



Peace United Church of Christ

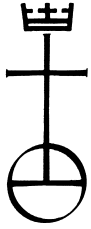
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April 2020
The Tidings



Peace United Church of Christ KEWASKUM, WISCONSIN 53040

Rev. J. Eric Kirkegaard · Pastor

Church 262-626-4011 · Home 262-626-1655

26 March, 2020

Dear beloved community,

We are all finding ourselves in an altered reality these days. It feels very strange not to be gathering and visiting and doing what Church has done for millennia... and yet I keep taking very seriously the command that Jesus gave us to love our neighbors no exception. There have been lots of times in the midst of ministry where I've heard people intone that if we are to love our neighbors as ourselves, then we are probably not doing a very good job... you see, we often don't love ourselves or take care of ourselves as we should. We are being reminded daily with the instructions to wash and pray, to social distance and to call and support one another in our interconnected world. As we hear stories about a virus that is "novel," utterly unique to human beings and our immune systems, that COVID-19 doesn't discriminate... we remember that all our lives are woven together in more ways than we can imagine. That connection might be frightening to some, but it should also be a beautiful reminder that God is offering us to see our neighbors near and far as connected to our lives and our stories.

I was recently reminded of the expression "liminal space." That's not a phrase that is probably familiar to most people, but it's an incredibly powerful idea. It's the idea of that space between the already and the not yet. It is a space that, within our journeys of faith, we are always traversing. Scott Stoner shared:

The author and theologian Richard Rohr defines liminal time in this way: "It is when you have left, or are about to leave, the tried and true, but have not yet been able to replace it with anything else. It is when you are between your old comfort zone and any possible new answer. If you are not trained in how to hold anxiety, how to live with ambiguity, how to entrust and wait, you will run...anything to flee this terrible cloud of unknowing." He goes on to say that ancient cultures referred to liminal space as "crazy time," because it is like nothing we have ever experienced before. Think of it as that space, that time, when a flying acrobat has let go of one swinging trapeze and is in mid-air, anxiously seeking the grasp of another who is swinging their way.

Often in ministry, I have encountered that moment at the threshold as sacred time when God's presence might catch us unaware and bless us unexpectedly.

I have been listening to people in this moment offering expressions of deep grief as their routines and the things that they enjoy doing most, the things that offer them purpose in life, have been stripped away very rapidly. The litany of separations is profound... and we all know it. At the same time, yesterday I saw more people out walking as families, as individuals, than I have seen on any weekday afternoon that I can recall. I've been hearing about people reaching out to long lost friends by phone and internet. I've heard about more families gathering to watch a movie together, or to read books, or to play a game. I am reminded so often of our first exchange student who used to intone: "pick an attitude." We often don't to choose our circumstance, but we get to choose our response.

There is a core proclamation of our faith that God journeys with us wherever we go... but much of the time we don't pay all that much attention to God's presence or to God's invitation to a deeper relationship with that love that never ends.

Our tidings this month is quite different than usual. There are not activities identified that will gather us together physically – though there are a number of opportunities to connect virtually, and we may seek to offer more as time goes on. We have been recording worship services and uploading them to YouTube with links to our website and Facebook, I'm grateful to have a talented family (even with the addition of a very musical French exchange student) that has been willing to share in creating what we hope is sacred space for those able to tune in. E-mail communication has become increasingly important for those who have access to that form of communication. If you've not been hearing from church, then it means that we don't have current information for you – please use this time as an opportunity to call or email church to update our records. Where I have been struggling to stay connected is with those who aren't on-line. It will take all of us to keep sharing the love of God with all those members of our family and beyond. I'm also very aware that there are many for whom this time is causing particular hardship not just emotionally, but also physically. Please, please, let the church know if there are needs of which you become aware and we will try to creatively do what we can to help.

A friend sent a poem from Kitty O' Meara that many of you have seen. This retired Chaplain and teacher from Madison offers us words that I share as prayer for us in the days ahead:

"And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of the people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed."

