



# The Evangel

Vol. 37, Edition 4

April 2020

## *Our Saviour Lutheran Church*

*is a congregation of the  
Indiana-Kentucky Synod of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church  
in America.*

*We welcome all  
to share in life with Christ  
as a community  
of faith in mission.*

## *OSLC's Vision & Mission*

*God calls us to be a community of  
discipleship for all, making Christ's  
love real in our daily lives.*

*Grow in faith and Christian calling  
Love and serve God and neighbor  
Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ*

## *Worship Online*

Join us for our first Zoom worship service, Sunday, March 29, at 10 A.M. EDT. You can join the Zoom session using your Web browser with this URL: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6477209851>. If you use the Zoom app on your smart device or computer, select "Join" and then enter "647 720 9851" in the Meeting ID box .

*Randy Schroeder, Pastor  
Michael Vinson, Campus Pastor*

## **Caring for Self and Others in Times of Trouble: Some Spiritual Tools and Tips**

(From Harvard Divinity School Website: <https://hds.harvard.edu/life-at-hds/religious-and-spiritual-life/caring-self-others-times-trouble-spiritual-tools-tips>)

1. **Breathe. Breathe. Breathe some more.** Take time in your day, at any moment, to take ten deep even breaths. Carve out 5-10 minutes to meditate or practice mindfulness or contemplative prayer. Start here, now, wherever you are.
2. **Ground yourself in the present moment.** Focus your awareness on something real, enduring, or beautiful in your surroundings. Look up often. Discover the wonder and awe that is already here.
3. **Acknowledge your fears, anxieties, concerns.** Offer them up in prayer, if you pray. Write them in your journal. Share them with others. Feel what you feel, honor it, and know that it is not the final word.
4. **Remember you are not alone.** Ever. You are surrounded by care and support. Reach out.
5. **Create and sustain community.** Show up for one another. Listen compassionately. Practice empathy. Even while avoiding "close physical contact," message the people you care about. Stand with those most vulnerable and those who suffer the brunt of prejudice and fear. Check in on folks. Call your mother, father, guardian, mentor, little sibling, long-lost friend.
6. **Unplug, judiciously.** While staying aware of developments, do not let the Corona-chaos govern you, but forgive yourself when and if it does.
7. **Practice kindness.** There is a temptation in health scares to view others as potential threats. Remember we are in this together. While practicing health guidelines and appropriate caution, remember to engage one another. Smile when you can. Bring good deeds and good energy into our world.
8. **Stay healthy through sleep, diet, exercise.** See healing and wellness holistically—mind, body, and spirit.
9. **Make art.** Discover, imagine, engage your hopes and fears, the beauty and ugliness of our world. Write, paint, sing, dance, soar.
10. **Practice gratitude.** In the face of crises, make note of the things for which you are grateful: your breath, the particular shade of the sky at dusk—or dawn. The color blue, the color green, the gifts and strengths you have, other people in your life, the ability to laugh. A pet.
11. **Connect with your spiritual, religious, humanist, cultural, or other communities.** Find strength and solace and power in traditions, texts, rituals, practices, holy times and seasons.
12. **Pray as you are able, silently, through song, in readings, through ancestors.** Remember the long view of history, the rhythms and cycles of nature, the invisible threads that connect us all.
13. **Practice hope.** Trust in the future and our power to endure and persist, to live fully into the goodness that awaits.

—Alexander Levering Kearns  
Director of the Center for Spirituality, Dialogue, and Service  
Northeastern University  
March 11, 2020

(This is an amended article from the email Pastor Randy sent out to the congregation in March.)



Grace, mercy and peace from God our Creator be with you through our Savior Jesus Christ. If you're anything like me, you are feeling powerless and frustrated. What in God's creation is going on? Leaders are supposed to have answers. Churches are supposed to hold services. Grocery store shelves are supposed to be full (and TP is supposed to be readily available). We are supposed to go out to eat and see friends and family. We are supposed to have power over our circumstances... Ok ... that one went a bit too far... The illusion in which we live gives us the belief that we are to have power in all situations. The truth is, we do not. That reality is hitting us in the gut right now. Certainty is as fragile as a snowflake. And the stress of COVID-19 is falling like an avalanche. SO... In the middle of this uncertainty avalanche, where can we find the certainty of the majestic snowflake?

