

NEWS,
IDEAS
&
BITS AND PIECES

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM VARIOUS GOOD PEOPLE

HERE is our organist Patrick Busby playing “Tell out my soul” – just for you

<https://youtu.be/1BTt7S1FGis>

and

O Thou Who Camest from Above

<https://youtu.be/sDfasy9yxtY>

A song by a friend of Canon Ed: Garth Hewitt

Light A Candle in the Darkness:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0agQyxTVwY&feature=youtu.be>

PLEASE NOTE:

The church buildings are now closed for both private prayer and public worship except for funerals.

Only immediate family are permitted to attend funerals – meaning only the immediate next of kin.

All weddings and baptisms are postponed for the foreseeable future.

PRAYERS

Prayers about the outbreak

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ,
you taught us to love our neighbour,
and to care for those in need
as if we were caring for you.
In this time of anxiety, give us strength
to comfort the fearful, to tend the sick,
and to assure the isolated
of our love, and your love,

for your name's sake.

Amen.

God of compassion,
be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.
In their loneliness, be their consolation;
in their anxiety, be their hope;
in their darkness, be their light;
through him who suffered alone on the cross,
but reigns with you in glory,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

For those who are ill

Merciful God,
we entrust to your tender care
those who are ill or in pain,
knowing that whenever danger threatens
your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe.
Comfort and heal them,
and restore them to health and strength;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

For hospital staff and medical researchers

Gracious God,
give skill, sympathy and resilience
to all who are caring for the sick,
and your wisdom to those searching for a cure.
Strengthen them with your Spirit,
that through their work many will be restored to health;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

From one who is ill or isolated

O God,
help me to trust you,
help me to know that you are with me,
help me to believe that nothing can separate me
from your love
revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

For the Christian community

We are not people of fear:
we are people of courage.
We are not people who protect our own safety:
we are people who protect our neighbours' safety.
We are not people of greed:
we are people of generosity.

We are your people God,
giving and loving,
wherever we are,
whatever it costs
For as long as it takes
wherever you call us.

Barbara Glasson, President of the Methodist Conference

Intercessions

SET A

Let us pray to God,
who alone makes us dwell in safety:

For all who are affected by coronavirus,
through illness or isolation or anxiety,
that they may find relief and recovery:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who are guiding our nation at this time,
and shaping national policies,
that they may make wise decisions:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For doctors, nurses and medical researchers,
that through their skill and insights
many will be restored to health:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For the vulnerable and the fearful,
for the gravely ill and the dying,
that they may know your comfort and peace:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.

Merciful Father,

**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

SET B

Let us pray to the Lord,
who is our refuge and stronghold.

For the health and well-being of our nation,
that all who are fearful and anxious
may be at peace and free from worry:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For the isolated and housebound,
that we may be alert to their needs,
and care for them in their vulnerability:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For our homes and families,
our schools and young people,
and all in any kind of need or distress:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For a blessing on our local community,
that our neighbourhoods may be places of trust and friendship,
where all are known and cared for:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray,
to the mercy and protection of God.

Merciful Father,

**accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

Prayers with children

A prayer for when a friend is ill

Dear God, (*name of friend*) is ill.
They are not allowed to go to school or come over to play.
I'm sad because I miss them.
They must be feeling miserable and lonely as well.
Please be close to them.
Please be with the people who are looking after them.
Please help them to get better and to know that you love them.
Amen.

A prayer for the world

God of love and hope,
you made the world and care for all creation,
but the world feels strange right now.
The news is full of stories about Coronavirus.
Some people are worried that they might get ill.
Others are anxious for their family and friends.
Be with them and help them to find peace.

We pray for the doctors and nurses and scientists,
and all who are working to discover the right medicines
to help those who are ill.

Thank you that even in these anxious times,
you are with us.

Help us to put our trust in you and keep us safe.

Amen.

A prayer at bedtime

Before the ending of the day,
Creator of the world, we pray
That you, with steadfast love, would keep
Your watch around us while we sleep.

Tonight we pray especially for *(names family or friends who are affected by Coronavirus)* and the people of *(country or place which is affected by Coronavirus)*.

Please give skill and wisdom to all who are caring for them.

Amen.

A prayer remembering God is with us

Lord God, you are always with me.

You are with me in the day and in the night.

You are with me when I'm happy and when I'm sad.

You are with me when I'm healthy and when I am ill.

You are with me when I am peaceful and when I am worried.

Today I am feeling *(name how you are feeling)* because *(reasons you are feeling this way)*.
Help me to remember that you love me and are with me in everything today.

Amen.

Personal prayers

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your disciples,
'I am with you always'.

