program that is using our kitchen to provide 400 meals a week to those in need! I want to thank everyone who continues to support the work to which God has called us. Because during this pandemic New Direction Ministries is no longer using the building, and Christ Presbyterian Church is using it only on Sundays, we have greatly reduced their costs for sharing the building, so we have lost income there. Others of you have stepped up and are giving even more generously than before which has helped greatly. I also want to thank those of you who are now giving online. If you would like to give online, simply click on the donate tab at SalemBridgeport.org, and follow the instructions.

If there is anything we can do for you, please don't hesitate to let us know. Do what you must to stay safe, but do not be afraid. There is nothing bigger or stronger or greater than God. And whatever God has brought us TO, God will bring us THROUGH. And remember: “Because of God's power, because of God's love, we can put ALL our trust in God above.”

Peace be with you,

Pastor Marjo

We are a community of Christian disciples called by the Holy Spirit.

GUIDE TO VIRTUAL / ONLINE CHURCH

TO ACCESS WORSHIP VIA FACEBOOK:

You do NOT have to be a Facebook member to watch it. (My husband isn't and he could.)

Just go to www.facebook.com/salembridgeport.

On the left, click on videos, which will bring up "Latest Videos".

Then just click on the one you want to watch.

(Sometimes a notice might pop up to say you can't access it, but when that happened to my husband he just clicked on the message, it disappeared, and the video started to play.)

Last Sunday some people said they could hear the entire video, others could hear the singing and not the speaking, and still others could hear the speaking, and not the singing – which seems to indicate the problem is on the receiving, not the sending end of things.

If you can't hear, please know that the videos are closed captioned, so you can see the text (at least of the speaking parts if not the singing) as you watch. In order to see the text, however, you need to turn that feature on for your device. (On my iPhone 6s, I went to Settings, then Accessibility, then scrolled down to Subtitles & Captioning, then turned on Closed Captions & SDH, and voila! The captions appeared like magic!)

TO ACCESS WORSHIP VIA YOUTUBE:

We are also posting our worship on YouTube.

To access worship that way,

go to YouTube.com,

click on the magnifying glass to search for Salem Lutheran Church Bridgeport CT

and we should come up.

There'll be a red circle with a white S in it and under that are the videos.

Once you find Salem on YouTube, subscribe to our channel and it will be easier to find next time.

TO ACCESS COFFEE HOUR, MEETINGS, & OTHER GATHERINGS:

Meetings and Gatherings (like Coffee Hour, Bible Study, Council and Committees) are being held online via Zoom.

If your Salem committee or group would like to meet via Zoom, please contact Karl

by emailing him at salemsec123@sbcglobal.net or by leaving a message on the church phone, 203-336-3300.

Links to zoom meetings will be emailed out to participants either personally or via our weekly email blast (which also posts to Facebook and our website).

Another way to access the invitation is to go to our website, click on the Resources tab, and click on Calendar.

So if you'd like to join coffee hour, for example, click on "coffee hour" for the date you want, and it will open up the invitation. At the bottom of the invitation is even an option to "copy to my calendars".

Again, if you have any difficulty accessing any meeting or event, call or text me at 203-982-3441.

TO ACCESS STAFF:

Due to the pandemic, our Office Manager, Karl, and I will be working primarily from our homes.

I have been coming in once a week to record worship

and Karl usually comes in on Thursdays to take care of tasks that cannot be accomplished from elsewhere.

To reach Karl, just call the church number and leave a message.

He will pick up your message remotely and return your call.

And if you need pastoral care – even just to talk – please don't hesitate to call or text me at 203-982-3441.

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

3160 Park Avenue
Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604
Phone (203) 336-3300 ▪ Fax (203) 336-8813

Website - www.salembridgeport.org

Facebook - www.facebook.com/SalemBridgeport/

Church Office Hours

Monday to Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Worship Services

9:30am Traditional Worship

Salem's Staff

The Rev. Marjo Anderson, Pastor
Cell Phone (203) 982-3441
marjoanderson@aol.com

Karl Kraft, Office Manager
Office Phone (203) 336-3300
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net

Jennifer Reyes, Sexton
Pablo, Cruz, Sexton
Office Phone (203) 336-3300, ext. 10

LEADERSHIP AT SALEM

COUNCIL

Marjo Anderson, Pastor – marjoanderson@aol.com
Frank Dukenski, President – fdukeniski@aol.com
Ray Anderson, Vice-President – andersray4@gmail.com
Nancy Headford, Secretary – nancy9881@att.net
Rich Kenyon, Treasurer – rich@kenyonbusiness.com
Katie Adams – keadams333@gmail.com
Liz Bales – the2bales@gmail.com
Sandra Brown – sjbrown@snet.net
Steve Kuczo, Staff Support – skuczo@aol.com
Evan Lansing
Emily Sokoloski – emilysokoloski@gmail.com
Diane Tomasko – dtomasko01@yahoo.com
Bill Winter, Property – wjwinter@optonline.net

SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE

Pastor Marjo Anderson – marjoanderson@aol.com
Frank Dukenski – fdukeniski@aol.com
Ray Anderson – andersray4@gmail.com
Liz Bales – the2bales@gmail.com
Sandra Brown – sjbrown@snet.net
John Bryk – jbryk@znclaw.com
Richard Lansing – rlansing@optonline.net
Jean Larson – tjcklarson@sbcglobal.net
Bruce Tomasko – bltomasko@yahoo.com

LIGHT –

Leaders Inviting Growth through Hope for Tomorrow

Source Team:

Pastor Marjo Anderson – marjoanderson@aol.com
Ray Lansing – raylansing@yahoo.com
Bill Winter – wjwinter@optonline.net
Tom Larson – tjcklarson@sbcglobal.net

Reflection Team:

Katie Adams – keadams333@gmail.com
Jean Larson – tjcklarson@sbcglobal.net
Frank Dukenski – fdukeniski@aol.com
Joel Hintz – brondle@aol.com

**Newsletter deadline is the 15th of each month
unless otherwise noted in the monthly
calendar.**

Next deadline date is **May 15th for the
June issue!**

**Email submissions to
salemsec123@sbcglobal.net**

May 2020

Salem Lutheran Church



SUN



TUE

WED



THU

FRI
May 1

SAT
2

NDM - ANNIVERSARY SANCTUARY

3 NDM - ANNIVERSARY SANCTUARY Fourth Sunday of Easter 9:30am Worship 10:30am Salem Coffee Hour 3 more	4	5 9:30am Tuesday Talk and Text Study 9:30-11 12pm Book Club	6 9:15am Salem Wednesday morning Bible Study	7	8	9
10 Fifth Sunday of Easter 9:30am Worship 10:30am Salem Coffee Hour 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12:30pm New Directions Ministries	11 6:30pm Finance Committee 7:30pm Executive Committee	12 9:30am Tuesday Talk and Text Study 9:30-11 6pm Stewardship	13 9:15am Salem Wednesday morning Bible Study	14	15	16
17 Sixth Sunday of Easter 9:30am Worship 10:30am Salem Coffee Hour 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12:30pm New Directions Ministries	18 7pm Salem Council Meeting	19 9:30am Tuesday Talk and Text Study 9:30-11	20 Golden Hill Community Supper 9:15am Salem Wednesday morning Bible Study	21 Ascension	22	23
24 Seventh Sunday of Easter 9:30am Worship 10:30am Salem Coffee Hour 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12:30pm New Directions Ministries	25 Memorial Day - Office Closed	26 9:30am Tuesday Talk and Text Study 9:30-11	27 9:15am Salem Wednesday morning Bible Study	28	29	30
31 Day of Pentecost 9:30am Worship 10:30am Salem Coffee Hour 10:30am Christ Presbyterian Church 12:30pm New Directions Ministries						

And now these three remain:
FAITH,.....
& HOPE
Love.
 But the greatest
 of these is love.
 I Corinthians 13:13

Note—As of now, the 9:30 worship will be online only. You can join in the worship service on Facebook Live. Go to <https://www.facebook.com/SalemBridgeport/> Sunday at 9:30am.

Howard Swanson	1
Gilbert Sidoti	2
Hannah Wilkins	3
Bonnie McWain	4
Robert Roehrich	5
Fran Zold	5
Joan Bromley	7
Jackson Sokoloski	7
Isaiah Vazquez	8
Nancy D'Andrea	9
Beverly Marshall	9
Ray Lansing	14
Andy Andrews	18
Deborah Palmieri	18
Maria Caragol	18
Karen Andrews	25

Roland Carlberg	26
Michael Caragol	27
Rita Johnson	28



The Salvation Army has a variety of programs to help people. If you are 60 years and over and live in Connecticut, the CSFP 'Silver' program is for you. It is a monthly food basket containing a variety of foods. If you live in the 06604 zip code area, the Salvation Army has a food pantry. Operation

Fuel Energy Assistance Program is designed to help low income families with electricity/gas/oil. For information about these programs and an appointment call (203) 334-0995 ext 105. Grandfamilies Together is a support group for grandparents and other kinship caregivers. For information about this program call (203) 334-0995 ext 107. There are also several volunteer opportunities available. For information about these, contact Major Lydia Pearson at (203) 334-0995.