The Council and other leaders of OSLC met on Wednesday the 18<sup>th</sup> in person (Shhhh) and via zoom, to discuss what we could *make certain*, fragile of course, as much as we can. The leadership decided the following:

***Obey the CDC requirements of not meeting in community worship or other church gatherings until May 10<sup>th</sup>. Provide worship opportunities on Sunday morning and Wednesdays.***

\*On March 29<sup>th</sup> we will use Zoom, a website for online conferences, to hold a live service in which you can participate, hear songs etc. You should have received information about a tutorial and walk through the Zoom process (This information is also on the website: [www.osluth.org](http://www.osluth.org))

\*Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> we will try a Facebook live session with Pastor Randy on either the OSLC Facebook page or Pastor Randy's Facebook page. (Or both)

**In the future... still working on this one...** we are working on new ideas for what worship might look like as the weather gets warmer.

***Send out prayer requests twice a week.*** Please let us know what you need or what prayer concerns arise by calling the church office or emailing me or Sandra.

***Once we are reunited in Worship, we will have an Easter celebration worship and meal*** and rejoice the New Life we have in Christ and together, because we will not have the regular Easter gathering on April 12<sup>th</sup>. I believe we need to celebrate our reunion with a grand gathering celebration when it happens.

Peace be with you all as we look for what God is providing in this new uncertainty in which we live. I pray that your faith reveals God's presence all around you. Just as the Israelites entered the wilderness with great uncertainty, so did their leadership, Moses and Aaron. We are called to something unfamiliar yet sustained by the Love of God as shown through manna from the sky and water flowing from a rock... God is with us now in patience, love, grace and acceptance always. God's Love is as certain as the beauty of the snowflake, as the spring flowers push through the soil for life, as the morning sun shines in the heavens, as the rising moon shows brightness in the void of the night sky. Our certainty is God's love for all people expressed in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ our Savior. Of *this* we are certain.

Pastor Randy

## Pints with a Pastor to Meet Online

**Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup>: Pints with the Pastor-Zoom in at 6:56 P.M.**

**Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>: "MH" Pints with a Pastor-Zoom in at 6:26 P.M.**

**(for Young adults)**

**Monday, April 27<sup>th</sup>: Pints with the Pastor-Zoom in at 6:56 P.M.**



## APRIL UPDATES

### Faith Formation Resources & Staying Connected

- Illustrated Ministry (faith resources for church & home)- FREE resources at: <https://illstrtdm.in/covid19>
- RightNow Media (bible studies, devotions, video resources for individuals & families)-FREE OSLC membership: <https://www.rightnowmedia.org/account/invite/OurSaviour>
- Pints with a Pastor (Pastor Randy) 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month (all ages).
- Facebook-“Like” OSLC’s page for updates and upcoming events: <https://www.facebook.com/osluth/>

### Thank you for the Easter Egg Fillers!

Thank you to those of you that made donations before the social distance restrictions! We plan to pack some Easter Eggs and share with families at Easter. Your generosity is appreciated!

### Women’s Retreat: Where is your hope?

There is hope, we will be together soon! The retreat was postponed until fall. Look for more information to come. If you are unable to attend the rescheduled date, your registration fee will be returned.

### Mark Your Calendars for VBS

ALL ABOARD!! “Rocky Railway” VBS remains on the scheduled for June 8th-June 12th from 9-11:30 A.M. OSLC will team up with Badger Grove Community Church this summer. If social distancing recommendations continue through the summer or school schedules change, the date may be moved back. Look for more updated information to come!

[www.childrensbulletins.com/covid19-childrens-activities-for-churches](http://www.childrensbulletins.com/covid19-childrens-activities-for-churches)

Contact Information for Angie Henderson, Director of Christian Education and Outreach:

EMAIL: [angie@osluth.org](mailto:angie@osluth.org) Church: 765-743-2931 Cell/Home: 402-213-9157

### Helpful Reminder

Don’t forget to sign-up for a [rightnowmedia.org](http://rightnowmedia.org) subscription. It is a free subscription for friends of OSLC (includes members and guests/friends/family).

