

April 2020

Redeeming Words

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April Calendar

April 1	Cancelled – Lenten Worship	7:30 pm
April 4	On-Line? – Conf Class	1:00 pm
April 5	<i>Palm Sunday</i>	
	Cancelled – Worship	10:00 am
April 7	Cancelled – Stewardship	7:30 pm
April 9	<i>Maundy Thursday</i>	
	Cancelled – Potluck St. B.	6:00 pm
	Cancelled – Worship St. B.	7:30 pm
April 10	<i>Good Friday</i>	
	On-Line – Walk of Faith	9:00 am
	Cancelled – Worship CTR	7:30 pm
April 11	<i>Holy Saturday</i>	
	Cancelled – Easter Vigil	7:30 pm
April 12	<i>Easter</i>	
	Cancelled – Breakfast	9:30 am
	TBA – Worship	11:00 am
	TBA – Sunday School	11:00 am
April 15	Cancelled – Seniors' Worship	2:00
April 18	On-Line? – Conf Class	1:00 pm
April 19	TBA – Worship-Easter 2	10:00 am
April 21	TBA – Mutual Ministry	7:30 pm
April 22	TBA – Bible Study	7:30 pm
April 26	TBA – Worship-Easter 3	10:00 am
	TBA – Sunday School	10:00 am
	TBA – Worship & Music Com	11:30 am
April 29	TBA – Bible Study	7:30 am
April 30	TBA – Montreal Luth Council	7:30 pm
	St. Ansgar's, NDG	



The full calendar is posted in the event that the bans on public gatherings are lifted. You will be notified about our plans for worship (including Communion) on Easter morning, April 12. TBA (to be announced) means that you should check with the church office about these events after Easter.

Worship Notes

During the cancellation of worship Pastor Jim is prepared to send weekly lessons, a sermon, prayers, and other notes for those who request them until public worship services resume. Call, text or e-mail.

COVID-19

Pastor Jim mailed and e-mailed a letter to our members in mid-March. Here is a summary:

1. Based on the advice of National Bishop Susan Johnson and all five Synodical Bishops, civic leaders, health officials, and the example of other denominations we have decided to cease holding Sunday morning services of worship, our Wednesday evening Lenten worship and study, and all meetings until further notice.
2. I will refrain from making regular visits to hospitals, seniors' residences, and private residences until the threat of my getting and then spreading the illness is eliminated.
3. During this outbreak I will work from the church office according to the following schedule:

Tuesday- Friday	9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Saturday	9:00 am – 1:00 pm

 I would be glad to receive telephone calls, e-mails and text messages.
4. The church building will be open from 9:00 to 11:00 am on Sunday morning, and during my office hours. Members are welcome to drop by for private prayer or pastoral conversation from a safe distance.
5. I will offer Holy Communion to visitors who make an appointment, exercising thorough hand-washing and other hygienic measures.

Please pray for the victims of this illness in our province, across the country, and around the world. Offer intercessions for doctors, nurses, researchers and other health care providers.

Resist the temptation to panic and to hoard groceries or other items. Continue to be neighbourly to one another. Use the phone or internet to remain in contact with family and friends, especially those who are living alone.

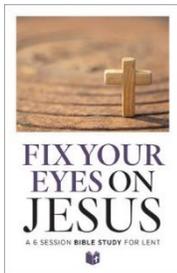
In Christ,
Pastor Jim

Lenten Devotions

Although some small group gatherings are permitted in Quebec at the present time, our Sunday services and Wednesday worship and studies have been cancelled.

Until we next convene members are encouraged to: a) read the Bible and offer prayers at home, b) subscribe to the worship notes offered by Pastor Jim, c) rely on daily devotional booklets like *Eternity for Today*, d) search the internet for other live-streamed services or sacred music, e) come to the church and pray silently/privately, and f) ask Pastor Jim for private Communion.

Those who purchased the mid-week devotional booklet *Fix Your Eyes on Jesus* may find this resource helpful.



Palm Sunday

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday, seven days before Easter. It is our practice to distribute palm fronds and to begin the service with a joyful procession. You are welcome to come to the church and pick up your palms outdoors on April 4 (9:00 am - 1:00 pm) and April 5 (9:00 am - 11:00 am). Or you could go for a nature walk, and search for pussy-willows (a local substitute for palms.)



