

Shepherd's Staff

HOLY SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

MAY 2020

"NOW WHAT?"

Our first month of "sheltering-in-place" due to COVID-19 was dedicated to discovering a new way to live. We learned how to social distance. We learned how to commute to the dining room table. We learned how to "Zoom" video conference. We even learned how to log-on to worship together in the relative safety of our own homes.

But the 'newness' of this novel coronavirus thing is staring to wear off. We've found ways of getting the food and paper products that we need. We've learned how to get our kids into their online classrooms when they need to. We've even mastered the art of going to church in our pajamas! Somehow, these routines that would have been unthinkable two months ago have become 'routine', and the freshness of these new routines is even starting to grow stale.

Living into new realities is always a challenge for us. We know that! And God knows that too! Which is maybe why so many of the promises of the New Testament seems so particularly relevant these days! And perhaps amid these days, none of those promises are more poignant than the saintly reassurance that the fruits of the Spirit are "Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

As these days of COVID-19 linger, I suspect more and more people are going to be acting up and acting out. Making poor choices. Violating the public trust. Living in ways that threaten the health of the community. Love and joy and peace — and all the rest of those fruits of the Spirit that Saint Paul lists — are going to be as scarce as toilet paper was in the grocery store this past month.

Yet as these days of sheltering-in-place turn into weeks, and as those weeks turn into months, we have this promise — that love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control can be found where the Spirit of God is. Those 'fruits' needn't be scarce in our lives and our world because God is a God of abundance. And God promises to make those gifts plentiful as we center our lives and beings in Him.

So may the Peace that passes all understanding guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus our Lord!

Pastor John



Lutheran Social Services

You can locate a sample pattern by going to <http://www.acraftyfox.net/tutorial/face-mask-drive-quarantine-log-day-5ish/>

There are other patterns available on the web also or perhaps you have one.

You can drop off the masks at Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church. There will be a box located under the mailbox for the CFM Building.

LSS currently serves more than 3,800 individuals of all ages, every day, in Sacramento, San Francisco, Contra Costa, San Joaquin, Solano and Shasta counties. Our supportive programs include money management services, case management in transitional and permanent supportive housing sites for adults, families, former foster youth, and youth 18-24 at risk of becoming homeless.

LSS is considered an essential service, so we are maintaining our services in all six counties at 100% at this time. While our program staff is working remotely whenever possible and maintaining social distancing, they do need to interact with clients, who also should have masks. These masks would be used by their social/case workers as well as clients with whom they are interacting.

WHO is asking for these?

LSS of Northern California, specifically our SF programs.

WHO will wear these?

Our social/case workers and we will also offer to our clients, who include adults (lots of seniors) and perhaps some children living with the adults in our family program.

HOW MANY?

100 masks would be helpful, but we will take whatever members of your congregation can create. These are simple masks, made from two layers of cotton fabric which can be laundered and re-used. First we would make sure our 36 staff have one since they are interacting with clients face-to-face on an as needed basis as well as packaging and distributing food bank parcels each week to our **2000+** clients.

Pray Always

HEALING

Marilyn N.
Will T.
Dinah W.
Gloria E.
Doug T.
Laura Z.
Harry H.
DoLoris T.
Dorothy L.

Martha (Ann B's sister)
Kathy McCarty S.
Jeff K.
Carole K.
Susie M.
Mallory W.
Madison V.
Mary Helene W.
Reese L.

WELLNESS

Rolf B.
DeLane R.

Ann B. Carol K.
Marilynn L.

PEACE / COMFORT

Kitti C.

Kristy L.

MILITARY

Keep our armed forces safe. Give them courage, hope and strength.

Brian H.

Megan H.

Peter & Melanie K.

OUR WORLD

All the people of our world as together we battle COVID-19.

Those Who Grieve

Remember in your prayers the family and friends of Alyce B. who passed away at home March 31 while under the care of Hospice. At her request, no funeral is planned. Her daughter, Joan, wrote: "Growing up in Moraga, Shepherd of the Valley was our church and a pretty important part of our lives. I was married in the church in 1980. I just wanted to thank you for the support and fellowship my parents enjoyed in their later years."

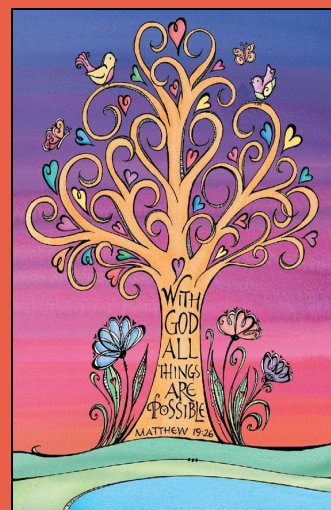
Celebrations

Birthdays

May 2 Jon H.
May 3 Johanna B.
May 4 Myrtis J.
May 5 Julie C.
May 6 Carol G.
May 7 Pete J.
Erin S.
May 10 Victor G.
Terry O.
May 11 Betsy S.
May 13 Linda H.
Carol S.
May 14 Meghan H.
May 16 Rita S.
May 19 Alison K.
May 24 Bethany V.
May 25 Rachel O.
May 26 Dave L.
May 28 Tom H.
May 30 Nick K.