2020
Blood Pressure
Screening Dates

Jun 7	Oct 4
Jul tba	Nov 8
Aug tba	Dec 6
Sep 13	

The following people have asked for healing, help, guidance or comfort.

Joan B	Bobby W
Barbara B	Anna
Sam B	Barbara
Erick D	James S
Grace D	Sarah R
Hannah & Joseph	Brooks A
Bob H	Angie
Dennis H	Liz F.
Sylvitha	Hazel P
Jay	Katherine P
Jinny L	
Mike R	
Jane M	
Jana B	
William S	
Daphne B	
Peter K	



To the People of the New England Synod,

Way back in January we had church life. That model of church life consisted of a building with a paid staff, in-person gatherings, people shaking hands, sharing food, singing, hugging, and programs for various age groups. Some of us have only known that model of church life, and we've been lamenting as we've witnessed the struggle to maintain it. I now call that model of church life the January Church, because it was last in January when we experienced it fully.

Much has changed since then, and every day brings more transition.

The purpose of this letter is to set the stage for what's next in two areas, Reopening and Worship.

This letter is longer than usual. Be forewarned.

Reopening

It is clear that re-opening is going to be a slow and gradual process involving some careful planning. This will require congregations to be flexible and adaptive because change will be the consistent theme going forward. In some ways, I believe reopening will be more challenging than the decision to close.

Considerations for planning your re-opening

1. Recognize that re-opening is not going back to normal. The church we all remember, what I call the January Church, is something we will not be returning to any time soon. If you view re-opening as an attempt to get back to the model of church as usual, I believe you will be continually frustrated. We must understand the need for grace and patience with one another as we all attempt to discover Christ in new ways.
2. Follow the guidance of your state's governor and health officials. New England Synod congregations are located in seven different states. While some states are acting in coordination with one another, this will not be the case throughout our region. In addition, I would not anticipate a great deal of specificity in the guidance for houses of worship. There are multiple reasons for that, including concerns about first amendment matters. While there may not be specific recommendations regarding houses of worship, look carefully at plans for schools (elementary through high school), since they are most similar to churches in their dynamics, for instance, people traveling from a regional proximity, sitting in rows, gathering for food, interacting socially, etc. My advice is to watch the guidance for schools and translate that application to church life.
3. Recognize that a phased re-opening is probably your best scenario. As an example, [Rhode Island](#) has a current limit of 5 persons gathering, and anticipates a process that will increase to 10, then to 15, then to 50. How will your congregation adapt to this type of model? I think a phased re-opening might look like this:

Phase 1 – When your state indicates a likely date for relaxing the quarantine, ask yourselves, “What’s most in need of attention?” One way to answer this question is to consider the most vulnerable and those who are grieving. Maybe it’s best to look at some social ministry that has been curtailed, such as a food pantry, before considering worship. In addition, if your congregation has had multiple deaths, perhaps attending to grief via memorial services is an appropriate first priority. The larger point is, don’t try to do everything all at once.

Phase 2 – As the next level of quarantine is relaxed in your state, begin conversations about how your congregation might be able to come together in smaller configurations. Not everyone will want to nor should they want to gather publicly, but some people are eager to have some in-person contact. One congregation might consider a gathering of its shepherding groups where six or so people meet. If you have the capability, perhaps that first meeting could be outside. In other words, think of Phase 2 as an intermediary step, think small. Also think of those not able or desirous of an in-person gathering, how will you continue to attend to them?

Phase 3 – If your state officials relax restrictions to larger group gatherings, ask yourself how this might be done. A favorite question of mine these days is: What’s doable? Following the Rhode Island guidance, this means groups of 50 could gather together. If you have a smaller congregation this might work. But if you are in a larger congregation, does that mean you need to have multiple worship services or staggered attendance plans? In this phase, you’ll also need to consider ways you will attend to expectations of sanitizing your building. Additionally, are you continuing an online presence as well? How will you do this simultaneously? One church is considering plans for an in-person gathering on Sundays, but then an online gathering on Wednesdays. Are you now asking your pastor, administrator, musicians and others to do twice as much work? Have you considered partnering with another church to share these responsibilities and more evenly distribute the workload?

