
The InnerNet Lite

APRIL 2020

Long ago letters were the only way to communicate with each other, and in our New Testament scriptures, we have a witness of the letters of Paul written to those house churches he began in various cities. In the years following Christ's resurrection, God and he began small gatherings of believers in various Greek and Turkish cities, and then he would often face persecution, trouble, and have to flee for his life. He would leave behind the people he loved. You can hear such an example in this letter to the Thessalonians,

17 As for us, brothers and sisters, when, for a short time, we were made orphans (heartbroken) by being separated from you—in person, not in heart—we longed with great eagerness to see you face to face. 18 For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, wanted to again and again—but Satan blocked our way. 19 For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you? 20 Yes, you are our glory and joy!
1 Thessalonians 2.17-20

It reminds me of these COVID 19 days.

We cannot gather in person, so we call each other, send cards, connect via social media, offering support and encouragement in the ways we can. We are sad that we are not together this Holy Week, sad that Easter will be subdued and physically distant from family and loved ones. Our hearts ache.

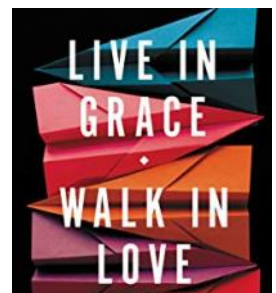
My arms long to hug you, my eyes to see you, my heart longs to bless you in person, laugh and pray and be together. I can only imagine how Paul of the 1st century felt, and this time helps me gain a new perspective on his sorrow---and his rejoicing.

You see, he rejoiced that God was doing a good work in those who heard the word and accepted it. He constantly gives thanks to God for this; continually prays that the word planted, take root and grow. He compliments the church at Thessaloniki for being imitators of the Judean church. I too give thanks when I see and hear how you are worshipping, praying, creating a family worship experience. Those make my heart leap for joy! Because I know God is at work in you.

So, with Paul in 1 Thess. 4, I ask and urge you in the Lord, that as you have learned from many disciples, pastors and teachers, how you ought to live and please God, you should do so more and more. I encourage you, pray for you, hope in you, that God will continue to work in you, deepening desire to be in closer relationship with the Lord God.

We may not gather in the building of church, but we gather as church in our homes, with our hearts and voices and prayer joining in the unity of the Spirit of God who has made us family through the water of baptism. Be the church where you are; share love and God's grace always. Amen.

In love.
Pastor Angela





WEDNESDAY PRAYER

Noon on Wednesday April 8, you are invited to a prayer time via Zoom. This is for those who would like to participate in praying for our first responders and medical personnel by name as given to me from people of LSLC. All are welcome. You will need to be admitted to the meeting, by Pastor Angela, to protect us from any "Zoom-bombing" which is when people try to insert distressing or disgusting images or comments into unprotected meetings.

Click this meeting link, on a smart phone, tablet, or computer with a camera/microphone, and if you do not have or do not wish to connect with video, use a phone to call the number listed. You may be asked to download Zoom the first time you try to connect. It is not difficult to do, follow the prompts.

pastorangela@livingsaviourlc.org is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Noon Wednesday Prayer

Time: Apr 8, 2020 12:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/594030836?pwd=c3AzVnQyQTBHQlIHemltUEsSdXFtUT09>

Meeting ID: 594 030 836

Password: 468487

Dial by your location

+1 253 215 8782 US

+1 301 715 8592 US

Meeting ID: 594 030 836

Password: 468487

MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP

Maundy Thursday worship will take place at 7 p.m. We are trying a Zoom style of worship, where you will sign into Zoom with your smart phone, tablet, or computer, or dial in by phone. You will also be able to watch later as we will be recording it and uploading to YouTube. We are trying something new, so bear with us if there are difficulties.

If you wish to participate, I suggest you familiarize yourself with Zoom, zoom.us and download the app if using a device such as a phone or tablet.

Description: pastorangela@livingsaviourlc.org is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting MAUNDY THURSDAY WORSHIP 7 PM. Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/122065384?>

HOLY COMMUNION

We have conflicting information about whether to do Holy Communion via the Digital Medium used for worship, some sharing bread and wine in their home via online worship, others refraining. The NC Synod and the ELCA both say we should not.

My heart is breaking from not being physically together and able to share this sacrament. I am a minister of Word AND Sacrament, so half my job description is bound up by the guidelines of others. Yet you may see some other places sharing bread and wine, either in a drive through or home setting. Different synods and Bishops, and indeed each pastor and congregational council must decide the right and proper way to do this sacrament.