Email Angie Henderson with any questions you may have to: [angie@osluth.org](mailto:angie@osluth.org). Here’s the link to activate your subscription:

<https://www.rightnowmedia.org/Account/Invite/OurSaviour>



rightnow MEDIA

## OSLC Stewardship Column April 2020

The novel coronavirus pandemic is upon us and has changed many aspects of our lives, including how we gather and worship. For fifty years, most of our members have made weekly or monthly contributions using envelopes placed in the offering plates on Sundays. Since we won't be meeting at the church on Sundays for several weeks or more, that's not going to work.

Unfortunately, we need to continue to pay our utility bills, employee compensation, payroll taxes, and support to Purdue Lutheran Ministry, Lafayette Urban Ministry, and Indiana-Kentucky Synod.

Assuming your income hasn't stopped due to the pandemic, please consider sending your offering by mail to the church (300 W Fowler Ave, WL 47906) or online ([www.osluth.org](http://www.osluth.org)). Just click the "Give: Your Offering Made Easy" button on the home page. Checks sent to the church through the mail will be counted, recorded, and deposited the same way the offering has been handled in the past. Contributions made online will go directly into our checking account with weekly reports being sent to the Treasurer (Sue Hermodson) and the Financial Secretary (John Mills).

If you have any questions about the online contributions, don't hesitate to contact John Mills either by phone or an email to [john.r.mills@icloud.com](mailto:john.r.mills@icloud.com).

Thank you for all that you do and thank you for your financial support that makes our ministry possible, even during a pandemic.

-- Steve Belter, [seb@wintek.com](mailto:seb@wintek.com)

Our  
Spirit  
Living in  
Christ

## To the People and Communities of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod Regarding Extended Life Together at a Distance



*By paths they have not known I will guide them.  
I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground.  
These are the things I will do, and I will not forsake them. (Isa. 42:16)*

My previous pastoral letter to the synod as a whole was written on March 6. Twenty days seems like a lifetime ago. Of course, I have communicated via email, Zoom, and phone with scores and scores of individuals and groups and I sent a pastoral letter to our rostered ministers (pastors and deacons) during these last 20 days. It is clear that the world has changed in this short time and it keeps changing as we wander together through this coronavirus wilderness toward God's unfolding future. These are fear-filled, anxiety-provoking, tragic, and confusing times, dear people of God.

Nevertheless, God is with us. God is guiding us. God promises to stay with us and to lead us by paths we have not known. "These are the things I will do," says the Lord, "and I will not forsake them." Entrusting ourselves to that promise, we are finding ways to walk together on this new path, even at a physical distance from one another. We pray with and for one another, for those who are most vulnerable and marginalized during this time, and for all whose lives are touched directly by Covid-19. Even at a distance, we encourage one another, we remind one another of the powerful presence of the crucified and risen Jesus with us and in the world, and we entrust ourselves and our world to the promises of new, abundant, and lasting life that are as true now as they were a month ago. Together, we turn our attention to serving the neighbor, every neighbor, especially those who may be overlooked or set aside by others, with the cross-formed love we see and know in Jesus.

Thank you, people of God, for your willingness to put your trust in God and to walk together through this wilderness. Thank you for your openness to trying new things, for embracing new-to-you technologies and ways of being together. Thank you for being willing to experiment and fail, and for your grace with and support of one another and of those who seek to lead us forward.

And thank you, deacons, pastors, and other ministers and leaders who serve across this Indiana-Kentucky Synod and on synod staff. Every one of you stands in a long line of leaders who have accompanied and guided God's people through intense, confusing, threatening wilderness wanderings through the centuries, reaching all the way back to Genesis. You are leading us through this particular coronavirus-induced wilderness with grit and grace, commitment and creativity, and deep, abiding trust in God's presence in the midst of it and God's promise to get us through it, the promise embodied in and now walking the wilderness with us in the crucified and risen Christ. Thank you. Please make sure to take care of yourselves and those who are close to you along the way.

