

# *Hope Lutheran Church*

*2174 Departure Bay Road*

*Nanaimo, British Columbia*

*V9S 3V6*

Tuesday May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020

Dear members and friends of Hope Lutheran Nanaimo

We are now coming to the end of our third month of dealing with the Covid crisis. We are seeing some reduction in new infection numbers, evidence that the restrictions we are experiencing have worked to reduce the spread of this virus and have helped to protect our elderly and those who are most vulnerable to this highly contagious illness. As we noted last month, there are no quick fixes or instant solutions and, despite some minor easing of restrictions, we are all still feeling the impact of Covid in our daily lives.

It is becoming apparent that restrictions on large gatherings, and the need to maintain protective distancing will continue for the foreseeable future. As I write this letter I am imagining that when these restrictions finally allow for us to be together in close contact with one another we will be having a re-union to remember. In the mean time we are continuing our faith journey together in so many ways, and we are appreciating each other's presence in our gatherings, especially as Pastor Terry leads us in Communion at our weekly Sunday Services.

Our Tuesday Bible Study group continues to explore the books of the Gospel with Pastor Terry and the Friday Men's group continues to talk about the impact of our shared mortality with Stephen Jenkinson's book *Die Wise*, lead by Ray Schultz. Our phone tree continues and Pastor Terry continues to "visit" with members of our congregation. It is exciting to see the different ways we are able to adapt, so that we continue to be the Body of Christ in the World.

The Corona virus has presented unprecedented challenges to all churches, including the ELCIC, and including our Faith Community of Hope Lutheran. So far, our small church has been able to adapt and each week we feel the joy of meeting each other on line for our weekly communion service. It is such a joy to greet each other during the half hour of our "Virtual" Narthex gathering before our service. Pastor Terry then leads us through our service of prayer, song, readings, sermon, greetings and communion.

We all long to be together in the same room, to laugh, to hug and to share our faith, AND, even though our services often include some technical glitch or another, Sunday morning is

increasingly becoming a time of shared joy. We are delighted to be joined each week by many new and old friends from outside our area, and we are especially delighted to welcome our dear friends from Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church in Comox. Christ told us that “Wherever two or more of you are gathered in my name, I will be present”. We gather each Sunday and we truly experience Christ’s presence together.

Thank you so much to all of you who bring yourselves present for our communion. This is how Christ can tell each of us, “I am with you, we will travel this road together”. Last Sunday over 100 of us joined together on the screen to share our faith. We are travelling this road together and we are appreciating each other with open hearts.

This challenge is not over, and it will continue to impact our lives for some time to come. It seems, however that our little congregation is answering this challenge with faith and kindness toward one another.

April was our first full month of navigating this crisis and, with your constant support and generosity we were a bit down from budget, but we were able to keep our heads above water and to pay our bills for the month. Navigating this time will not be easy and we will continue to need your generous support as we move forward. At the end of this letter we will repeat the information about ways you can support our faith community.

The late Irish theologian, philosopher and poet, John O’Donohue wrote about times of difficulty. In his book of poems *To Bless the Space Between Us*, he wrote these words that a friend here recites daily during this crisis:

“..... This is the time to be slow,  
Lie low to the wall  
Until the bitter wind passes.

Try, as best you can, not to let  
The wire brush of doubt  
Scrape from your heart  
All sense of yourself  
And your hesitant light

If you remain generous,  
Time will come good;  
And you will find your feet  
Again on fresh pastures of promise,  
Where the air will be kind  
And blushed with beginning.”

We began this journey several months ago and we wondered with concern where this path would lead us. So far as a faith community, we have not let the wire brush of doubt scrape

away our sense of ourselves, on the contrary, with each passing week we seem to find ourselves, and in doing so we find new ways to be kind and generous. Perhaps, in some more comfortable future time we will see this as the time when we found our feet on “pastures of promise”. If we can stay with one another on this path this could be our time of a new beginning.

Remember, in practicing kindness and generosity to each other, to be kind and generous to yourselves as well, you are precious to us and we are so very grateful for the company of each one of you on this path at this time.

With appreciation for each of you

Hope Lutheran

Gerry Owen Co-Chair and Treasurer  
On behalf of Hope Lutheran Council

Ways to continue to support Hope Lutheran:

**1. Mail envelopes with your donation (preferably by cheque) to the church**

As long as Canada Post is running, you can mail envelopes directly to the church office.

Mailing address:

Hope Lutheran Church  
2174 Departure Bay Road  
Nanaimo, BC  
V9S 3V6

**2. Drop envelopes with your donation (preferably by cheque) off at church**

Envelopes can be placed through the normal mail slot at the front door of the church. These will be gathered regularly and your donation will be accounted for in the usual way. You will receive your charitable tax credit for all donations.

If you are mailing or delivering a cheque you might want to think about enclosing a series of post-dated cheques. We expect the current restrictions will last at least three to four months.

### 3. Sign up for Pre-Authorized Withdrawal (PAR)

A fillable PDF form is attached to this letter. You can fill the form on your computer and mail your signed application together with a void cheque to:

Hope Lutheran Church  
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Or you can scan the signed form together with both sides of your void cheque and email them to me, Hope Lutheran's Treasurer, Gerry Owen at [gerry.owen@shaw.ca](mailto:gerry.owen@shaw.ca). I will ensure that your PAR form gets to the administrator right away. You will receive a charitable donation receipt for your full donation.

The PAR Fillable PDF Form is attached at the bottom of this email.

### 4. Interac e-Transfer using online banking

- a. If you use online banking, log into your account
- b. Add Hope Lutheran Church as a recipient using our email address: [hope2174@shaw.ca](mailto:hope2174@shaw.ca).
- c. Enter the desired amount and click send.
- d. You will be asked to set a security question and specify an answer. Please then email our Treasurer at [gerry.owen@shaw.ca](mailto:gerry.owen@shaw.ca) to let him know the specified answer. He will then process the e-Transfer.

Again, you will receive a full charitable donation receipt for this donation. The following link provides further instructions on Interac e-Transfers:

<https://www.interac.ca/en/consumers/products/interac-e-transfer/>

If you need assistance with any of these options or have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me.