For now, we fast; awaiting the day when we are once again in each other's presence, able to share physically in the one loaf (or wafers), the one cup, the one Christ.

Pastor Angela



EASTER LOVE LETTERS FROM GOD

During Holy Week, Pastor Angela will be sending links to families to connect with a book, Easter Love Letters from God. These are short readings of the events of Holy Week. There are also many other resources available as well. Below is one such resource.

Easter Eggs at Home

The following ideas came from the United Methodist Church and are available here:

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/adaptable-easter-egg-hunt-for-families-during-covid-19>

Takeaway/Objective: Families will learn about the Easter joy of Jesus' resurrection.

Object: Empty plastic egg.

Read Scripture: Matthew 28:5-6 (CEB) ⁵But the angel said to the women, "Don't be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. ⁶He isn't here, because he's been raised from the dead, just as he said. Come, see the place where they laid him.

Leave one empty egg for this day to represent the tomb. The tomb is empty just as the egg is empty. An empty egg on Easter morning is better than one filled with candy, better than toys! It is the emptiness of the tomb. The empty egg holds the most wonderful gift ever . . . the empty tomb!

Conversation: How is the empty egg a surprise? How might that remind us of the surprise the women felt at the empty tomb that first Easter morning? In one sense, the egg is empty; in another way, the egg is filled with endless possibilities. The tomb was empty! Death has been defeated! All things are possible! God raised Jesus from the dead and proved that nothing, not even death on the cross, could stop God from loving us!

Prayer: God of Easter, we thank you for the good news of the Resurrection. Because of your love, all things are possible! Help us to experience Easter joy, Amen.

Stewardship Observations about the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act)



The CARES Act provides a multitude of assistance to churches, including Charitable Contribution Incentives.

The CARES Act encourages individuals to contribute to religious and other charitable organizations by creating a new "above the line" deduction (i.e. for taxpayers who take the standard deduction). This deduction will permit them to deduct up to \$300 of annual monetary contributions.

MAKING SURE YOU GET YOUR STIMULUS CHECK!

Are you someone has been retired or unemployed for the last few years and who hasn't been required to file a federal tax return for 2018 or 2019 because your income was too low to have to file a federal tax return? There has been much confusion about what has to be done. As of April 5, 2020 this is what the U.S. Treasury has posted on its website:

"Social Security recipients who are not typically required to file a tax return do not need to take an action, and will receive their payment directly to their bank account," said Secretary Steven T. Mnuchin.

The IRS will use the information on the Form SSA-1099 and Form RRB-1099 to generate \$1,200 Economic Impact Payments to Social Security recipients who did not file tax returns in 2018 or 2019. Recipients will receive these payments as a direct deposit or by paper check, just as they would normally receive their benefits.

IRS has posted on its website:

The IRS does not have my direct deposit information. What can I do?

In the coming weeks, Treasury plans to develop a web-based portal for individuals to provide their banking information to the IRS online, so that individuals can receive payments immediately as opposed to checks in the mail.

I am not typically required to file a tax return. Can I still receive my payment?

Yes. The IRS will use the information on the Form SSA-1099 or Form RRB-1099 to generate Economic Impact Payments to recipients of benefits reflected in the Form SSA-1099 or Form RRB-1099 who are not required to file a tax return and did not file a return for 2018 or 2019. This includes senior citizens, Social Security recipients and railroad retirees who are not otherwise required to file a tax return.

Since the IRS would not have information regarding any dependents for these people, each person would receive \$1,200 per person, without the additional amount for any dependents at this time.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Did you know that this COVID 19 pandemic is considered a disaster in which Lutheran Disaster is responding? They are! Bethlehem Lutheran Church in New Orleans, the oldest historically black congregation, has a meal program to which LDR gave \$5000 to fund the purchase of food. With so many restaurants closed, and the hotels shuttered, the need for feeding people is great. Pastor Angela knows the pastor at Bethlehem and attended a conference there this fall. She herself has contributed to help these meals happen. There is also a site in southern California which LDR is helping feed senior citizens and provide supplies for this most vulnerable population.

Be a part of the response:

Pray

Please pray for people who have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. May God's healing presence give them peace and hope in their time of need.

Give

Thanks to generous donations, Lutheran Disaster Response is able to respond quickly and effectively to disasters around the globe. Your **gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response** (General Fund) will be used where they are most needed.

Connect

To learn more about the situation and the ELCA's response:

Sign up to receive Lutheran Disaster Response [alerts](#).

Check the Lutheran Disaster Response [blog](#).

Like Lutheran Disaster Response on [Facebook](#) and follow @ELCALDR on [Twitter](#).