



NEWS from the BRIDGE

Life at Bridge Street United Church (Belleville, ON) during COVID-19

An initiative brought to you by the Transition Team.

Friday, April 25, 2020

Welcome to our second only edition of 'NEWS from the BRIDGE'... a look at the ongoing life and work of our faith community at this unique time.

Watch for future editions where we highlight more undertakings and activities that continue being done notwithstanding the suspension of routine church life.



TOLLING OF THE BELLS...

In the company of other United Churches from coast to coast to coast, BSUC will rings its bells at 5 *p.m. today* to memorialize the victims of last Saturday's murderous shootings in Nova Scotia.

If you are within ear shot, listen as our community of faith laments this tragic, senseless, incomprehensible loss of life.

And as you hear, or imagine in your mind, the bells pealing, please pray for the healing of all who grieve this horrific event. It is heartbreaking.

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24 April 2020



ONLINE WORSHIP... Sunday, April 26th

The text has been proofed, the sound checks and rehearsals done, technical issues are being resolved, and now it's simply a count-down to our inaugural online worship service.

Participation details are provided on the last pages of this publication.



A Word from the Transition Team – April 2020

The title of this newsletter, chosen by Rev. David and initiated through the efforts of the Transition Team, seems to be particularly fitting. We are, after all, in a time of “Bridging” between two different realities—life before COVID-19 and life after COVID-19. We have no idea how long we will be experiencing this unique phase of our congregational life, or indeed, of our lives in general. It is a time when we will be needing to remain focused on building a road into our future, while also dealing with the challenges presented by life in the present. It is a time, more than ever when we need our faith to nurture us and the fellowship of our church community to sustain us. It is our hope that each of you have been able to experience this unusual time as offering new opportunities for prayer and reflection and connecting with others through telephone calls and/or virtual gatherings.

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Though uncertainty abounds, it is encouraging to know that the work of the various teams are continuing behind the scenes through innovative means of communication. For some, it has meant learning a whole new skill set, navigating the various new platforms for hosting and participating in virtual meetings. For others, it has meant searching out the appropriate means of sharing worship in the virtual world. In the midst of all this new activity there is a sense of the strong need for connection that exists within the church community and the lengths to which we are prepared to go to “see” each other as we go about fulfilling the mandate of our ministry teams.

It is important for the Transition Team to know that all of you are able to share in the knowledge that the work of BSUC is continuing on despite the current challenges! And so we are committed to sharing through this newsletter some of the details of the virtual work that is occurring each and every day of this COVID-19 era. Our goal is to keep you informed of all the many actions and activities that are taking place despite the constraints of social distancing.

As evidenced in last week’s inaugural edition of *News From the Bridge*, the Strategic Planning Team is forging ahead with its efforts to link this bridging time to a place of solid ground in the future life of Bridge Street United Church. It is a challenging time to be doing this work, but it is also a very important and necessary time to be looking at ways of building new bridges, bridges of connection with the community, bridges of shared community with other churches, bridges of sustainable funding for the continuing work of the church, and bridges of hopefulness that can weather any future storms!

The Transition Team has continued to meet in person on February 11 and March 10 and virtually on April 14. Some of our plans included the Lenten coffeetime discussions following church, the subsequent plan for continuing Bible Study through virtual discussions (offered by email to the BSUC congregational folk) and hosted online by Rev. David in the days leading up to Easter. This series of discussions was based on resources offered through the Christian Century (www.christiancentury.org). An online prayer vigil was offered on April 11th through our local congregations’ cluster group, as sponsored by the East Regional Ontario Council of the United Church, but regrettably was unable to be delivered because of technical difficulties. No doubt the cluster will continue to find novel and engaging ways to advance solidarity and familiarity among the Belleville and area communities of faith. And finally, there was a renewed commitment on behalf of the Transition Team to ensure the regular sharing of information through this new medium--necessitated by the suspension of regular weekly worship and

church bulletins. We hope you find this new communication tool useful in keeping you informed in this time of “bridging”!



As at Monday, April 20, 2020, and for the duration of the pandemic, full-time employees will work 5 days a week from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Part time staff will also work reduced hours.

Rev. David is available by phone 24/7. His number is 905-375-7369.



Sunday, April 26th @ 10:30 a.m.

LOGIN IN DETAILS:

Please copy (ctrl c) and paste (ctrl v), or otherwise place this link into your browser and press enter:

<https://youtu.be/SO3ZZzSBlaI>

On being redirected to YouTube hit 'play' and join us!

Hymn # 1: 359 (VU) "He Came Singing Love"

He came singing love and he lived singing love; he died singing love.
He arose in silence. For the love to go on we must make it our song;
you and I be the singer.

He came singing faith and he lived singing faith; he died singing faith.
He arose in silence. For the faith to go on we must make it our song;
you and I be the singer.

He came singing hope and he lived singing hope; he died singing hope.
He arose in silence. For the hope to go on we must make it our song;
you and I be the singer.

He came singing peace and he lived singing peace; he died singing peace.
He arose in silence. For the peace to go on we must make it our song;
you and I be the singer.

Scripture

Luke 24: 13-35

Now on that same day two of Jesus disciples were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

And he said to them, "What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?" They stood still, looking sad.

Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?"

He asked them, "What things?" They replied, "The things about Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how our chief priests and leaders handed him over to be condemned to death and crucified him.

But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things took place. Moreover, some women of our group astounded us. They were at the tomb early this morning, and when they did not find his body there,

they came back and told us that they had indeed seen a vision of angels who said that he was alive.

Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but they did not see him."

Then he said to them, "Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!

Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his glory?"

Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.

As they came near the village to which they were going, he walked ahead as if he were going on.

But they urged him strongly, saying, "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over." So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.

Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; and he vanished from their sight.

They said to each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he was talking to us on the road, while he was opening the scriptures to us?"

That same hour they got up and returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together.

They were saying, "The Lord has risen indeed, and he has appeared to Simon!"

Then they told what had happened on the road, and how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

Instrumental: "Standing in the Promises"

Hymn # 2: 182 (VU) "Stay With Us Through The Night"

Stay with us through the night.
Stay with us through the pain.
Stay with us blessed stranger
till the morning breaks again.

Stay with us through the night.
Stay with us through the grief.
Stay with us blessed stranger
till the morning brings relief.

Stay with us through the night.
Stay with us through the dread.
Stay with us blessed stranger
till the morning breaks new bread.

Questions for Contemplations

If Jesus were to come alongside you today and ask what you are talking about, what would you say?

Are there particular stories or verses in Scripture that would be helpful for you to remember in this current time? How can you keep them in the forefront of your mind? How do they shape your understanding of current events?

When has your heart burned within you? Have you ever recognized it as being the presence of God?

What do you make of the lack of agency on the part of the two disciples? Why does Luke tell us that they were kept from recognizing Jesus and then later that their eyes were opened?

Can you recall a time when celebrating communion was especially meaningful to you? Have you experienced "virtual communion"? If so, what has that experience been like for you? Did you recognize the Spirit even though you were not in the same space as those with whom you were worshipping?