Whether you use this concept or another, I urge you to recognize that this will be a gradual re-opening. You should also plan for the inevitable “two-steps forward, one-step back” scenario. Several health officials have indicated we may have times when the virus spreads quickly and we may need to restrict our activities again. How will you plan for this possible return to Phase 1?

The reality is: this is hard. We are trying to balance a concern for health and safety with a desire to connect again. Take it slow; go one step at a time and recognize not everyone is ready to make the same step at the same time, so allow for flexibility.

Resources

There have been many resources published elsewhere that may help in your planning for re-opening, and I’ve listed some below. This is not an exhaustive list, but some comprehensive ones.

[A Plan for Returning to Church by the Wisconsin Council of Churches](#) – This resource also makes use of a phased approach, as well as raising important considerations around actual worship practices. Again, remember to always be aware of your own state's health officials' recommendations.

[Coming Back Together by the Three ELCA Synods in Texas](#) – The three ELCA synods in Texas and Louisiana have produced this guide. Since that part of the country has chosen to re-open sooner than New England, we can look to their experience. I'll be in touch with my colleagues there to learn from them as they go through this process.

[Opening Up Again](#) – This is a document produced by the Federal Government that contains helpful information. It also uses the phased opening approach. This document contains important reminders about health and safety protocols.

Throughout this time of pandemic, I ask your patience with one another. Do not rush decisions. Be mindful of decisions that you make for all your constituents, as well as for longer term implications.

Worship for the Long Haul

I have been impressed with how rapidly you have adapted to the new reality of worship and congregational life in these times. The widespread use of online worship, Bible Studies, fellowship hours, and meetings using a variety of technologies is admirable. We are all still beginners in this work, learning as we go. Like toddlers learning to walk, we spend a fair amount of time falling down. But that's how we learn. That's ok.

As I've learned more and more about this disease and the likely trajectories of its impact on society, I'm realizing the need to begin making plans for the long haul. The commonly articulated time frame of 12-18 months before we achieve some semblance of broad public safety via a vaccine, credible treatments, and levels of herd immunity is a sobering timeline. Some have noted that timeline might be a best-case scenario. In light of this, I think we need to look at questions around the future both near term and long term of the church. For now, let's discuss our worship life together.

There is clearly a need for us to think and plan for ongoing changes in worship life, chiefly around questions of online worship and some practices which have always been in-person such as Baptism, Communion, Confirmation, Ordination, weddings and funerals. How do we navigate the terrain of a three-legged stool of theological understandings, pastoral needs and technological innovation? While some have chosen a quick fix approach, I've not wanted to go that route for multiple reasons, which I have [previously described](#). I'm grateful to the pastors, deacons and congregations of this synod for their patience in honoring my request that we refrain from an impulsive decision to engage in various practices around Holy Communion.

However, I do think the time has come for us to dive more deeply into this subject. I am choosing a harder path in the hopes that the outcome will yield a more thoughtful decision. That

path is to engage as widely as possible in a series of discussions on our practices of worship in these times.

We will begin with a series of discussions at the conference level with pastors and deacons. Then, we will introduce an opportunity for congregations to engage in similar discussions. There will be resources made available in both written, audio and video formats. These will be small digestible pieces that address the topic at hand. The full details of this approach are in development and will be available next week.

My goal in all this is two-fold: 1. to deepen our understanding of the sacraments, and 2. to help provide for informed decisions as we move into a new way of being church.

I could choose to simply write you all a letter, tell you what I think, and be done with it. That seems easier and briefer, but does not honor your gifts, intelligence and faithfulness. I'm choosing the harder way, but I believe the end result will be more broadly embraced. I will have more information and details next week, and you'll actually have tools to put in people's hands next Wednesday.

Finally, a brief word on the "big picture." I think we are in a time of transition. I don't fully understand it, but I sense that these are times of significant cultural and spiritual transformation. If you are interested in exploring this with me, I'm having a series of Wednesday evening Zoom discussions starting next week. More information on that is [here](#).

Once again, thank you for all you are doing. I'm witnessing so many examples of congregations, places of ministry, and individuals rising to the challenges. We are demonstrating to those around us that Christ is alive in the people of our synod. My confidence in the present and the future of this church continues to rise as each day I hear about Lutherans being the hands and feet of Jesus.

