



April 29, 2020

Greetings Lettered Streets Covenant Family!

Today I was reading in Philippians and came across this familiar passage: *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all people. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.* (Philippians 4.4-7)

*Rejoice always* (with exclamation mark!). *Be anxious for nothing. The peace of God.* These phrases seem almost offensive at face value. Clearly Paul wasn't writing during a global pandemic. Obviously Paul didn't wasn't in lock down, loosing work, missing friends, and family, and school, and sports, and travel plans. Paul could write these things because his life wasn't in danger from stepping outside or going to the store, or going to the hospital and catching the virus.

To just spout this Bible verse feels like malpractice when I consider how so many of us are suffering pain and loss or at a minimum, frustrations and extreme inconvenience.

But Paul isn't writing a pep talk like some morning radio host who is entirely too peppy for 6 in the morning. Paul is writing from a prison. He is writing from confinement. He is under guard by the Roman Empire—a power that could decide the outcome of his earthly life. Paul wrote this letter to the Philippians out of personal circumstances that, like ours, could crush the soul and discourage.

But in the midst of this darkness, he reaches out to the church—to the community of Jesus followers in Philippi. Paul reaches out to a group of people who were suffering in their own way—suffering from lack of faith, suffering from economic oppression, suffering from relational brokenness—and he

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does two things: He encourages them in the Lord and he uses their shared suffering to unite them as co-pilgrims on the path of following Jesus.

In a way, encouraging each other in the Lord and uniting as co-pilgrims on the path of following Jesus is a foundational goal of every worship gathering. Our staff and volunteers have been trying to help us stay connected through a variety of means from updates like these to home worship resources and online forums.

I know a number of you have even joined together via Zoom to go through the home worship resources together. That way you not only have the content, but also a sense of being with the larger church community.

Christy Wilson shared a bit about her experience doing this in the video version of this weekly update. Basically, you can decide upon a time of day you want to worship at home, invite some people to join you on a Zoom call at that same time, and then participate together in the songs, readings, sermon, and Communion.

Like Paul writing from prison, our circumstances are far from ideal. But let us be encouraged that in Christ, we can still find moments of joy, stunning beauty, foundational truth, and acts of honor and courage that are praiseworthy.

I leave us with more of Paul's letter to the Philippians: *Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.*

May the peace of Christ be with you,

Chris

## Announcements and Updates

- Keep an eye out for home worship resources to be released **by 10am on Sunday** on our [website](#). We'll also send the link via email each Sunday morning.
- Elizabeth continues to build ways for us to connect online. Please contact her [HERE](#) if you would like to be added to the private facebook group.
- [Morgan](#) is coordinating care within our congregation. If you need help, or even someone to make a grocery store run, please contact Morgan.
- If you have prayer requests, please submit those [HERE](#).
- If you would like to set up a time to talk with pastor Chris, contact him directly [HERE](#).
- If you need financial help during this crisis please contact our Lead Team Chair, [Ryan Wasserman](#) or pastor [Chris](#).

## What You Can Do

- Pray! We are seeing sick people recovering, anxious people finding deeper peace, and protection for our front line workers. Please continue to lift them, and each other, up in prayer!
- Stay home unless you are employed in essential services or must go out for supplies or well isolated outings for physical and mental health.
- [Stay in contact](#). If you're not feeling well (physically, emotionally, mentally) and are isolated at home, the staff wants to know so we can best care for you!
- Be sure to have bread or crackers and grape juice or wine on hand for Communion.
- Write cards to encourage the staff of the LH Mission, Food Bank, Hospital, WTA, or other frontline agencies. Thank your grocery clerk or take out delivery person.
- Watch out for each other. Check in with people. Write cards, make calls or send texts.
- Continue to give of your tithes and offerings as an act of worship and in support of the ministry of the church and the community by mailing a check to P.O. Box 5645 Bellingham, WA 98227 or by giving online, [HERE](#).
  - Last week we highlighted Nicole Burdick as an example of how individual LSCC congregants can bring the support of the whole church to make an

impact of our neighbors. This week we are investing \$750 in World Access Project, a non-profit in Mexico that helps provide mobility, and ongoing training for people with special needs. Patrick and Adalid McEvoy serve on the board and our church has partnered with them in the past, most recently during our trip to Mexico last July.

**[Archive of LSCC COVID-19 Updates](#)**