Here are some things that are important for you to know and tend to as we continue this wilderness journey together:

- \* Given the CDC's continuing recommendation that meetings of more than ten people be suspended through at least May 10th in order to continue slowing and staving the spread of the coronavirus, **the Synod Executive Committee and I strongly recommend that all in-person worship and other congregational or ministry activities be suspended through the middle of May.** I am aware, of course, that this pushes us through Easter Sunday toward the 6th Sunday of Easter (May 17th). The weekend of March 28, I will send a communication to our pastors and deacons (through our conference deans) offering some guidance for making decisions about worship, including Holy Communion, during this extended time of physical distancing. That letter will also be made available more generally through the synod's website ([www.iksynod.org](http://www.iksynod.org)) and social media. Should you decide to have an in-person gathering of ten or less people, it is crucial for the sake of the participants and for the common good that all appropriate Covid-19 protocols be observed, such as no touching, maintaining 6' distance, use of sanitizing methods for hands and surfaces, etc.
- \* **Please continue to share your offerings with your congregation and your congregational mission support with the synod in any way that you can.** Gospel ministry continues during this time. In fact, local and synodical ministries have intensified and many of us are actually growing ministries in service to our neighbors. If your congregation has not yet set up electronic giving, check out this website for a couple of "preferred vendors" which offer discounts for congregations of the ELCA: <https://elca.org/preferredvendors>. The synod uses Tithe.ly.
- \* In alignment with Indiana Governor Holcomb's "stay at home" order, **the synod office will remain closed at least through April 7, and possibly longer.** All staff are working from home. We gather for prayer via Zoom on Wednesdays. Essential staff go into the office on Wednesday just long enough to take care of paying bills, making deposits, and other essential tasks. **We have also suspended staff travel and canceled or postponed synod events/gatherings through the month of April.** The best way to contact staff, including me, is via email.

*Continued on page 3*

- \* **The 2020 Synod Assembly has been canceled.** Per the synod’s governing documents, the Synod Council will do the business work that would have come to the Assembly (including synod council membership and budget, for example). We will also work toward planning three regional one-day worship/fellowship/information sharing events in the fall, or whenever we are able to host large meetings again.
- \* **Synod staff members are providing video sermons** for Sundays through mid-May. The sermons are available for download via the synod’s YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCE5dD18sLTN2rJ2a5Za7h2w>), Vimeo, and other sources each week. Deacon Cory Driver is also offering a short video lectionary reflection each Thursday, also accessible through the YouTube channel.
- \* **If you do not follow synod ministry on social media, now would be a good time to do so.** By way of these media we offer links to resources for congregations and their leaders, prayers, and accompaniment and support for the people of this synod. Search for Indiana-Kentucky Synod and Bishop Bill Gafkjen on social media platforms and you should find us. Many of these resources can also be found on the synod’s website ([www.iksynod.org/covid-19-resources/](http://www.iksynod.org/covid-19-resources/)). Also, if you do not receive the weekly eNews, please email Assistant to the Bishop Pastor Dan Fugate ([dfugate@iksynod.org](mailto:dfugate@iksynod.org)) to be added to the mailing list.

It is clear that we’ve still got some distance to go through this wilderness, dear people of God. It is also clear that we, the church, and the world will all be different on the other side of this. It is so important that we go the way together, that we be gracious and gentle with one another as we each deal with the situation differently, and that we do all that we can to keep the common good and love for and service to our neighbor near the center of our commitments, right alongside our trust in the steadfast love, presence, and promise of God that we see and know in Jesus. For thus says the Lord, “By paths they have not known I will guide them. I will turn the darkness before them into light, the rough places into level ground. These are the things I will do, and I will not forsake them.”

Peace be with you,  
The Rev. Dr. William O. Gafkjen, Bishop

COVID-19 Resources from the I-K Synod:  
<https://iksynod.org/covid-19-resources/>

### June 2020 Synod Assembly Cancelled

The Indiana-Kentucky Synod Executive Committee has made the difficult decision to cancel the 2020 Synod Assembly. This decision was made by the Executive Committee based on CDC and other recommendations regarding the Covid-19 crisis, the recommendation of the ELCA Presiding Bishop and Secretary to cancel or postpone synod assemblies, and mindful of the significant financial implications of this crisis for congregations and the synod. Many other ELCA synods have also made the decision to cancel or, if constitutionally necessary or in the case of bishop elections (16 this year), to postpone until fall. Our synod’s governing documents do not require the synod to have an assembly annually. The next Synod Assembly will be in June 2021.