Sincerely in Christ,

Bishop Jim Hazelwood

We Are Grateful

Memorial Donations

Bert & Cary Andren, Joe & Liz Bales, Dick & Roberta Bellows,
Sandra Brown (all in memory of Reinie Lange); Marjo Anderson



Capital Improvements

Joan Crossman, Al & Dorothy DeWalt (all in memory of Reinie Lange);
Marjo Anderson

Food Pantry

Marjo Anderson, Joe & Liz Bales, Mary Lou & Donald Hastings, Barbara & Donald Healy,
Bonnie & Richard Lanese, Jane Montgomery

Outreach

Marjo Anderson

CDC's New COVID-19 Symptoms

During this coronavirus/covid-19 outbreak, Slem's Parish Nurses are keeping us informed about what to look for, what resources are available, and what each of us can do to stay safe. New information comes out regularly. The Center for Disease Control has put out a list of additional symptoms to look for.

- Chills
- Repeated shaking
- Muscle Pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- COVID Toes

COVID Toes which have purple or red lesions or bumps on toes or hands. These lesions can be painful, burn, itch, or blister. More often, these lesions appear on the feet of children or teens that do not have any other symptoms.

Some people with COVID-19 had just some of the new symptoms and did not feel right.

The original basic symptoms to still look for are:

- Fever
- Shortness of breath and difficulty breathing
- Cough

Coming soon will be home testing for COVID-19. Antibody testing to check if you have had Covid-19 but are now negative needs to be standardized. Eventually, there will be antibody tests that can also be done at home.

COVID-19 Resources



Regional Resources

- Yale New Haven Health established a **call center to respond to questions about Covid-19**, give assessments to patients by phone or video, and determine whether someone needs to be tested. It's a way for people to get the information they need without having to risk others being exposed to the coronavirus, if they happen to be infected. Their number is 1-833-275-9644.
- Hartford Healthcare established a **COVID-19 Clinical Command Center hotline**, staffed by healthcare professionals. To reach the 24-hour hotline, call (860) 972-8100 or (toll-free) (833) 621-0600. You can also receive text alerts by texting **31996** with **COVID19** in the message field.
- The Hub CT has a variety of resources available to provide mental health support and guidance for people of all ages. "*Coping with Corona: Mental Health Supports in a Pandemic*" can be found by going to <https://www.thehubct.org/>.
- Town and Health Department Resources:
 - Bridgeport Department of Health and Social Services
 - Fairfield Health Department
 - City of Milford
 - Town of Monroe
 - Stratford Health Department
 - Town of Trumbull

Statewide Resources

- State of Connecticut website <https://portal.ct.gov/coronavirus>
- To learn how to subscribe to the Connecticut emergency alert messaging system by going to <https://www.ctalert.gov/ctalert/site/default.asp>
- Food Assistance, Connecticut Food Bank Pantry Locator at <http://www.ctfoodbank.org/> . The Connecticut Food Bank is distributing food to those who need it at the sites listed on this webpage.
- Applying for Unemployment Benefits The most important things are to file as soon as possible and to file electronically, to ensure that your claim is received as soon as possible.
- Utilities The State of Connecticut has announced a moratorium on utility shutoffs (electric, gas, and water) until further notice.
- Small Businesses The Governor announced that he is opening up disaster relief funding for small businesses and nonprofits. These organizations can apply for low interest loans of up to \$2 million. Go to <https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance>
- Homeowners The following provides a variety of resources for people who are facing home foreclosure due to financial hardship.
 - Mortgage and Foreclosure Hotline 1-877-472-8313 (toll-free)
 - www.ct.gov/dob The free Foreclosure Hotline is open Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Calls will be returned within two business days.
 - You can also reach the Department of Banking at the following telephone numbers: Toll-free: 1-800-831-7225 and at 860-240-8299.
 - You can also call Infoline at 2-1-1 for resources.

Federal and International Resources

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- World Health Organization (WHO): <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

How to coronavirus-proof your home

By Scottie Andrew, CNN

Life under coronavirus means staying at home as much as possible — but you'll likely need to make a trip to the grocery store or pharmacy at some point. Download or print this tip sheet to make sure you don't bring the virus back home with you.

Note: Recommendations for Covid-19 may change as officials learn more, so monitor your local health department and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) for updates.