May we know that God is with us in this time upon our sacred journey,

PASTOR ERIC

From the Pastor's Study • April 2020

"...Then Jesus began to teach his disciples: "The Human One must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and the legal experts, and be killed, and then, after three days, rise from the dead." He said this plainly. But Peter took hold of Jesus and, scolding him, began to correct him. Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, then sternly corrected Peter: "Get behind me, Satan. You are not thinking God's thoughts but human thoughts." Mark 8:31-33

This is a portion of the lesson that I had chosen to preach on next week for the last of the West Bend ecumenical Lenten services. We were asked to preach on the topic: "Speak Lord, your servant is listening". Who knew that we would be called to listen in such unique ways as our Lenten journey has unfolded? Of course, those services and that sermon won't happen. But the scripture has been living with me for some weeks now framing a part of my journey. In Mark's gospel this exchange happens just after Jesus has asked the disciples who it is that they say that he is. Peter is the one who answers correctly that he is the Christ, the messiah, the anointed one. Peter understands Jesus' identity right up until Jesus begins expressing a message that is radically counter to all Peter's expectations. Peter, we could anticipate, is longing for a savior king who would restore Israel to the glory that it knew under David's realm. He is expecting the power and military overthrow that will finally free the people of Israel from living under Roman occupation. He may even be hoping that the elders, chief priests and legal experts would finally have the epiphany to recognize Jesus as the one who would reorient Judaism back to God as the prophets of old had repeatedly sought to do. Peter was focused on human systems and human ways – or to look at this more critically, Peter's perspective was filtered through his own desires. It might sound awkward to accuse Peter of thinking selfishly, but I think that Jesus' admonishment of him leads to that conclusion: "get behind me Satan" is as harsh a scolding as I can imagine. Peter in that moment is one more voice offering the tempting call of the world instead of the call of God.

Lent's journey toward Holy Week and Easter is intended to stretch us even as the days are lengthened. That's the origin of the word Lent: to lengthen. We are called to stretch our thinking beyond our own selfish expectations. We need to stretch even our assumption of the Easter proclamation. It's always fascinating to me at this time of year to see all the ways that our Easter story has been co-opted by the world. We take Jesus' refusal to participate in the violence of the world, his peaceful, pacifistic ways, and turn the focus of the story toward the violence that was done to Jesus: how much he was whipped, how much blood he shed, a focus on the spikes and pain instead of focusing on Jesus' steadfast commitment to peace, love, and forgiveness. It's always interesting to read back through the Gospel accounts and note how spartan even they are with the details of violence. This seems always to say more about us than about Jesus. We turn God into one who would demand a blood sacrifice instead of one who would show us the power of love and nonviolence. Perhaps there is something in our nature that longs for revenge and action instead of generous compassion. And we also long for someone to blame, instead of hearing the story as a critique against all of us. Within the early years of the church, this seems to lead toward the rise of one of the most absurd and dangerous distortions of history and theology. We render the Jews as the "Christ-killers" wanting someone else to blame. Somehow, we forget that Jesus and his disciples were all Jewish and only ever identified as such, and so we shift the story away from the faithful being complicit in not wanting to follow God's ways. It's always easier to blame another.

Jesus offered us not only his life, but he offered us an example of a different way of being in the world, one that focused on selfless compassion instead of fear, or violence, or selfishness. And the message of Easter is that witness triumphs. In this time when we are called to love like Jesus, I pray that Jesus' story offers us a path and a promise of hope. Speak Lord, your servant is listening... In God's love,

Pastor Eric

Message from Our Covenanted Partner in Ministry, Rev. Gretchen Martin

That Feeling is Grief

I know I said in my last article that we were finishing the topic of grief and would be moving to other topics. Well our world is very different than it was a month ago. Dane, the kids and I haven't left home in about 2 weeks, and we are just beginning a 3-week shelter in place. I've had such a range of emotions over the last two weeks and even I couldn't put my finger on what I was feeling. "That Discomfort You're Feeling is Grief" That was the title of an article I read this week of an interview with David Kessler, a leading grief expert. I really encourage you to read this article, but the general sentiment is that what we are feeling right now is all different types of grief. "We feel the world has changed, and it has. We know this is temporary, but it doesn't feel that way, and we realize things will be different...The loss of normalcy, the fear of economic toil, the loss of connection. This is hitting us and we're grieving. Collectively. We are not used to this kind of collective grief in the air."¹

For me, right now I'm grieving small things, like not being able to go to into the hospitals and see my colleagues, or that Finley is missing so many things in his last semester of preschool (field trip, Easter egg hunt, school photos) and that several birthday celebrations for our family have been canceled. Dane and I have been talking with high school seniors a lot this week, and they are grieving too. Things like no prom, no last sporting event, no adventures of senior year and likely no graduation. Can you take a moment and think about the COVID-19 pandemic in the lens of grief? What are you missing out on, what has changed in your daily routine, what things in your life are unknown?