Be with me today, as I offer myself to you.
Hear my prayers for others and for myself,
and keep me in your care.

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.

from St Patrick's Breastplate

I am giving you worship with all my life,
I am giving you obedience with all my power,
I am giving you praise with all my strength,
I am giving you honour with all my speech.

I am giving you love with all my heart,
I am giving you affection with all my sense,
I am giving you my being with all my mind,
I am giving you my soul, O most high and holy God.
Praise to the Father,
Praise to the Son,
Praise to the Spirit,
The Three in One.

*adapted from Alexander Carmichael,
Carmina Gadelica (1900)*

Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of the living God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.

The Jesus Prayer

O God, the protector of all who trust in you,
without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy:
increase and multiply upon us your mercy;
that with you as our ruler and guide,
we may so pass through things temporal
that we lose not our hold on things eternal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Common Worship

Be with us, Lord, in all our prayers,
and direct our way toward the attainment of salvation,
that among the changes and chances of this mortal life,
we may always be defended by your gracious help,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Common Worship

O gracious and holy Father,
give us wisdom to perceive you,
diligence to seek you,
patience to wait for you,
eyes to behold you,
a heart to meditate upon you,
and a life to proclaim you,
through the power of the spirit
of Jesus Christ our Lord.

St Benedict

Before going to sleep

God our Father, by whose mercy
the world turns safely into darkness and returns again to light:
we place in your hands our unfinished tasks,
our unsolved problems, and our unfulfilled hopes,
knowing that only what you bless will prosper.

To your love and protection
we commit each other and all those we love,
knowing that you alone are our sure defender,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Church of South India

Here are some ideas

COVID-19: 100 Ideas for Ministers and Ministry Leaders

POSTED MARCH 12, 2020 TRACI SMITH

A lot of us are wondering how church will be the same (or different) now that we're in the middle of a lot of changes related to COVID-19. I think this is a time for us, as church leaders, to show our creativity. I think that churches and ministry people are endlessly creative, and I wanted to jump start some of that creativity. Here are 100 things to think about as you go about leading your congregations. Many of these ideas are

things I've seen people post about on twitter or talk about in Facebook groups. I decided to compile them all in one place. Enjoy, and add your ideas to the comments as you feel led.

Ways to Keep Your Church Community Running

- 1. **Zoom** Conferencing for worship, meetings, or discussion
- 2. Facebook (or Instagram) **Live** Broadcasting
- 3. Group Text Messaging / Group Chat (using **GroupMe** or **Remind**)
- 4. **Facebook Groups** for Book Studies and Bible Studies
- 5. YouTube channel or **Broadcasting**
- 6. Blog Posts with Comments (I use **WordPress**)
- 7. Use **Twitter** to communicate and stay in touch
- 8. Telephone Conferencing (Here's a **free** resource)
- 9. Take Prayer Requests Online or on the phone, and have a virtual prayer meeting
- 10. Google Video Chats for Small Group/Pastoral Care Meetings
- 11. Make a SurveyMonkey or Google Form to find out how people want to connect online
- 12. Ask everyone to light a candle at the same time and post photos
- 13. Host a photo challenge (I'm thinking of something like this **Lenten** one)
- 14. Make sure people can continue to give to the church remotely (**Simple Give** is what our church uses, but there are **others**)
- 15. If you have an electronic (or other) sign, use it to post encouraging messages for the community
- 16. Take a look at one of these **Intergenerational Ideas** for young people and cross+gen community
- 17. Find and share articles and stories of people persevering through adversity and challenge using social media

- 18. Use **prefilled cups/wafers** for communion
- 19. Tap into the leadership resources you already have established (boards, committees, teams) and repurpose them for what is needed right now.
- 20. Make sure to encourage leaders and staff to care for themselves to avoid **compassion fatigue** as things get more challenging.

Classic or Creative Spiritual Practices that Can Be Practiced At a Distance or In Small Groups

- 21. Find a **Labyrinth** to walk
- 22. Make a Post-it Prayer Wall or other community **prayer wall**
- 23. Plant a garden and post about its progress
- 24. Open the Sanctuary for small groups and individuals to come in and pray or light a candle
- 25. Encourage people to stop by your outside prayer gardens alone or in small groups
- 26. Tie prayer requests to fences outside of your building or make an **outdoor prayer box**
- 27. Have people pray in “shifts” over a period of time so your community knows someone is in constant prayer
- 28. Set up an interactive Prayer station on **lament**
- 29. Set up some of these nature/**outdoor** themed Prayer Stations
- 30. Read a book of the Bible together (and check in over one of the platforms above)
- 31. Make a group gratitude journal either online, or somewhere everyone can contribute
- 32. Divide people up into prayer partners or prayer groups to meet virtually or via phone
- 33. Pray for the **world**
- 34. Tons more **prayer stations**
- 35. Promote the use of a daily **Bible reading guide**

- 36. Encourage use of the d365 devotional for a great daily **online** devotional
- 37. Use the **Pray as You Go** app
- 38. The poetry foundation has a **poem of the day** that is great for centering and thinking in new ways
- 39. Get completely out of this world by looking at NASA's **astronomy picture of the day**
- 40. In these tense times, practice **joy**.