Make a game plan

- Designate one person to be your errand-runner to limit your outside exposures
- Set up a disinfecting station — an area outside your home or in a room with low foot traffic where you can disinfect packaged food

When you're out

- Avoid coming within less than six feet of others
- Wipe handles on carts or baskets while shopping
- Wear a mask when you go into a business. Also, wash your hands frequently while you're out and avoid touching your face

When you get back

- [Wash your hands](#) with soap and water for 20 seconds
- Disinfect takeout boxes and packaged foods at your disinfecting station Thoroughly wash produce before putting it in your kitchen

Disinfect

- Disinfect everything you touch — doorknobs, light switches, keys, phone, keyboards, remotes, etc.
- Use [EPA-approved disinfectants](#) (these include Clorox Disinfecting Wipes and certain Lysol sprays) and leave surfaces wet for 3-5 minutes

Delivery

- Ask workers to drop deliveries on your doorstep or an area of your complex
- If they need you to come to the door, keep six feet of distance
- Pay and tip online when possible
- After you pick up mail from your mailbox, wash your hands

Laundry

- Wash clothes, towels and linens regularly on the warmest setting
- Disinfect your laundry hamper, too, or place a removable liner inside it Don't shake dirty laundry to avoid dispersing the virus in the air

Guests

- You shouldn't allow guests over right now
- If you need to house a family member or friend, avoid shared living spaces as much as you can
- If they need to enter shared living spaces, ask them to keep six feet of distance

If someone in your home gets sick

- First, consult your doctor
- Isolate them in another room and ask them to use a separate restroom
- Disinfect frequently touched surfaces every day
- Avoid sharing items with them
- Wear gloves when washing their laundry
- Continue to wash your hands frequently
- Ask them to wear a face mask if they have one

Supplies you'll need

- EPA-approved disinfectants
- If you don't have disinfectants, make a bleach solution:
 - ◊ Mix four teaspoons bleach per quart of water; or
 - ◊ Use a 70% alcohol solution
- Laundry detergent
- Trash bags
- Prescription medicines (you can mail order these)
- Canned foods — fruits, veggies, beans
- Dry goods — breads, pastas, nut butters
- Frozen foods — meats, veggies, fruits

Pets

- Supervise your pet in your backyard
- It's [OK to play with them](#) outside — just keep your distance from other humans
- If you're sick, ask someone you live with to take care of them while you recover
- If you must care for them while you're sick, wash your hands frequently

Sources:

- Dr. Leana Wen, former Baltimore City Health Commissioner and an emergency physician and public health professor at George Washington University in Washington.
- Dr. Koushik Kasanagottu, an internal medicine resident physician at John Hopkins Bayview Medical Center in Baltimore, Maryland, and who is among the thousands of health care professionals treating patients with coronavirus.
- Dr. Richard Kuhn, a virologist, director of the Purdue Institute of Inflammation, Immunology and Infectious Disease and editor-in-chief of the journal "Virology."
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Helping Feed Families



During this COVID-19 crisis, many areas of our lives are affected on a daily basis. One hard hit area is families of the children who received meals through the school system. In our own small way, Salem is helping by working with the Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport and FEED program.

The Council is pleased to announce a wonderful new partnership with Harvard Pilgrim Health Care to feed the families of the children who received meals through the Bridgeport Public School system during the COVID-19 shutdown.

"Through our partnership with the Feed Bridgeport, nutritious family meals will be delivered to our most vulnerable neighbors during these challenging times," said Michael Carson, president and CEO of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and chair of the Foundation's board of directors. "This meal delivery project is designed to support social distancing, take care of those most at-risk for complications from COVID-19, and help put people whose jobs have been impacted by COVID-19 closures back to work. The Harvard Pilgrim Foundation has initiated similar meal delivery projects in Mass., NH. and Maine, and we remain committed to providing necessary resources to support our communities."



Chef Aditi Goswami and three graduates from our CREATE Culinary

Program began prepping last week for the delivery of 400 meals a week for the next four weeks. Prepared meals will be delivered on Wednesdays and Fridays through FEED's Mobile Market truck to both Curiale and Blackham school. The FEED Center will provide free fresh and frozen meals, milk, and the option to purchase fresh produce and eggs using SNAP dollars. Meals will be distributed on a first come, first served basis.



Last week Chef Aditi summed up The Council's gratitude online: "FEED has been blessed to get a grant from Harvard Pilgrim to make available free meals to the community. I feel so humbled and blessed to be of service,

to be working with a great team and to work for CCGB who supports our work. Harvard Pilgrim has made amazing things happen and we couldn't be more grateful!! And a big thank you to Salem Lutheran Church for providing us the space to work out of. Could not ask for more at this time. " Aditi Goswami FEED Mobile Marketplace





The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, Inc.
Leveraging Hope, Transforming Communities
*Service * Dialogue * Collaboration*

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April 3, 2020

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To all our Members, Friends, and Supporters,

First, on behalf of the Board of Directors and all our staff, I pray that you, your families, and all those you love are safe and healthy. The challenges we all face with the COVID-19 pandemic are daunting, no matter who we are.