We have told the high school seniors, and now I'm reminding you of some of the things we have talked about in relation to grief. Your grief is your grief! No matter what you are grieving, it is real and valid! Try to acknowledge it and not dismiss it. You may think it seems small in comparison to people dying from COVID-19 or the stress that health care workers are feeling, but that does not make your grief any less real for you. Don't compare your grief or stress to others, it doesn't help. Create space for you and your family or friends to talk about how you are feeling and remember or acknowledge what is lost during this time.

Dane and I asked the high school seniors what the worst piece of advice they have gotten in the last week, and almost unanimously they responded, "in the long run it won't be a big deal." One of the "not top 10" responses to grief is "True but not helpful!" So this comment about the long rug may be true, but it isn't helpful. It dismisses what the person is feeling and shuts down the conversation. If my kids don't have a school Easter egg hunt or don't have school photos taken this year, it really won't matter. Or if students don't play that one last game, in 20 years it won't be a big deal. But right now it is a big deal. I just encourage you over the next few weeks to hold what people are sharing with you in a sacred way. Avoid those "At least..." and "I know exactly..." statements. Acknowledge the loss and don't shut down the conversation. Right now lean into grace, compassion and love.

I don't know what the future holds for us individually or as a country, but I do know that we worship a God of love and mercy and that is what I am clinging to in these uncertain times. Sending lots of love to you from North Carolina.

¹ That Discomfort You're Feeling is Grief by Scott Berinato, Harvard Business Review
<https://hbr.org/2020/03/that-discomfort-youre-feeling-is-grief?fbclid=IwAR1mYLZgrL4Sc4j6AGpUfmmL61KqvOJGLekf7E0Ocpch-Ucx9nIW1j7oAOM>

Worship Schedule for April 2020

**All Worship Services during the “Safer at Home” will be VIRTUAL
The Church building is closed with staff working remotely**

We are recording services and posting them to our YouTube Channel at “Peace UCC Kewaskum” or you can find a link from our website: www.Peace-UCC.org or through our Facebook page. We seek to post services by the times listed below:

Sunday, April 5, 8:00 am Online

Palm Sunday

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29 • Matthew 21:1-11

Thursday, April 9, 7:30 pm Online

Maundy Thursday

Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14 • Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 • 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 • John 13:1-17, 31b-35

Friday, April 10, 1:00 pm Online

Good Friday

Isaiah 52:13-53:12 • Psalm 22 • Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9 • John 18:1-19:42

Sunday, April 12, 6:00 am Online

Easter

Acts 10:34-43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6 • Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24 • Colossians 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43 • John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10

Sunday, April 19

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 22-32 • Psalm 16 • 1 Peter 1:3-9 • John 20:19-31

Sunday, April 26

Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:14a, 36-41 • Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 • 1 Peter 1:17-23 • Luke 24:13-35

Sunday, May 3

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 2:42-47 • Psalm 23 • 1 Peter 2:19-25 • John 10:1-10

Sunday, May 10

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 7:55-60 • Psalm 31:1-5, 15-16 • 1 Peter 2:2-10 • John 14:1-14

Sunday, May 17

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 17:22-31 • Psalm 66:8-20 • 1 Peter 3:13-11 • John 14:15-21

Sunday, May 24

Seventh Sunday of Easter

Acts 1:6-14 • Psalm 68:1-10, 32-35 • 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11 • John 17:1-11

Sunday, May 31

Pentecost Sunday

Acts 2:1-21 • Psalm 104:24-34, 35b • 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13 • John 20:19-23

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday! (Ages 1-18)

April 2 Joshua Weinreich (11)
April 4 Zachary Butzlaff (8)
April 10 Brooks Martin (3)
April 16 Kenady Kivell (7)
April 16 Brady Stern (18)
April 17 Hudson Gitter (4)
April 18 Kolton Hauch (15)
April 19 Tore Schemelin (13)
April 25 Derek May (15)

Birthdays (80 years plus)

April 1 Shirley Reinders (83)
April 5 Ron Rusch (85)
April 9 Donald Sedgwick (89)
April 13 Shirley Schlice (82)
April 15 Bob Schrader (81)
April 23 Allen Kuhn (93)
April 25 James Reigle (94)
April 25 John Wood (83)
April 26 Cheri Hron (88)

Anniversaries

April 3 Zak & Katie Pendowski (16)
April 7 Bill & Jessica Loser (19), Jason & Jamie Piittmann (19)
April 12 Scott & Cathy Stern (12)
April 14 Jacob & Jessica Manogue (2)
April 20 Greg & Kelly Anderson (13), Brian & Deborah Butzlaff (24)
April 23 Tim & Kathy Danielson (43)
April 25 Pam & Alan May (22)
April 28 Joshua & Arielle Guillaume (2)
April 29 Ashley & Randy Thull (14)
April 30 Susan & Daniel Chesak (32)

Events and Activities

All in person Peace Church events – Postponed until further notice.

