

**The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in
green pastures;
He leads me beside still waters;
He restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for His name's sake.**

**Even though I walk through
the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.**

**You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.**

**Surely goodness and mercy shall
follow me all the days
of my life,
and I shall dwell
in the house of the Lord
forever.**



Dear Friends,

First of all it's virus season. Secondly it's Lent. The first causes anxiety and uncertainty. The second is preparation for Easter. There are some parallels that I'm sure you've spotted.

They say we are an Easter people, and I believe that to be true. Mostly because I find myself looking forward to Easter with as much longing as I can remember for almost anything. I am convinced it will get here.

How do I know? Well I heard someone say that, even in the absence of food we know that food exists because we are hungry. We wouldn't be hungry if food didn't exist. The same is true of Easter.

We are an Easter people. It is built into who we are now; and it is in that anticipation, that hope and faith, that we find our inspiration and strength. I'm not quite sure when it will come but it will, as sure as eggs are eggs. And when it does we will raise the roof with shouts of alleluia.

Your friend in Christ,
Michael

Who Ya Gonna Call?

Feeling isolated? Need someone to talk to? Reach out to a vestry member. The vestry is working to make sure we stay connected. Please let them know what you need, whether it be someone to bring you groceries or a bit of company. The new 2020 vestry members and their phone numbers are listed on the other side of the newsletter.

Make Space for God

Say prayers, chant chants, read scripture and wisdom, dig deep into your resources, but if you do not pause for God, then you are missing the most important part. Wash your hands with God and remember whose hands you are in. Take an extra breath before everything you do and breathe God in; allow yourself to be held, and listen.

The Good News Is . . .

It may be hard to see the good if you are feeling very depressed by these sudden and difficult changes. The good news is *there is good news!* Two new babies, unaware of any social distancing recommendations, have made their way into our midst: Myra Nicole was born to Todd Erickson (yes, that means Nikki Erickson is a new grandma!) and Aurora Catherine was born to Kaia Wallin. Bobbi Otteson felt God was definitely present in her hour-long, cross-country, cooking-together-by-Skype session with her daughter, Jessamy. Sebastian Tippet, briefly home, was thankful to receive an extra caramel role at his favorite diner last week before they closed their doors. Janet Dixon reports there are prayer shawls ready to bless. Diane Spitzack had a lovely afternoon knitting and crafting together separately with her granddaughter. Kris Warehime, who normally works in a windowless office, has enjoyed the sun this past week from the windows of her new home office.

Treasurer's Note

I wanted to submit something for this mini-Leaven that sounded like a cross between a treasurer's report and a conversation regarding the unknown. I don't really know where to begin, nor do I know our status. Not having regular church services does affect our offerings, of course. But I do know this: We are still in the black.

We are a community intended to support each other. If you are concerned about your personal finances right now, please don't worry about your pledge. Pledges are made as a snapshot of where we are at one point in time. If you are feeling financially stable and can give, we would appreciate your support. Some members use automatic withdrawal, which makes it easy from a church standpoint. For those of you who contribute via the offering plate, there are several ways to contribute: Drop your pledge envelope in the mail

The Church Is Still Open

If you find yourself needing the comfort of a familiar, holy space, church will be open daily by about 10:30. The exact hours are not yet finalized, but will be shortly. You may reach out to Fr. Michael or Steve if you want to know more. When at church, please wash your hands and be mindful of your proximity to others who may also be in the building. Drew and Diane have been wiping down pews and door handles, but they could use some help. If you have a few minutes and can lend a hand, there are Clorox wipes by each door. Please leave a note by the wipes indicating what you cleaned and the date.

slot by the glass doors; mail it to church; ask a vestry member to pick it up from your house.

Ok, one more thing to address: We have learned that our friends at Rachel's Light are in dire straits. Our March offering was for the food shelf. The food shelf is an important resource for our community and we will continue to support them in the future. At the moment, though, they are in a good place, having just completed a successful fundraiser. The vestry has decided to send Rachel's Light anything collected as a Second Sunday offering in the rest March and to make our Second Sunday offering in April to Rachel's Light as well. We will send two checks. We know that there are people struggling in our community that has nothing to do with a pandemic, yet this crisis adds to their crisis. If you are able, please give to Rachel's Light. And let us all keep them in our prayers.

Communion Delivery

If you haven't heard, there was a modified worship service posted to Facebook Sunday morning. You can access this any time. Bread was consecrated and available for drive-through pick-up Sunday at 11:30. For those who were unable to make it to church, communion will be delivered sometime this week. This will not be our "new normal"—we do not expect to do this every Sunday, but it felt like we needed it this week. Stay tuned as we figure out our needs and how to meet them in the coming weeks.

Leaven is published monthly to keep the people of St. Paul's informed and united in thought.

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To keep us all connected, for the next few weeks, the Leaven will appear weekly. Please send your comments and news to Kris.

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