Maundy Thursday

The potluck meal and service of footwashing and communion scheduled for April 9 has been cancelled. The day leads us into a three-day remembrance of the last hours of Jesus' human life, including his example of humble service and the institution of the Lord's Supper. Maundy refers to Jesus' command for us to love one another. At home you could identify a tangible way to serve a family member or neighbour.

Walk of Faith

The Walk of Faith will not take its usual form this year. Leaders will offer live-streamed or prerecorded lessons and prayers. Stayed tuned for details.

Good Friday

Our evening service of Tenebrae (darkness) has also been cancelled this spring. This is the day when Christians around the world remember Jesus' suffering and death. At home you might read the Passion according to Matthew, chapters 26 and 27, by candlelight. And then pray in silence and darkness after the candle is extinguished.



Holy Saturday

On the evening of April 11, the eve of Easter, we are not able to hold a service this year. Beginning in 2011 we have held a Vigil here with the rector and members of St. Barnabas Anglican Church. In the last two years we have also kindled our Easter fire with the leaders of St. Luke's Roman Catholic Church. At home light another candle, read a Bible story or two about God's love for you and all humanity, and offer prayers of thanksgiving for the Baptism with which you have been grafted to God's family tree.

Easter

Our plans for Easter morning are undecided. It is most likely that the 9:30 breakfast will be cancelled in 2020. But perhaps some form of worship might be held, even allowing members to receive Holy Communion at 11:00. Your creative suggestions are welcome (live-stream, drive-in, delivery of bread and wine...). If we cannot gather to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord on April 12, you might consider an Easter Breakfast at your place, followed by the reading of Matthew 28:1-10. You might also like to watch a movie about Jesus on tv or the internet, or borrow a DVD from my collection..



Congregational Council

In light of the virus the Council cancelled its March meeting. In the coming days our elected leaders may find a way to attend a virtual meeting, and attend to the congregation's business and ministries.

Stewardship Committee

The committee is scheduled to meet on April 7. Members are likely to find a way to meet electronically.

The questionnaire about two major gifts is still being collected. (Additional copies available upon request.) Please mail or e-mail your responses to the church office, to help us decide how to spend and/or invest nearly \$2 M. We seek your help:

1. spending up to \$120K on local capital projects in the coming year or two,
2. enhancing local ministries identified in the 2020 Budget (except "Designated Offerings"), and
3. balancing our support for others outside the congregation between Eastern Synod Benevolence, Other Lutheran Ministries, and Local Outreach.

The committee would also encourage you to set aside your weekly offerings until worship services are resumed, so that the annual budget will be maintained. Those on PAR will continue to have their offerings come to the congregation each month.

Bulletin Photos

Public services of worship are not likely to resume until May or June. Even so, you could submit jpg photos to enhance our bulletin this year (or next):

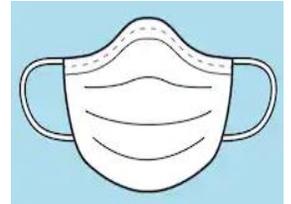
May 3	Easter 4 Psalm 23, shepherd, sheep, staff
May 10	Easter 5 Building block, cornerstone, door
May 17	Easter 6 Love, Holy Spirit, commandments
May 24	Ascension Jesus to heaven, goodbye, clouds
May 31	Pentecost Fire, dove, wind, disciples
June 7	Holy Trinity Shamrocks, threes, triangles
June 14	Pentecost 2 Abraham & Sarah, disciples, harvest
June 21	Pentecost 3 Wilderness, sparrows, sword
June 28	Pentecost 4 Isaac, knife, altar, glass of water

Isolated

A quick internet search allowed me to find the origins of the words isolate and isolation. In the 17th century the French word *isolé* was defined as "standing detached from others of its kind." And before that the Latin *isolato* and *insulatus* are rooted in a word meaning "island."

Some of us felt isolated even before the COVID-19 virus. Teens and seniors expressed the anguish and sorrow of being alone or lonely. Technology, fear, and unrealistic expectations have amplified our sense of separation from other human beings.

Now the Corona virus has required us all, this Lent, to give up the kind of day to day contacts that create community. Shuttered up in our homes, asked to stay away from our extended family, neighbours, and coworkers, many of us feel isolated.