Nevertheless, as you can imagine, among the hardest hit are **our clients** -- those who were already economically vulnerable, those who depend on our food pantries, those living in halfway houses, youth already struggling with poverty and violence.

The cancellation of our major fundraiser, the Spring Fling, has cost us dearly, but

Our Work Continues and We Need Your Help!

- Malik continues to make his rounds with our Mobile Marketplace, bringing fresh produce to food deserts in Bridgeport and beyond.
- Rosa, Wesley, and Stephanie, our Case Managers, continue to provide counseling and support to vulnerable youth and returning citizens, and Rosa's case load has actually increased!
- Howard, our Street Outreach Worker, is still out on the streets, connecting with youth, making sure they have essential needs met, and urging them to take this virus seriously, and to stay healthy.
- Michelle is helping to coordinate the local and regional efforts to keep food pantry shelves stocked for those who already depend on them, as well as the many who are losing their jobs.
- Helen and Endra continue to perform the vital background functions that keep The Council going -- paying bills, communicating through Enews and social media, and more.

We need your help to ensure that these vital programs and ministries continue without interruption. Please consider donating NOW, online at www.ccg.org or with the enclosed envelope, to keep our work going!

Thank you very much,

Cass L. Shaw

Advocacy * Food Access & Economic Development * Ecumenical & Interfaith Re-Entry * Youth in Crisis

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION

"And a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6).

My husband and I were both religious studies college majors, religious studies high school teachers, then religious studies college instructors. Eric and I were high school sweethearts, and one of the things we joke about is that our first phone conversation was two hours long because we were discussing theology and world religions (or what we knew of them at 17). This shared interest of ours has lasted decades, through graduate school, household moves, job changes and raising a child.

Together, we extensively explored and joined the Presbyterian church, the Catholic church and a nondenominational church with really upbeat music, all while delving deeply into study of other American Christian denominations. In our free time, we visited temples, mosques, synagogues, religious art exhibits and religious conference after religious conference. This has always been a deep part of who we are and what we share—it's just fun for us.

The downside to this, as with any other field of study or skill, is that the more you know, the pickier you become. I imagine that Italian chefs don't want to eat at Olive Garden, and clothing designers don't shop for jeans at Target. When it comes to all things religious, I am less than forgiving. So is Eric.

So we had our usual routine: we attended a Sunday service and promptly went into heavy evaluative mode. We analyzed the sermon's content and delivery, the music, the artwork, the bulletins, the comfort of the seats, the flow of the service, the presence or absence of liturgical or sacramental elements and how they were explained and offered.

Then we analyzed the duration of the service, the friendliness of the people, the prayers, the offering, the childcare, the noise level, the amount of silence, the contemplative spirit. Next, the sense of mission, the energy, the gender and ethnic diversity and equality, the age ranges, the coffee. ... I wonder how we weren't exhausted from all this!

We were, for sure, disappointed. With all that to evaluate—and since there's no such thing as a "perfect" [worship](#) service—how could we not be? One Sunday morning, we were in our car in our garage, having a familiar discussion. Eric asked, "Where do you want to go to church?" I replied, "I don't know; where do you want to go?" On we went, weighing the possibilities. No prospect seemed especially fun or helpful, more like another restaurant for us self-appointed critics to evaluate—not for any published critique, just for my husband and me to discuss privately, to think about how things could be better.

In the middle of our conversation, our 2-year-old son piped up from his booster seat: "I want to go to where the man is." Whoa! A third voice in this conversation? Surprised and eager to hear his thoughts, I turned around in my seat and asked, "What man, honey? Father John? Pastor Bill?" My little boy said, "No. Jesus. I want to go to where he is."

I looked at Eric, stunned. Oh—that man. I had forgotten.

It wasn't as if our son had added one more important thing to consider in our conversation. It was as if he had exploded the conversation, then brought in a new one. My husband and I were silent. I asked, "Where is [Jesus](#)?" Our son described the local Lutheran church, the look of the

buildings and surroundings. We had visited there a couple times, and apparently he thought Jesus lived there.

It was as good a place as any, so we went. That morning, for the first time in decades, I worshiped. I went there to be with "the man." I realized it truly didn't matter what kind of music or lighting or doughnuts they had. If the theology was decent (i.e., about love and grace) and the sacraments were offered to everyone, that would be what "the man" wanted.

I realized that if I were suddenly placed in a remote country and there was only one Christian church for miles, I would go there (unless its theology was horribly shaming, my one deal breaker). The floor might be dirt, the bread might be stale, the music might be bizarre to my taste, the sermon might be long or short. What difference would any of that make? Jesus would be there.