Anniversaries

May 8 Richard & Fran G.
May 14 Nina & Steve B.
May 25 Gabriel & Mara J.
May 27 Otto & Yvonne T.



ONE WAY WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Thirty-five years ago Rwanda, a country in the center of Africa, experienced a genocide. Over one million people were killed — as people of one ethnic subset of the population unleashed waves of violence on another. Many people fled their homes or were forcibly relocated and families were split and torn apart. This left many children orphaned, homeless and struggling to survive.

One of those orphans, Amani, survived and eventually found a way to attend college in the U.S. by graduating from the Rwamagana Leaders School (formerly known as the Rwamagana Lutheran School). Amani is Lutheran and after graduating from college in the U.S. he went back to Rwanda and founded "Rukundo" to give kids an opportunity to thrive like he did. Rukundo now supports kids in the Kigali area and helps them survive the streets, shows them how to get an education and how to build a positive and supportive community.

Our Sunday School kids adopted Rukundo as their Christmas project this year. Working with Joan Kiekhaefer, Sara Wilson and Janine Crowe they hosted two coffee fellowship events in December and raised (thanks to YOUR generosity!) more than \$1500 to provide school supplies, snacks and support for the Rukundo kids. Well done!

We're happy to report that the funds have been transferred to Rwanda, and are hard at work helping needy kids half-a-world away. In fact, Amani recently reported that two of the Rukundo children just passed the entrance exams and were admitted to the Rwamagana School that he attended. Our Sunday School kids and the Rukundo kids unite their voices in saying "Thanks! To all of you!"



IN THIS TOGETHER

These days of 'social distancing' have forced us to abandon some of our usual ways to 'do' church, but they've also invited us to discover some new ways to 'be' church. We're thrilled to note that we had upwards of 500 people 'attend our Easter Sunday service online, and that our 'average weekly worship' attendance is more than 100 each Sunday! In case you've missed it, we invite you to discover:

- **Our "Facebook Premiere" community worship events which occur every Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m.** When you join that 'video watch party', you'll not only experience the release of our weekly worship video, but you'll do so with other members and friends of our congregation. By using the "Like it" and "Love it" buttons, you can let others know what particular songs and prayers and words resonate with you. And by using the chat feature on Facebook, you'll be able to greet your fellow worshipers!
- **Our Webpage at www.holyshepherd.org.** Our Sunday worship services are accessible at our website at about 10:15 a.m. each Sunday morning (after they have premiered on Facebook).
- **Our new Online Bible Study debuts on Wednesday, May 6th at 5:30 p.m.** Pastor John will be hosting a half-hour-long, interactive 'Zoom' conversation that involves watching an engaging video, and reflecting together on what God's world is saying to us today. (You'll find more details about this on the back page of this newsletter.)
- **The Telephone.** That telephone you have in your home isn't just for telemarketers to use! Pick it up and dial another member of the congregation and just check in! You might be surprised how invigorating and encouraging it is.
- **Prayer.** This technology is perhaps the oldest communicative technology of all! Take time each day to pray – for our nation, for our church, for the whole of the Church of God in Christ Jesus, for the whole of God's creation, for those on the front lines of this crisis, and for those who are in need.

ONLINE DEVOTIONAL OPPORTUNITY!

We're cooking up something COMPLETELY different each and every Wednesday evening at 5:30 p.m.! (You might even call it a new recipe from our pastoral kitchen!) Actually, we're taking some familiar ingredients and putting them together in an unfamiliar way, and trust that you might find it a tasty dish!

The ingredients?

- + The Bible ... we'll open by reading a brief passage from Holy Scripture, then add ...
- + A brief Video ... of the sort prepared by Inlighten that we often have used in our Sunday evening services, then stir in ...
- + You ... and your thoughts and reflections, your questions and your concerns to make ... and pull it all together in a time of supportive prayer, thus making ...

A meaningful, half-hour devotional conversation with other members of the Holy Shepherd community about the things of faith and the things of life.

In order to participate, you'll need an interactive device (video phone, iPad, laptop computer, etc.) that has the ability to run a Zoom Video Conferencing app. And you'll need to send Pastor John Valentine an email (jvalentine@holyshepherd.org) to get the login information ahead of time. This online study opportunity debuts on May 6th at 5:30 p.m. If you have questions about this study opportunity (or how to access it!) contact Pastor John.

Holy Shepherd Lutheran Church

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