To be sure, the internet, telephones and even Canada Post still work. We can send letters, e-mails, texts, and participate in video conferences. But many of us would say it's not the same. Seeing someone's image on a screen, or hearing the sound of their voice is not like shaking a hand, or offering an embrace.

This is our challenge as a community of faith. To cooperate with health authorities we have cancelled services and meetings. I can send notes, and direct members to live-streaming services of worship. We can say "Peace" to others. We might even find a way to distribute the life-giving body and blood of Christ to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord.

But the church is not a virtual community. Just as God's plan required an incarnate Christ, and the sacrificial giving of Jesus' body and blood, disciples are called to enter into face to face relationships, and hand to hand partnerships.

Which means that isolation prevents us, for the time being (and for good reason), from being the people God has called us to be. It may cause some of us to become fearful or sad. And perhaps even to imagine that God has abandoned us.

It is like being alone in the wilderness. Cut off from other people. Wondering where God might be found. Waiting for our prayers to be answered.

So, for now, we will turn inward. We will listen for the voice of God's Spirit within. We will rearrange our priorities. And we'll be ready when the time comes to meet and serve others, following Jesus' example.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Jim

St. Barnabas

A brief conversation with the Rev. Dorothy Samuel after one of the Wednesday services informed me that the congregation has received permission to demolish its hall, but not its sanctuary (which has been deemed historically and architecturally significant). The congregation will need time to consult with its members and developer in regards to its plans for the future.

Ladies' and Men

The monthly Ladies' Lunch and Men's Breakfasts are cancelled until the health restrictions on public gatherings are lifted.

Eastern Synod

In recent weeks Bishop Michael and his staff have cancelled face to face visits with clergy across the Eastern Synod. Several video-conferences have been held, to encourage clergy and support them as they care for their members from a safe distance.

Theologians have been asked about the efficacy of celebrating the Lord's Supper via the internet. Their response will be shared once it has been formulated.

Youth Stars

The Youth Stars organisation has suspended it's work in schools and in the community. It is not expected to resume until after the quarantine has ended.



In the meantime Andreas and Pastor Jim have painted the room at the end of the Sunday School hallway, which Youth Stars hopes to occupy,

More Painting

Others rooms (perhaps beginning with the Chat Room) may also be painted during these quiet days. Pastor Jim has supplies and equipment, allowing volunteers to work alone and/or in one room at a time. Please contact him if you'd like to lend a hand, all at a safe distance from one another.

Birth

Great-grandparents Cliff and Pat Pachal are pleased to announce the birth of Luko Clifford, the 8-pound 12-ounce son of Bogdan and Lauren, in Kitchener-Waterloo ON, on March 18. Mother and baby are fine. Thanks for your prayers!

Sunday School

Sunday School classes are suspended until further notice.



Confirmation Class

Two face to face classes for teens scheduled for April are cancelled. Pastor Jim sent notes to students in March, but will try to find a way to interact with the class on-line to make up for coming sessions on Holy Communion, the Sacraments, and Spiritual Gifts.

On-Line Study?

Pastor Jim hoped to launch a five-week study after Easter. It was to focus on the Early Church from Easter/Pentecost to the development of the Apostles' Creed. It is unlikely that the course can be offered in person, but it might be presented on the internet. Interested members are invited to contact Pastor Jim, and let him know if they can participate on-line.

Lessons

Palm/Passion Sunday April 5

Matthew 21:1-11, Isaiah 50:4-9a, Psalm 31:9-16, Philippians 2:5-11, Matthew 26:14 – 27:66

Good Friday April 10

Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12, Psalm 22, Hebrews 10:16-25, John 18:1 – 19:42

Easter April 12

Acts 10:34-43, Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24, Colossians 3:1-4, Matthew 28:1-10

Easter 2 April 19

Acts 2:14a, 22-32, Psalm 16, 1 Peter 1:3-9, Matthew 28:9-15a

Easter 3 April 26

Acta 2:14a, 36-41, Psalm 118:14-19, 1 Peter 1:17-23, John 20:19-31

April Birthdays

Corinne Verpoorten	April 1
Kirsten Gust	April 3
Katherine Kunanec	April 3
Madison Yuck	April 5
Birgitta Jakobsson	April 7
Bryton Cantello	April 13
Shaylin Thomas	April 13
Kelly Joseph	April 23
Willy Bertchsmann	April 28
Helmut Feese	April 28
Susan Jacques	April 29
Domenic Bach	April 30

