

A letter from the Rector and the Sr. Warden to the Parish

May 2020

Dear People of Good Shepherd,

Alleluia, Christ is Risen! The Lord is Risen Indeed, Alleluia!

We are writing to you this Fifth week of Easter to send our greetings and give you some important information. It has become clear that this pandemic has changed the way we live our daily lives, and that we will not be getting back to the old ways of doing things any time soon. We are following the direction of our Bishop, who in turn is following State and local restrictions and the advice of the CDC. If you have not already, please read the Bishop's letter to the Diocese, available on the Diocesan web site – titled: A Path to Phased Re-opening. From this letter, and from the governor's plan, which puts churches in phase three, which, he says, is "months away" now, it seems clear that we are some months away from being back in our worship space.

From Rev. Susan+: *"I miss all of you! I miss seeing your faces, singing and worshipping together on Sundays, long chats and laughter at coffee hour. I am keeping you all in my hearts and my prayers in this difficult time. Know that you are precious in God's sight, and that God is with us, and God will bring new life out of this disruption. We can use this time to deepen our relationship with God."*

From Sr. Warden Butch Glosson:

This is a loss to all of us. All of us miss being together in the ways that we could for worship and fellowship. But we know that God is with us! We are finding new ways to come together through virtual worship and meetings on Zoom. The Vestry plus a few others have been calling everyone on the parish list every week to check in. I have been calling those who do not have internet or cannot join us on Sundays online.

Since this phase of not meeting together in person is going to last a while, I encourage you to join us in the ways we can be together. We have Morning Prayer with sermon each Sunday at 10:30 on Zoom, followed by a Zoom coffee hour where we can see each other's faces, or at least hear each other's voices, check in, and share what's going on in our lives. (You need a Smartphone, an Ipad, tablet or computer to access Zoom. If you need technical help getting on Zoom, contact Ed Moore, Joyce Brightman, or Richard Taylor, who have offered to talk people through the process). All Zoom links are on the Shepherd's Call e-news that goes out weekly. **If you are not getting those e-mails please call the church office and leave a message. If you are not getting a weekly phone call, please call the church office and leave your phone no. for us.**

A new Grief support Zoom group will be starting on Wednesdays at 1 p.m., and we are planning a Zoom Hymn Sing for Thursday, May 28th at 11 a.m. Rev. Susan+ continues to post Evening Prayer videos each week Tues – Thurs on our Facebook page, which you can access without having a Facebook account.

The Bishop has asked us to form a Task force to look at how we will go forward with worship whenever we can start meeting in person. It is likely to be in small groups (10 or fewer folks) at first. The Task Force has started meeting. If you are interested in being a part of the Task Force, please call Rev. Susan or Sr. Warden Butch Glosson.

We thank those who have continued to support the church financially in these times. We still have most of our normal expenses to pay, and we encourage you to continue to support the church with your prayers and your treasure.

We are available to you by phone and Zoom during this time of physical distancing. We especially want to know if you or a loved one becomes ill so we can add you to the prayer list. Please feel free to call Rev. Susan (304 – 926-4554) Sr. Warden Butch Glosson (951-970-4561), or any Vestry people if you have questions or concerns, or just want to chat!

Finally, know that you are precious to God. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Our parishioners are still caring for one another and the community, sharing God's love, in the ways that are available to us now. God will help us find our "new normal".