We are offering a couple of Virtual Faith Formation Gatherings:

Please call the church office if you have difficulties connecting

Tuesdays at 10 am. - Lectionary group. Each week we will study the scripture for the upcoming Sunday.

Join Zoom Meeting on your computer by copying or clicking this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/299920158>

Meeting ID: 299 920 158

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,299920158# US (Chicago)

+19294362866,,299920158# US (New York)

Dial in on your telephone -

+1 312 626 6799, then enter meeting ID: 299 920 158

Thursdays at 3 pm. – Adult Faith Formation, Confirmation Redux – we will continue studying the confirmation materials used by our 9th grade confirmands

Join Zoom Meeting on your computer by copying or clicking this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/266869687>

Meeting ID: 266 869 687

One tap mobile

+19294362866,,266869687# US (New York)

+13126266799,,266869687# US (Chicago)

Dial in on your telephone -

+1 312 626 6799, then enter meeting ID: 266 869 687

Thank You Peace UCC!

Thank you messages were received from the following organizations:

Dear Peace Members,

Thank you for the generous donation to the food pantry of \$365.00. This donation will enable us to buy needed groceries at this pantry. Sincerely, The Kewaskum Community Pantry Staff

Thank you messages were received from the following Peace members:

Thank you to the Women at Peace church for the fruit basket and to JoAnn Manthei for bringing it and visiting. Sincerely, Gloria Liepert

Thank you to Peace Church and Karen Grundahl for delivering a beautiful poinsettia plant and nice visit. Thank you also to Pastor Bob for his visits, and to the Sunday School children for their cards. Dolores Terlinden

Dear Peace Church, Thank you so much for providing me another scholarship this year. I am greatly appreciative for it. As I complete my final semester at UW-Milwaukee, I am very grateful for the support I have been granted over the past four years. Thank you, Liza Rosenthal

Dear Peace Church,

Thank you so much for the scholarship. It is greatly appreciated and will be put to good use. I have so many wonderful memories at Peace Church and am so thankful to have you all in my life. With gratitude, Alaina Rosenthal

Dear Peace UCC, I wanted to take the opportunity to express my gratitude and how thankful I am to have received the Peace UCC Scholarship. This scholarship continually allowed me to focus on my studies and overall pursue my dream career path in physical therapy. I cannot even begin to state how appreciative I am and the impacts this scholarship has had, thank you for your generosity and kindness. Sincerely, Stephanie Henk

Financial Reports

Financial Report February 2020

General Fund

Adjusted Beginning Balance as of Dec. 31, 2019	\$ (24,097)
Receipts	24,917
Cemetery Transfer	0
Internal Transfer	250
Incr/Decr from Investments	0
Expenses	(\$29,744)
Ending Balance as of 02/29/2020	Balance of <u>(\$28,674)</u>

Please know that each month the above balance report only represents our General Fund - the fund designated to meet the operating costs of our church. Thankfully we have sufficient monies in other funds to allow us to continue doing ministry and even dreaming during these times of economic distress. For those who are able, please continue to support the life of our church. For those who are not financially able at this time, offer your gifts in whatever way you can – a prayer, a card, a phone call. Together we will remain strong.

Benevolence Receipts

WI Conf. One Great Hour of Sharing	10.00
WI Conf. Strengthen the Church	5.00
WI Conf. NIN	5.00
WI Conf. CUE	10.00
WI Conf. VOC	20.00
Lenten	20.00
Easter	30.00
Maundy Thurs	5.00
Good Friday	5.00
Ash Wed	115.00
Exodus House	161.32
Souper Bowl of Caring	502.72
Dr. Albrecht Free Clinic	25.00
Full Shelf Food Pantry	25.00
Kewaskum Food Pantry	50.00
Family Promise	50.00
Thanksgiving	5.00
Christmas	30.00
Total Benevolence Receipts	<u>1,079.04</u>

