

# THE Cross



# Word

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## **Pastor's Notes in the Key of D – Easter under Quarantine**

I don't know about you, but in recent days it has been hard to think about much other than things related to the coronavirus. And as we all scramble to restructure our lives, it seems as if everything else has been pushed aside. It only just hit me that Easter is in three weeks! The other day my boy came up to me and asked, "Dad, will Easter be cancelled this year?"

Before I answered him various thoughts rushed through my head. Things like, "If I was Jesus, maybe I'd think twice about it this year... probably safer to just stay inside that tomb and leave the heavy stone in place. Even though it would be cold and dark, at least the germs couldn't get in."

In times of fear it's natural to have thoughts like that creep in, and be tempted to give in to inclinations to hide and stay safe. But here's what is also true: it's precisely in these times - when cold and darkness abounds, when our lives and our hopes are on lockdown, when it seems that the news is only bad and getting worse - it's in moments like this that Easter happens. Maybe in the midst of this pandemic, perhaps even for the first time in our lives, we are primed to fully experience Easter, especially where we may feel unprepared or ill-equipped to do so.

After all, that has always been the nature of the story. God breaking in, life emerging, love bursting forth in places and ways we don't, *or can't*, anticipate. The disciples weren't ready. Oh, they thought they were, but then when things got tough, they fell away. Hid. Betrayed. Denied. Even though they had been told six ways to Sunday, even though they had walked with Jesus and heard his teachings, they weren't prepared for Easter to happen.

Pilate and the Roman authorities weren't prepared either. Oh sure, they had their laws and enforcements. They thought they could dictate all the outcomes through brute force and dehumanizing violence on a cross. They thought the tombstone was immovable. They never saw Easter coming.

Even the women at the tomb didn't see it. They arrived anticipating doing nothing more than anointing a corpse. They had no idea anything else was possible, overcome as they were by despair. They weren't prepared to meet the risen Christ, the love that conquers all the places of death.

We don't see Easter coming either. Like the disciples, we feel beaten down and lost. Like Pilate and the Romans, we act as if the forces of death in this world have the final say. Like the women at the tomb, we get consumed by grief and we live as if nothing ever changes. And that's before Easter was under quarantine!

But the promise of Easter is that there is no tomb, no fear, no violence, no despair, no plague, no quarantine that can separate us from God's unyielding love. Easter is a green blade that rises no matter what is used to bury or encase it. Resurrection takes the ugliest parts of our world and of us and transforms them into something new. It takes whatever is dead in us and brings it back to life, even when – especially when – we least expect it. And none of this is subject to change. It just is. It just happens. No matter what...

I snapped out of my reverie. My son stood before me, awaiting a response. "Dad, will Easter be cancelled this year?" I looked at him and said simply, "No way, buddy, because God loves us. And there's nothing that can cancel that."

In faith and love,

**Dan**

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### **KEN'S KORNER**

*Submitted by Ken Moore, moderator*

We are in the midst of an enormous global health crisis. World trade and our very lives and livelihood are being threatened by the virus Covid-19. We are also in the midst of an environmental crisis. There are terrible fires, floods and droughts that threaten life in many parts of the world as well. As Christians, I believe that we are being challenged by the current crisis to reflect upon our relationship to God, the world, and to our neighbors. In response to the current health challenge I believe that we can best demonstrate our love of neighbor by following the guidance

of health professionals as we do our part to stop the spread of this dread disease. As those who care about God's creation we also will continue our efforts to protect, heal and treat the earth with reverence.

In the following poem entitled an "*Imagined Letter from Covid-19 to Humans*" the author challenges us to pause and reflect about the way in which everything is interrelated. She invites us to be still and listen and imagine what wisdom we may learn in these challenging days that may help us in our quest to bring into full realization God's dreams for humanity and the whole of creation.

**The poem is on pages 6 and 7 of this Cross-Word.**

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### **UPDATE FROM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY MINISTRY:**

*submitted by Becca Kreiner*

[christian.education@1ccauburn.org](mailto:christian.education@1ccauburn.org)

I've been asked to put together a list of resources that I've found to help everyone get through this period of isolation. One thing I want to stress with everyone is what I've heard our governor calling this: "A period in time." This is NOT the new normal. We WILL come out on the other side and be able to see each other in person, hug each other, and look back with relief that we made it through. As for dealing with the here and now:

- 1) Community support for those who cannot leave their homes: I have put together a list of members who are willing to go out and run errands for our members who are unable to. These people live from Roseville to Meadow Vista and want to help those members who cannot go out to meet their needs. If you are in need of help, contact Aggie Glover (530) 913-2074, Lynn Flathmann

(916) 765-0825, or the church (530) 885-7231. If no one answers, leave a message with your name, number, and basic need (grocery shopping, prescription pickup, etc.), and we will get back to you.

If you would like to help (and haven't yet told me), email me at: [christian.education@1ccauburn.org](mailto:christian.education@1ccauburn.org) and I will add your name to the list.

