

Hi friends,

It's been a busy week. I hope you and your loved ones had a wonderful and blessed Easter. I heard from many of you that families were gathered around computer screens and smart phones and tablets having Zoom or FaceTime family gatherings. I know many of those gatherings started with the traditional prayer... "Grandpa your microphone is muted!" However, you celebrated, I hope there was a feeling of peace and an assurance that Jesus is risen during all the things that seem so strange and unsettling these days.

We are all learning what it means to be a community that cares for one another when we can't be physically near one another. I am so thankful that so many of us at KFUMC have taken to heart what it means to care for each other and reach out to look after one another in love and compassion. When we and other churches made the decision to gather for worship in an online format, I confess that I was afraid. Not because of the technology required or the added layers and difficulties of producing such things. What I was afraid of was that with the church's steaming a worship service right to our kitchen table, we would be creating a passive church... one that simply watches as the worship service goes by. That the commitment we have at KFUMC to proclaim that everyone is a beloved child of God, and that Jesus invites us to be part of a spirit led community of faith, AND that we would use our time, talents and treasures to bring about a world that reflects the justice, reign and grace of God, would somehow become less important. I am so thankful that so many of us have risen to the occasion to participate in worship in new and creative ways, to foster and strengthen friendships, continue to grow in our spiritual health and be in service to others as the opportunity arises!

With that in mind, there are three things I want to remind you about and/or have you watching for in the week ahead:

- 1) Our online worship service is taking place at 10:30 am at our YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/PiratesoftheColumbia/featured>). And Just a reminder if you would like to read a poem you have written, or read scripture, or perform a song as a way to help us worship together, give me (Mark@Kennewickfirst.com) or Amberley Almarode (Amberley@KennewickFirst.com) an email and let us know. ALSO, you can go to our web page and on the "news" page you can download an order of service and lyrics to the songs for this week's Worship Service (or just follow this link... <https://kennewickfirst.com/news/>) ***Just a reminder that I will be presiding over an online communion service during this week's worship gathering so make plans to have bread and juice/wine available during the service in your own home so we can celebrate this means of grace together.
- 2) During the last few weeks, as we have been trying to connect with people, we became aware that many of us have either incorrect, outdated or just no information in our church's contact records. In the next couple of weeks, we will be sending you a form that you can use to update addresses, telephone or cellphone and email addresses. The form is a much-preferred way to get this information rather than a message on the

phone at the office. It allows Cheryl Nixon, our Office Administrator to have a written document to work from as she updates that information. So, look for this in the days ahead.

- 3) Looking ahead to when we can gather in person again, we realize that for the first few Sundays that we gather in person, (I'm expecting that won't be until the end of May or beginning of June) there may be some restrictions in place for how we gather and distance ourselves and other things. One of the things our Emergency Planning Team discussed was having masks available for each of us as we return to worship together. The church would have them available as you come in the building, after worship you could take it home if you like, to clean and sanitize it for your personal use, or you could leave it with us and we will wash, bleach and sanitize them to be available for the following week. We will be putting together a mechanism to collect and organize this project in the upcoming week. If you are someone that knows how to sew ... without injuring yourself or others 😊... we will be sending out information to let you help us meet the goal of having 500 masks available when we return to in person Worship Services.

Thank you all for "Being the church" and not just "Going to church".

Now GO WASH YOUR HANDS!

Pastor Mark