Additional Information

Project Balances as of 02/29/2020
Church Kitchen Remodeling Project \$ 13,172.00

2020 Sound of Change Collections

January = Peace Habitat \$161.72

February = Exodus \$161.32

March = \$216.93

Consistory Meeting Minutes

**Peace United Church of Christ
Consistory Meeting Minutes
Consistory Meeting Minutes
February 11, 2020**

Members Present = X

Members Absent = left blank

X	Tom Kolb (Deacon)	X	John Lemke(President/Deacon)	X	Ken Singer (Elder)
X	Paul Behring (Trustee)	X	Roger Mertz (Deacon)	X	Kathy Thomas (Trustee)
	Greg Anderson (Deacon)	X	Steve Falk (Trustee)	X	Martha Wilson (Elder)
X	Elizabeth Bobb (Deacon)	X	Karen Kletti (Trustee)	X	Kathy Charland (Deacon)
X	Nancy Horning (Trustee)		David Roehrig (Trustee)	X	John Lemke Sr. (Elder)

Also Present: Pastor Eric

- A. Call to Order: 7:04 pm
- B. Opening Prayer –Pastor Eric prayed to open us up to God’s vision.
- C. Approval of Agenda – addition to New Business – Discussion on Endowment articles, motion to accept by Nancy Horning, second by Martha Wilson and carried.
- D. Approval of Minutes from January 14, 2020 meeting: motion to approve minutes as written by John Lemke, Sr. and second by Steve Falk and carried.
- E. Financial Report- The Investment Committee has transferred Investment Funds in the amount of \$476,180.07 to the UCC Foundation. Motion to accept this transaction by Kathy Charland, seconded by John Lemke, Sr. After discussion, motion carried.
- F. Pastor’s Report-
 1. John Dorhauer, president of the UCC, was the guest speaker at the MLK service at Cedar Ridge.
 2. Kewaskum School District administrators met with the clergy in the district.
 3. The confirmation class will again be conducting the Lenten services this year. Confirmation will be taking place at the 9:30 service on May 17th.
 4. Adult Education class began last week.
 5. The youth group from Downer’s Grove, IL, will be staying overnight this weekend for their annual ski trip.
 6. February 28-30 is the Confirmation camp retreat at Pilgrim Camp.
 7. March 22 – Pastor Eric will be vacationing with family in Colorado. Pastor Bob will be conducting worship services.
 8. In recognition of Peace UCC’s continuous support of OCWM, Franz Rigert, President of the UCC Wisconsin Conference, will be coming to Peace on May 31 to celebrate at service. We will also have a chance to meet Andrew Warner, who is the Conference Co-Coordinator for the UCC Foundation.
- G. President’s Report
 1. John Lemke Jr re-emphasized the “What is new or needed this coming year?” Let us all remember the purpose behind all the things we do as a church. He urged us to be inspired in our efforts to move forward.
 2. We are in the process of looking at ways to streamline the many opportunities to volunteer.
- H. Mission Moment – NONE
- I. Old Business

1. Mission Statement: Has already been adopted, no further discussion.
2. Investment change process – The Investment Committee activity was noted in the Financial Report. Current potential check signers are: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Investment Committee Chairperson.
3. New Vice President – Nancy Horning

J. New Business

1. XYZ Club requested to use the Fellowship Hall at Peace Church on Wednesday mornings from 8:00 – 11:30 a.m., beginning March 4. After discussion, it was agreed upon to reach out to the community. Motion to approve XYZ Club's request by Kathy Charland and seconded by John Lemke, Sr. Motion carried.
2. Endowment Fund Articles – Wording was discussed. The issue was referred back to the Endowment Committee for further review. Consistory voted to approve this year's recommendation by the Endowment Committee to make Peace Church's final contribution to the Campital Campaign in the amount of \$5,936.71.

K. 1. Committee Reports

Deacons –Tom Kolb is the new Chairperson of the Deacon's Committee.

Elders- Approved scholarships for students – 15 students @ \$750 each. Dates were set for cookie sales, pancake breakfast, and Children's Christmas Program.

Trustees- Kitchen Renovation Committee has met twice. New arrangement for coffee hour has been tried. Carpeting in parsonage is complete.

Care & Connection – written report from Gayle Van Ess

Evangelism/Marketing – N/R

Faith Formation- written report from Gayle Van Ess

Habitat-Planning for Youth trip in June and Adult trip in July.

Investment Committee-discussed in Financial Report.

Mission – next meeting April 21, 2020 at 9:30 am

New Members–One new member has joined so far this year.

Pastoral Relations- Next meeting 2/13/20 at 6:30pm

Women @ Peace- January tour of Old Courthouse and Prison has over 20 attendees. Feb. 20 outing is a tour of Cedar Ridge and lunch at the Top of the Ridge.

L. Lord's Prayer

M. Adjournment – 9:10 p.m.

Next Meeting Tuesday, March 10, 2020 – 6:30 p.m. Deacons, Elders, Trustees –
7:00 p.m. Consistory