



Kanata United Church

March 27, 2020

Dear Friends,

Remember when I reached out to you in a newsletter or Pastoral Letter five times over the course of a year instead of four times in two weeks; remember when we were face to face only on Sunday mornings, instead of mid-week as well through the wonders of Zoom; remember when we thought Zoom meant moving quickly instead of a gateway to familiar faces and much need smiles and connection.

There is no doubt that these past two weeks of moving from thinking about what we would do to planning for how to do it, and now living through it, may at times be likened to the feeling of trying to walk through the deep, thick and heavy mud of how things 'use to be'. But, when that 'how it use be' frame work is set aside, we discover moments when we are lifted into new ways of being, that glide us into deepening relationships with one another and with the world in which we live. In two short weeks, we have connected in new ways, and impressively we have done so without long planning sessions and resistance to change. Change instead, has become the thing we seek out, it has become our new way of being.

As you will recall from the letter our Chair of Council Brian Linkletter and I sent to you last week, your KUC Council has increased our Outreach budget by 50%, ensuring that those most vulnerable in our community are not forgotten. It was with such joy, that I read an email from Penny Gelinis, our Chair of Outreach recounting some recent experiences, and I would like to share that with you now. Penny wrote:

"I spoke to someone at the Debra Dynes Family Centre today. She was so grateful, she said she could cry. They have emptied out their shelves twice just this week. There is such a need now."

In a previous email Penny wrote:

"the lady at the Centretown Emergency Food Cupboard said the need is great. The number they serve has jumped considerably from 900 a month (a number I was shocked at) to 100 each day."

As Penny concluded we have made the lives of some of our neighbours just a little easier. In addition to these two centres, she has also noted that Matthew House is also in need of additional support at this time of extraordinary uncertainty, helping those who were already living uncertain lives. These organizations, on the front lines of support, are under extreme duress trying to meet the abundance of needs. And we know, so too are many of you. We know that your gifts of generosity may be being redirected towards family members who have lost their jobs; or perhaps you have had to adjust as investments have declined and the income garnered from them is no longer the same. But if that is not you, if you find yourselves still managing well, receiving the same – or close to the same economic benefits that you did in January, we encourage you to consider abundant generosity in this time of abundant need.



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If you find yourselves in a situation where you are able to practice the tradition of generosity that is at the core of our faith, and might be able to make a special donation to help support a local foodbank but aren't quite sure which one, make a note 'foodbank' on the memo line of your cheque and we will direct it to where the need is greatest, with in the network of organizations we support. As well, if you are able to make an extra gift in extraordinary times to KUC, so we too can continue to engage in our many forms of ministry and Community Outreach, that too would be most helpful.

Yes, much has changed. And yes, the building is closed. But the ministry of the church continues, as does the movement of the Spirit. In the uncertainty, make space to know the movement of the Spirit. Make space to feel the abundant love of God surrounding you: recognize it in every phone call; every virtual gathering opportunity; and believe in it with every prayer you pray.

These are challenging times, but we can meet the challenge with love and compassion, with courage and with faith, finding peace in the solitude and in this time of Lenten disruption. What better time to be disrupted, what better time to be silent, and hear that quiet, calling voice of the One, who summons us into a new way being while reminding us that we are not alone.

And alone we are not. On a separate page, you find some important information that highlights the wonderful ways this community continues in ministry. You will also find various opportunities for you to engage in community virtually, in this uncertain time.

My friends, as we make our way through this journey towards the light of resurrection in our lives and in our faith, let us do so knowing these days of uncertainty will end, and our fast from each other will cease.

In Christ,

Cindy

Reverend Cindy M. Casey, MDiv, B.A, FLE



Important Links, Information and Opportunities:

Children, Youth & Family: Terrie Chedore, our CYF Minister is producing material that is being sent out to children and youth and their families. If you have not yet received them, please email office@kuc.ca and we will add you to the list!

Gathering in Friendship: Each Wednesday afternoon at 1:00 PM, we will gather informally through Zoom. It is an opportunity to chat and share our joys and our challenges, to share tips and experiences, and to simply see friendly faces! Please join us by Zoom at: Join URL: <https://zoom.us/j/260415925>

Worship: Every Sunday morning, for the duration of the Pandemic, you are invited to join us by Zoom at the following link: <https://zoom.us/j/868765865>

Pastoral Care: Please continue to reach out to our Pastoral Care & Family Pastoral Care Teams through email to office@KUC.ca This week, Wilma Free, the Chair of Pastoral Care shared this important link:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/talking-with-children.html>

UCC Regional Council: The Eastern Ontario Outaouais Regional Council of the United Church of Canada extended these opportunities noting that “in response to the need for “social distancing” what better time to connect online and reconnect with two core practices of our faith – prayer and studying scripture”. Click on this link to learn more about these opportunities:

<https://eoorc.ca/ministries/communities-of-faith/>

Outreach Update: To date funds have been distributed by KUC to the following organizations:

- **Ottawa Food Bank** (\$1,000.00) They supply 112 emergency food programs so many food cupboards across Ottawa will benefit.
- **Centretown Emergency Food Centre** (\$1,000.00) They continue to operate with just two staff. They are experiencing a sense of panic as many people have never used a food bank before. Packages are prepared in advance so people can come in, pick up their hamper, and leave immediately so there is no social interaction.
- **Debra Dynes Family House** (\$1,000.00) They serve low income families, working poor families, and new Canadians, and are located in a very disadvantaged neighbourhood. They offer a variety of services but, at this time, are only offering essential services - Food Hamper and Baby Cupboard. Necessary baby food items are often overlooked in food collections and it is encouraging to see this program.
- **Kanata Food Bank** (\$500)
- **Pinecrest Terrace Food Bank** (\$500)
- **Matthew House** (\$500)
- **The Ottawa Mission** (\$500.00) KUC has a long tradition of supporting the Mission and like all agencies that support the homeless I am certain they are overwhelmed.