Loving Your Neighbour

- 41. **Wash hands and practice social distancing**
- 42. Drop off food and supplies to older adults and those in isolation
- 43. Give a phone call to those who are staying at home, use a phone tree if you have one
- 44. Connect with community programs who are helping children who are out of school
- 45. Create an emergency fund to help people who are living paycheck to paycheck and are temporarily out of work
- 46. Support Asian restaurants and businesses who are facing discrimination
- 47. Share your abundance if you've got extra from your stockpile
- 48. Send cards, mail, and prayers to people at home
- 49. Find ways to support and nurture health care workers through prayer and providing a place of respite
- 50. Donate to local organizations who continue to serve the most vulnerable
- 51. Share ideas as a community. Who needs help? How can we help? Have an offering of service ideas on your social media
- 52. Offer extra support to those in your community with mental health challenges such as depression or anxiety

- 53. Don't label people as overreacting or underreacting. Practice **compassion**.
- 54. Remember that COVID-19 preparedness helps the **most vulnerable**.
- 55. Ask a mom-to-be, how you can help support her in this challenging time
- 56. Share reputable information, not misinformation or rumour (it can be hard to tell the difference. I recommend this **resource center**)
- 57. Check in with immigrant and refugee communities
- 58. Stock your church's little library or little food pantry
- 59. Check in with artists and speakers whose income has been severely affected by cancellations
- 60. Be reminded of the importance of being kind through one of these kindness **quotes**

Faith at Home Practices to Encourage

- 61. Create a **sacred space** at home to pray and meditate
- 62. Start a regular prayer practice (here's **my** prayer book)
- 63. Do one of the practices in *Faithful Families*, such as family Lectio Divina, Washing Worries Away, or starting a Nighttime Blessing Practice
- 64. Send home **books** for parents and children to read at home
- 65. Create a version of take out church or **church to go**
- 66. Do acts of service together at home, reaching out to those who need company
- 67. Spend time outside, breathing in fresh air and listing reasons to be grateful
- 68. Do practices from a **Faith Jar**
- 69. Bake and break bread together — talk about the parable of the **yeast**
- 70. **Watch a caterpillar turn into a butterfly**
- 71. Read from the **Family Time Bible**

- 72. Make a prayer chain with gratitude or prayer requests. Watch it grow every day.
- 73. Help children to feel secure and safe by using one of **these practices**.
- 74. Draw or colour your prayer requests. Post pictures and share with others, or mail to those who are isolated.
- 75. Sing a simple song or hymn together from your faith tradition.
- 76. Blow bubbles or fly a kite. Let them remind you of the Holy Spirit that moves in mysterious ways
- 77. Make origami **birds** or **butterflies** as a symbol of hope and resurrection
- 78. Feed the birds to remember how God cares for creation
- 79. Use the **butterfly hug** to create calm and peace
- 80. Remember **play** can be a spiritual practice

Spiritual Practices to Reduce Anxiety and Foster Peace

- 81. Practice a news fast. Turn off social media and news. Try looking at news only one time per day.
- 82. Practice the **loving kindness** meditation
- 83. **Focus on what you can control and not what you can't**
- 84. Practice **mindfulness meditation**
- 85. Practice **centering prayer**
- 86. Go outside and listen to nature sounds. Think about God's creation.
- 87. Print and color **mandalas**
- 88. Encourage **Mini-Sabbaths** in addition to a regular practice of Sabbath
- 89. Practice the **Daily Examen**
- 90. Practice **Lectio** or **Visio Divina**
- 91. Nurture a Spiritual practice of **imagination**

- 92. Make and use a **finger labyrinth**
- 93. Practice acts of **generosity**
- 94. Do **body prayer** or restorative yoga
- 95. Start a gratitude journal or practice
- 96. Make a prayer journal
- 97. Pray the “**Lord it is Night**” prayer before bed
- 98. When you don’t have the words to say, light a candle instead (or turn on a battery operated one.)
- 99. Make and use **prayer beads**
- 100. Pick a centering word like “peace” or “hope.” Write it down and let it be your intention for the day.