

EXETER UNITED CHURCH



*Open Arms,
Open Hearts,
Open Spirit*

30 April 2020

Greetings my Friends,

I am writing today to provide a few updates and to let you know about activity that has been going on in the background while we are physically distant from one another.

As you are aware, the Province of Ontario has declared that non-essential services are to be closed at this time. The church building falls into this designation. The church is closed to the public, however, the building is being monitored by the Property Team for security and safety.

During this time both Heather and I are working remotely from home. Telephone and email messages are monitored if you contact us by phone or email. We are also attending at the Post Office to collect the mail addressed to the church.

This is an important time for us to remain connected as a faith family. Members of the Leadership Team and the Spiritual Care Visitors have been designated as Spiritual Care Connectors who reach out by phone to check in and ensure that you are well and to address any needs or concerns. If you, or someone you know, have any needs or concerns, please connect with us and we will do our best to connect you with resources. Heather and I can be reached at 519-235-0860 or the office email exeterunitedchurch@gmail.com or for me at rev.oleary.ucc@gmail.com

We are not only reaching out through our Spiritual Care Connectors but I am also providing Wednesday Words of Care and worship material for everyone and a focus on families and children too! I hope that these small offerings have been meaningful and supportive for you!

An update regarding finances. The Finance and Stewardship Team, the Leadership Team and the Trustee Team have each met and communicated with each other. I am happy to report that from a financial standpoint at this time we are stable. Some of the actions we are taking: (a) making application for the government's emergency measures providing wage subsidies; (b) monitoring the United Church of Canada's direction concerning finances; (c) transferring monies to the operating account as needed and ensuring that funds that are held in trust can be available easily when necessary; and (d) doing what is necessary and possible to transition to a more electronic relationship with our bank.

A question you may have is 'How can I continue to support Exeter United Church at this time?'

First, let me say that those members who are on the Pre-Authorized Remittance program (PAR) have provided us with a certain degree of stability - Thank you!

Joining the PAR program would be helpful, however, we know that this does not suit everyone's budget especially in these days when there have been layoffs and money is not so abundant in certain households. If you can and wish to join PAR, please contact us - there is a form that you need to complete and sign. We can walk you through the process.

What might appeal to some are post-dated cheques that could reflect your giving pattern. Or there is a 'Canada Helps' button on our website (exeterunitedchurch.ca) if you wish to give

an online donation. Or, if your previous pattern was to give quarterly or yearly, maybe you want to consider giving now?

Each of the worship resources that I have provided include a time of 'giving' and I have suggested that you have a special container or jar for those 'givings'. I believe it is important to continue to express the action of giving even when we are not physically together for worship. We have so much to be thankful for and the offering is our time to be intentional and physical about it. So another way to financially support the church is to continue doing that, save it up! When we are able to be in the sanctuary, that first service back, I would love to see your saved up offerings in their containers.... I want to be able to bless each and every one of them, no matter the size or the amount. That is not what matters, what matters is the fact that you have shown your faithfulness during a time of separation and for that I will give FULL THANKS! This is your way of living the vision and the mission of church! Giving up to your potential!

Lastly, I must remind you that during this time the needs of the Exeter Community Food Bank, the Community Table and the Street2Feet initiative also are in need of support. If you can, consider supporting them too!

Many blessings to each and every one of you. Thank you for all that you are doing to be safe and well. I so look forward to our next face to face meeting!

Blessings
Rev. Laurie

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