



GEORGE STREET UNITED CHURCH



25 Buchanan Street, St. John's, NL, A1C 0A4

***Three times I appealed to the Lord about this, that it would leave me,
but He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you,
for my power is made perfect in weakness."
So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses,
so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.
-2 Corinthians 12: 8, 9***

25 March 2020

To the Scattered Saints of the George Street Pastoral Charge:

Grace and peace to you.

We are in a new-to-us place. Our forebears dealt with the Spanish Flu and, while there have been a number of widescale medical crises since 1918, we haven't responded quite as we are now. The good news is that our current response is built upon learnings from the Spanish Flu and other large medical events so, even as difficult as it feels, there is much wisdom in recognizing that something invisible to the naked eye has our number and can bring us low. Boasting in that communal weakness is the path to finding communal strength.

The strength of the Church has always been the gathered body of the believers either in work or worship. Into these gatherings, an invisible enemy seeks to come and multiply and destroy. So, we must choose to embrace the weakness of isolation so that the power of Christ can be made manifest and the grace of God realized in the wisdom of the medical community. When the enemy is routed, or at the very least controlled, we will be free to come together in work and worship once more.

Meanwhile, we have to find ways to maintain our caring, one for another. To that end, a member of the Pastoral Care Team will be contacting you by phone (or has already done so). That member is going to check in with you to try and determine what we can do to help you cope with our time apart. If you are getting along fine, let us know. If you have specific needs, let us know how we might help.



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If you or a family member have access to a computer, you can join us on our Facebook page. I am uploading videos to the page on a daily basis. Typically, one of those videos is me reading a chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew, as part of our Lenten Challenge, and the other is a brief meditation on various doctrines of The United Church of Canada. If any of the videos prompt you to ask a question, feel free to comment and I will respond. On Sunday mornings at 11 AM, I go live on our Facebook page with a brief worship opportunity. The worship is not very interactive at this point, we are experimenting with how we may facilitate these moments even more successfully.

Regrettably we have had to put many of our volunteers with the Soup Kitchen into a voluntary isolation. A close encounter with the Covid-19 Virus means that for two weeks we will not be serving the take-away meals on Monday or Friday. To the best of my knowledge none of the volunteers have tested positive and all are currently in good health. This is purely precautionary. It is more loving towards our neighbours, to ensure we are not a conduit for this potentially deadly disease. I invite you to join me in lifting the volunteers up through prayer in this difficult and anxious time.

The Modified Mission Team will be meeting again shortly to discuss future plans and to make those plans in consideration of direction provided by both the *First Dawn Eastern Edge Region* of The United Church of Canada and *The Minister of Health and Community Services*. We will inform our members of any important changes to our current status after that meeting.

Though we cannot be physically together our spirits are still joined together by the everlasting love of Jesus our Lord and our Saviour. Be well. Be safe. Be home.

Your Servant in Christ Jesus,

Reverend John Maich