Almost 100 years ago, one-time U.K. poet laureate John Masefield wrote a play called *The Trial of Jesus*. In it, the centurion who oversaw Jesus’ execution returns to give Pontius Pilate an official report. When Pilate’s wife requests and receives details about the crucifixion, she asks, “Do you think he is dead?” Despite what he had witnessed, the centurion answers, “No, lady, I don’t.”

Confused, Pilate’s wife inquires, “Then where is he?” The man’s response: “Let loose in the world, where none can stop his truth.”

Indeed, as 2 Timothy 2:9 (ESV) attests, “The word of God is not bound!”

The Christian church commemorates Dietrich Bonhoeffer — pastor, theologian, anti-Nazi spy — on April 9, the anniversary of his 1945 martyrdom. Among his much-loved writings are nuggets of wisdom such as these:

“Judging others makes us blind, whereas love is illuminating. By judging others we blind ourselves to our own evil and to the grace which others are just as entitled to as we are.” (*The Cost of Discipleship*)

“In normal life we hardly realize how much more we receive than we give, and life cannot be rich without such gratitude. It is so easy to overestimate the importance of our own achievements compared with what we owe to the help of others.” (*Letters and Papers from Prison*)

“The table fellowship of Christians implies obligation. It is our daily bread that we eat, not my own. We share our bread. Thus we are firmly bound to one another not only in the Spirit but in our whole physical being. The one bread that is given to our fellowship links us together in a firm covenant.” (*Life Together*)

# Social Justice COVID-19 Updates

## COVID-19 Update from FFFB

Needless to say, the last 10 days have been filled with stress and uncertainty. I want to assure you that Food Finders Food Bank remains open and working hard to meet the needs of our neighbors. We continue to see many new clients requesting our services for the first time due to the sudden downturn of our economy. Our Chief Philanthropy Officer, Kier Crites, and I recorded a short video that I hope will provide you with a brief update and encouragement. (See our facebook page.) Our team is here to answer any questions or concerns you might have. We are updating our website as news changes rapidly. If you know someone in need, our on-site pantry's schedule and other resources can be also be found there.

Be well,

Katy Bunder President/CEO

Food Finders Food Bank ([www.food-finders.org](http://www.food-finders.org))

1204 Greenbush Street

Lafayette, IN 47904



Lafayette Urban Ministry

Touching the future by helping children & families today



## How Can We Help LUM?

**CASH DONATIONS** are preferred because they allow LUM to purchase what is needed, when it's needed. To give online, go to [lumserve.org/donate/](http://lumserve.org/donate/).

**MEALS** — Prepare a meal for the guests at the LUM Emergency Shelter. You may prepare & serve meals —OR— just drop off your prepared meal —OR— donate food that the LUM staff can prepare, like bread, deli meats, and large cans of soup, stew & chili. For more information and to sign up, go to [lumserve.org/shelter-meal/](http://lumserve.org/shelter-meal/).

**NEEDED ITEMS**—Donations of “needed items” are also welcome and appreciated. To view the LUM *Wish list of Needed Items*, go to [lumserve.org/wish-list/](http://lumserve.org/wish-list/). You may either ship or drop off items to the LUM Office (420 N 4th Street, Lafayette, IN 47901). Here is a list of “**COVID-19 Supplies**” that are urgently needed now:

- **Disinfectant** (for surfaces) – bleach, wipes (Lysol, Clorox), spray (Lysol), cleaner (Fantastik, 409, Clorox)
- **Hand Cleaning** – antibacterial wipes, gloves (nitrile disposable), hand sanitizer, liquid hand soap
- **Paper Products** – paper towels, facial tissues, toilet paper

To give online, go to [lumserve.org/donate/](http://lumserve.org/donate/). To view the LUM *Wish list of Needed Items*, go to [lumserve.org/wish-list/](http://lumserve.org/wish-list/). **THANK YOU.**

## Family Promise

The last few days have been full of webinars and telephone meetings with several organizations including the CDC, HUD, Tippecanoe County Health Department, Family Promise National, and others. I can attest to the fact that there are many people working collaboratively to keep people safe, find solutions, and help flatten the COVID-19 curve.