As my husband and I learned about religious art and architecture, myth, ritual, history, literature, philosophy, theology and the psychology of religious experience, Jesus himself faded into the background. His presence was as invisible to us as the art and people were visible, his words as inaudible as the sermon and music were audible.

I thought of myself as educated, but I had also become a bit lazy, unwilling to see and hear with my heart and intuition, and using only my five senses and reason. But Jesus never went anywhere. He just remained unseen, unheard.

That Sunday, after my son's remarkable proclamation, the scales seemed to fall from my eyes. Jesus was the only reason I needed to worship. He was the only gift to receive. I left immensely grateful that I had met "the man" again that day. That feeling has never left me.

My 2-year-old is now 20. My husband and I are Lutherans, and I'm a Lutheran pastor. We love the ELCA for a thousand reasons: it offers the Protestant theology we believe in, as well as the liturgical and sacramental sensibilities we adored as Catholics. It has an open [Holy Communion](#) table that welcomes all people, and it strives for justice and peace while also focusing on grace. But the bottom line is that I have found a place where I can intentionally meet Jesus Christ.

As a pastor, I'm often around people who express likes and dislikes about their worship experience. I understand this; no one was pickier than I. However, as I often tell these people, we worship leaders aren't trying to produce *Hamilton*; we're trying to help people encounter Jesus Christ. The bells and whistles are nice but ultimately don't matter.

When I get caught up in the details of budgets, meetings, paperwork, contracts, hymn choices and the million other minutiae of church, I regularly return to my son's leveling words, "I want to go to where the man is." All else follows from that.

Stephanie Lape is a rostered minister in the ELCA, serving Cross and Crown Lutheran Church in Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. She lives with her husband and teenage children in Corona, Calif., and writes and speaks on spirituality and interfaith dialogue.



Hope and healing in South Sudan

Situated in eastern Africa, South Sudan is the newest country in the world. But newest isn't the only way to describe South Sudan - it's also one of the most volatile.

According to the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, an estimated 1.5 million South Sudanese are internally displaced and many more have fled to neighboring countries due to poverty, food insecurity, a lack of education and health care, and extreme violence against civilians. While the government struggles with the situation, many have turned to the church to be a healer and peacemaker.

"With all of this suffering, we still see God has a promise for us," said Hilary Garang Deng, bishop of the Malakal Diocese of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan. "He gave us a mission to testify about the great God who created the world."



Part of this mission includes establishing the Evangelical Lutheran Church Africa Mission in South Sudan. With the assistance of local partners, including ELCA congregations that are Sudanese, the Episcopal Church of South Sudan and Sudan, and the South Sudan Council of Churches, the ELCA is seeking more than \$1.2 million to enable this work.

Last November the partners broke ground on a Lutheran center and health clinic in Juba, the nation's capital. The center is near Juba's Hai Referendum area, which lacks basic health and education services, making it difficult for people who are displaced to improve their lives, said Rafael Malpica Padilla, executive director for ELCA Global Mission.

"It is precisely in that community that we are planting a center to provide these opportunities," he said. This center will be a place of encounter for a community that has experienced the horrors of war, a place of hope for the next generation of leaders, an instrument through which we will touch people's lives and where the good news of the gospel will be proclaimed."

The center will offer courses, including English language lessons and computer training. This will be the first formal education for many South Sudanese adults. "Most of them were in the war and couldn't get an education," said Mawien Ariik, an ELCA pastor who coordinates outreach for the new church. "This time is about catching up so they can learn, they can operate a computer, and they will know how to write their names. This time is hope for them - we are giving them what they couldn't get when they were young."

Joining Ariik at the church's frontlines is Wal Reat, an ELCA pastor serving in refugee camps in South Sudan and its bordering countries. Both are South Sudanese natives who sought asylum in the U.S. during the war and eventually became ELCA pastors. What's more, they come from feuding tribes. Together they hope to grow the Lutheran church and bring healing to their country.

"The church is calling for the unity of the tribes in South Sudan to be one in Christ, but it is tough for those who are really wounded to convince them to accept others," Ariik said. "The message that the church is conveying is that they are all children of God and we are supposed to remain as one. It is not bad to have different tribes, but to love others as one body of Christ - it is a big challenge for us to convey that."

Hope is a common thread connecting and motivating these leaders in South Sudan. Amid conflict, violence and poverty, they are growing the Lutheran church, spreading the message of God's love and bringing hope for a peaceful future.