- 2) Mental and Emotional Support: Jessica Del Pozo, a local psychologist whose daughter is involved with our youth group, is offering no cost remote 45 minute sessions for those whose emotions and well-being are impacted by COVID-19. For more information, see [www.mercycenter.org](http://www.mercycenter.org) or contacted Jessica at (530) 392-8037 or [lemkehealth@gmail.com](mailto:lemkehealth@gmail.com)
- 3) Talking with Children: I have a document published by Kaiser on how to speak about COVID-19 with children (young to teenagers) and how to address their common concerns. If you would like a copy, please email me at : [Christian.education@1ccauburn.org](mailto:Christian.education@1ccauburn.org) and I will email it to you.
- 4) Copies of Bibles: If you would like a copy of our Children's Storybook Bible used in Sunday School, please let me know. I will find a way to get one to you as we have several we can loan out.
- 5) I am working on a way to post more information on our church website without overwhelming the website with written words.
- 6) Check our church website frequently for updates as well as video recordings from Dan and myself. We can maintain our community while physically separated!

### CONTACTING MEMBERS IN ASSISTED AND INDEPENDENT LIVING FACILITIES DURING THIS TIME OF COVID-19

Those members who live in assisted living facilities (ART and Brookdale) are on lockdown and **would enjoy phone calls and notes from friends and church members.** (All of these people are in the Instant Church Directory if you need addresses.)

*For these members, lockdown means no dining with their friends, no exercise groups, no outside shopping, no sitting in the lobby chatting with their friends or family (unless the family is part of a caregiver team). Their world has shrunk considerably and they would appreciate phone **calls and notes.***


**Lucille Dyer** (530) 887-8453

**Kay Atchison** (530) 320-8420

**Ginny Westerman**—530.906.9043 (530) 885-3892

**Jean Reymann**—530.320.8825 (530) 885-4975

**Bill Somers** — (530) 537-2807



### IMPORTANT MESSAGE: DROWSY CHAPERONE POSTPONED

We have selected the **NEW DATE:**  
September 20th - 2pm Matinee

**Please consider keeping your reserved tickets for the new date.**

Auburn State Theater is generously saving the same block of seats for us .

They will honor all tickets for the new dates of performances: September 12-27.

Questions: Sandra Smith 530-878-2079  
State Theater 530-885-0156  
(11am-4pm)

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Submitted by Barb Grandstaff

**Please keep the following members of our church family in your prayers.**



Tony Oliveira  
Margaret Holbrook  
Mida June Deal  
Roger Griess  
Gage and Kim Morrow  
Gunter Vogtmann  
Patt Bennett  
Duane Jeppson  
Addah Owens  
Doris Slaydon

**The following church family members are residing in nursing homes or care facilities.**

Elaine Harte—ART skilled nursing  
Glyneth Cassidy—Brookdale Assisted Living  
Ruth Jackson



## A FEW NOTES FROM THE CHURCH OFFICE:

Please continue to support our church community with your pledges and donations during this time of exclusively virtual church. In the coming weeks we will provide additional means of sharing pledges and donations electronically.

If you need help purchasing groceries or supplies, please email or call our church office.

You may email your individual prayers for Pastor Dan to lift up during next week's virtual service by emailing them to the church office.  
[Church.secretary@1ccauburn.org](mailto:Church.secretary@1ccauburn.org)

## MEDITATION MOMENT

*Perhaps the most important thing we bring to another person is the silence in us. Not the sort of silence that is filled with unspoken criticism or hard withdrawal. The sort of silence that is a place of refuge, of rest, of acceptance as they are. We are all hungry for this other silence. It is hard to find. In its presence we can remember something beyond the moment, a strength on which to build a life. Silence is a place of great power and healing. Silence is God's lap. (Rachel Naomi Reman)*

In these tumultuous times of pandemic, political tension, and social disruption, the mind and body can react with anxiety, stress, and a heightened sense of vigilance. What a good time to sit in "God's lap" for a while! One way is through what Fr. Richard Rohr calls, "Bringing thinking down to our hearts." This practice allows us to move from a place of mental anxiety and physical stress to a place of equanimity. Here is the practice. \*

1) *When you find it difficult to let go of a fearful or anxious thought, take time to focus on your breath. As you breathe, imagine moving that thought from your head to your heart.*

2) *Surround these thoughts and sensations with silence. Imagine encircling them with the warmth of your life-blood. The heart is a place that does not feed the stories we tell ourselves; rather, it creates a sense of openness and embrace of What Is.*

3) *Welcome the situation that causes you anxiety. Consciously hold it in your heart space, saying a prayer without words. "Do it in an almost physical sense," writes Father Richard, "and you will see how calmly and quickly it works."*

4) *From this place of equanimity, take a moment to discern God's call to you in this situation.*