I want to extend my gratitude for those that have reached out to me via phone or email. My email has been busy but I will respond soon. The overwhelming support from this community is encouraging and I truly appreciate your thoughtfulness of others even during this time. As I stated previously, pandemics do not stop crisis and the families we serve were on crisis prior to COVID-19. Our families now have more barriers like loss of income, less housing prospects, and even more discouragement. Nevertheless, we are still ever-committed to help families overcome what seems to be insurmountable obstacles. With help, families can achieve self-sufficiency and with help, together we can get through this pandemic together.

In order to have a more organized relief effort, we have joined with over 150 affiliates of the national Family Promise organization in a COVID-19 relief effort. All amounts already given will be counted in our relief effort. However, if you would still like to join us, please paste the following link in your browser and consider donating today.

[https://www.fpgives.org/organizations/family-promise-of-greater-lafayette-inc?fbclid=IwAR0KdU5F9IeNyuzyvYHktvser-b2ysG\\_Wcc6M4Iek0j-HHTfLM0Lz6kOUXE](https://www.fpgives.org/organizations/family-promise-of-greater-lafayette-inc?fbclid=IwAR0KdU5F9IeNyuzyvYHktvser-b2ysG_Wcc6M4Iek0j-HHTfLM0Lz6kOUXE)

Additionally, please consider sharing this link on your social media platform. I'm sure we will exceed our goal. Please know that any additional funds will be still be used to help our families here in Greater Lafayette area.

Be safe, be encouraged, and continue to practice social distancing and wash your hands!

Nakeshia J. Hedrick, Executive Director  
Family Promise of Greater Lafayette, Inc.  
2010 Elmwood Ave.  
Lafayette, IN 47904  
(765) 838-3651 — [fpglinc.org](http://fpglinc.org)



## Social Justice COVID-19 Updates



**Lutheran World Relief**  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. LASTING PROMISE.

Dear Friends,

While you continue to keep your loved ones safe, I urge every member of our Lutheran family to contribute whatever you can to prevent a growing catastrophe for vulnerable families in Africa.

Right now, in the most fragile communities across the African continent, far too many:

- \* Families don't know how to protect themselves from this invisible killer.
- \* Children and adults don't have access to clean water to wash their hands.
- \* Health care workers are treating sick patients with no masks, no gloves, no training, and no medical equipment!

As the virus spreads, families fighting extreme poverty in countries like Uganda, Burkina Faso and the Democratic Republic of Congo are at extreme risk. So our staff is fully mobilized to fight COVID-19, quickly implementing the steps we took to halt the recent Ebola outbreaks in Africa.

Your urgently needed gift today (go to [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org) to give) will:

- \* Quickly send staff door-to-door to teach families how to protect themselves through handwashing, sanitation and social distancing.
- \* Install handwashing stations in more communities and improve access to clean water.
- \* Rush critically needed supplies to keep patients and heroic health care workers safe.

Thank you for helping to mobilize God's hands and feet on earth as we work as fast as we can to protect our most vulnerable neighbors from the COVID-19 pandemic.

May God bless you and keep you safe.

Sincerely,  
Ambassador Daniel V. Speckhard  
President and CEO

P.S. While we all do what we need to remain safe at home, we must also work to prevent the catastrophic spread of the coronavirus in countries where health systems are not prepared to handle an outbreak of this magnitude. Thank you for making your most generous gift.

**PACK AWAY HUNGER**

We have distributed more than 118,000 meals to local families in the past week. The need will continue.

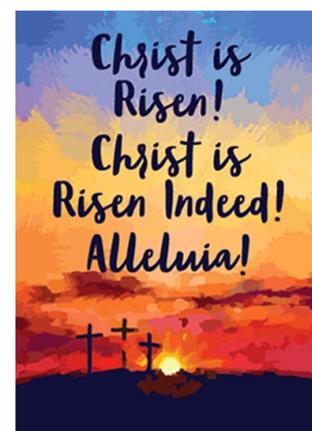
Please donate today. (<https://donate.packawayhunger.org/2020>)

The most vulnerable groups in our communities are suffering greatly with the spread of COVID-19. Children who receive free or reduced-price lunch, families who live on limited or fixed incomes and older adults are all experiencing severely limited access to healthy food.

We are currently distributing meals to local food pantries, community centers and churches that are able to share meals with at-risk populations. Your past generosity has made it possible for us to provide these non-perishable, highly-nutritious meals.

Now more than ever, we need your support to continue.

Your donation will create more meals for these local families in need. Please give today!





Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.  
— Philippians 4:6

## Coronavirus Conversations Discussion Guide



Begin by sharing a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your lives and then use the outline below to talk about faith and God's presence in this moment.



### Caring Conversations

Discuss these thoughts and questions:

- What concerns you about the coronavirus pandemic?
- With restaurants, gyms, and theaters closed, how do you spend your time?
- When worship services are canceled, in what way can you worship in your home?



### Devotions

Read the following:

*Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Matthew 6:25-30 (NRSV)*

- What message do you hear in this reading related to the affect the coronavirus has had on our lives?
- How has the coronavirus impacted your faith life?



### Service

There are many who are elderly or immune compromised. During this time of the coronavirus pandemic, it is important they stay at home and be quarantined from others. In what way can you help a neighbor who may be in need of food or supplies at this time?



### Rituals and Traditions

Pray together: The Lord's Prayer.

Conclude by blessing one another:

*May God take away your worries and fill you with peace through Christ our Lord.*



*I am the  
resurrection  
and the life.*  
— Jesus

## Easter Egg Blessing Milestone Moment

Milestones Ministry brings an awareness of the presence of God to individuals of all generations by recognizing the home as church, too. A Milestone Moment brings family and friends together to mark a special time in their lives and to acknowledge and affirm God's presence in their midst. Milestone Moments provide a model for connecting significant occasions in people's lives with the ongoing journey of faith.

Historically, eggs have been associated with new life, rebirth, and springtime. Many ancient cultures used eggs in their religious ceremonies. It was not long before the Christian church took up the tradition of decorating and giving eggs as gifts as part of the springtime festival of Easter to celebrate the resurrection. Decorating Easter eggs and hiding them for an Easter egg hunt has been a fun tradition for many a family gathering. Having an Easter egg hunt at one's home or at a community park can be a simple and effective way of celebrating the message of Christ's resurrection with family, friends, and neighbors. A congregation can also use the Easter egg hunt as an outreach tool for the surrounding community.

Milestones Ministry uses a simple five stage structure that includes naming, equipping, blessing, gifting, and reinforcing so that the Milestone Moment will have a greater chance to take deeper root in one's lifelong faith formation.

Moments that cause us to pause and shift gears like the celebration of the resurrection and the beginning of a new season in the church year happen once a year. Providing opportunities to take a breath and find God's presence in these moments is important. This Easter Egg Blessing Milestone Moment incorporates the five stage structure.

**Naming** – It is important to recognize a time of coloring eggs for Easter and the traditions we have of using eggs in baskets and for hunts. This can play a role in passing faith from one generation to the next.

**Equipping** – This Milestone Moment encourages caring conversations that connect our faith while participating in the tradition of coloring eggs for Easter and having an awareness of its history in the Christian church.

**Blessing** – Blessing the eggs and the Easter egg hunt reminds us of the joy of the resurrection and our new life in Christ.

**Gifting** – Giving a tangible gift like a plastic egg with a special message, Bible verse, or gift inside is a good way to be reminded of this milestone every year during Easter.

**Reinforcing** – It is a good idea to follow up after the Blessing of the Easter Egg Milestone Moment by gathering a few weeks after Easter Sunday to talk about how the Easter egg hunt and coloring eggs enriched relationships by combining playfulness, celebration of the resurrection, and fellowship time.

Four Keys for Practicing Faith

- Caring Conversations
- Devotions
- Service
- Rituals and Traditions



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News items for the May *Evangel* are due to Sandra Vana (sandra@osluth.org) by 4/22/2020. Please type "Evangel" in the subject line.

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**The Evangel**

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