\*Inspiration: <https://cac.org/worship-or-transformation-2019-11-11>

## April Birthdays



01 Kay Atchison  
 02 Joyce Isheim  
 02 Will Turner  
 05 Halle Wilson  
 07 Aggie Glover  
 08 Jane Roach  
 09 Lisa Lamorey  
 11 Jonah Benjamine  
 12 Kim Morrow  
 13 Hunter Smothers  
 15 Bill Benner  
 15 Brecken Cash  
 15 Kathy Chamblin  
 16 Crisyntha Jones  
 17 Jack Cole  
 17 Mike Belles  
 17 Steve Michalak  
 18 Marilyn Meyer  
 20 Charles Serrano  
 21 Charlie Serrano  
 21 Leo Benjamin  
 21 Theresa Dilworth

22 Jeanette Leino  
 23 Leslie Belles  
 24 Sam Smothers  
 26 Betty Roby  
 27 Josh Wilson  
 29 Gage Isheim  
 29 Jan Waaler  
 29 Trish Ballantyne  
 30 Abby Richards  
 30 Daniel Richards

## April Anniversaries



08 Sandra Smith and Dick Cerruti  
 16 Rick and Trish Ballantyne  
 26 Johnathan and Janine Wilson

If you are fairly new to our church community, we may not have your birthday and/or anniversary. Please email or call the office with this information if you want it included here.

## Financial Report—March 2020

<i>Actual Budget Receipts received through 2/29/20 .....</i>	<i>\$ 53,373</i>
<i>Estimated Budget Receipts through 2/29/20 .....</i>	<i>\$ 59,364</i>
<i>.....</i>	<i>\$ -5,991</i>
<i>Actual Budget Expenditures through 2/29/20 .....</i>	<i>\$ 60,835</i>
<i>General Reserve Balance as of 2/29/20 .....</i>	<i>\$ 37,538</i>

*Report prepared by Barbara Hooker, Bookkeeper*

# An Imagined Letter from Covid-19 to Humans

Stop. Just stop.  
It is no longer a request. It is a mandate.  
We will help you.  
We will bring the supersonic, high speed merry-go-round to a halt  
We will stop  
the planes  
the trains  
the schools  
the malls  
the meetings  
the frenetic, furied rush of illusions and "obligations" that keep you from hearing our  
single and shared beating heart,  
the way we breathe together, in unison.  
Our obligation is to each other,  
As it has always been, even if, even though, you have forgotten.  
We will interrupt this broadcast, the endless cacophonous broadcast of divisions and distractions,  
to bring you this long-breaking news:  
We are not well.  
None of us; all of us are suffering.  
Last year, the firestorms that scorched the lungs of the earth  
did not give you pause.  
Nor the typhoons in Africa, China, Japan.  
Nor the fevered climates in Japan and India.  
You have not been listening.  
It is hard to listen when you are so busy all the time, hustling to uphold the comforts and  
conveniences that scaffold your lives.  
But the foundation is giving way,  
buckling under the weight of your needs and desires.  
We will help you.  
We will bring the firestorms to your body  
We will bring the fever to your body  
We will bring the burning, searing, and flooding to your lungs  
that you might hear:  
We are not well.

Despite what you might think or feel, we are not the enemy.

We are Messenger. We are Ally. We are a balancing force.

We are asking you:

To stop, to be still, to listen;

To move beyond your individual concerns and consider the concerns of all;

To be with your ignorance, to find your humility, to relinquish your thinking minds and travel deep into the mind of the heart;

To look up into the sky, streaked with fewer planes, and see it, to notice its condition: clear, smoky, smoggy, rainy? How much do you need it to be healthy so that you may also be healthy?

To look at a tree, and see it, to notice its condition: how does its health contribute to the health of the sky, to the air you need to be healthy?

To visit a river, and see it, to notice its condition: clear, clean, murky, polluted? How much do you need it to be healthy so that you may also be healthy? How does its health contribute to the health of the tree, who contributes to the health of the sky, so that you may also be healthy?

Many are afraid now.

Do not demonize your fear, and also, do not let it rule you. Instead, let it speak to you-in your stillness,

listen for its wisdom.

What might it be telling you about what is at work, at issue, at risk, beyond the threats of personal inconvenience and illness?

As the health of a tree, a river, the sky tells you about quality of your own health, what might the quality of your health tell you about the health of the rivers, the trees, the sky, and all of us who share this planet with you?

Stop.

Notice if you are resisting.

Notice what you are resisting.

Ask why.

Stop. Just stop.

Be still.

Listen.

Ask us what we might teach you about illness and healing, about what might be required so that all may be well.

We will help you, if you listen.

*-Kristin Flyntz*

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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Music Director ..... Richard March  
Pianist ..... Jane Roach  
Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry ..... Becca Kreiner  
Youth Group Leader ..... Becca Kreiner  
Custodian ..... Geno Wood

**Office Hours:** All church facilities are closed during this time of Covid-19.  
Please check our website for updates and  
virtual sermons and Sunday school. [www.1ccauburn.org](http://www.1ccauburn.org)