

Aldersgate UMC News
Letter 2, Friday, March 14, 2020

Dear Friends,

First of all, take a moment and take three deep breaths breathing out slowly with no sound (military breathing). It slows the nervous system and helps one relax. (Thank you, Bob Plant.)

This week has been like no other week in American history. Monday seems like it was months ago, and social media has accelerated actions and awareness related to the Covid 19 pandemic which in turn creates massive uncertainty and fear. Yet, on the other hand, this acceleration of information has perhaps helped us to begin to implement measures that may help limit the eventual consequences (“Flattening the Curve”) of the pandemic.

It is so easy to become confused because there are so many levels to this situation – global, national and local. Let me address these areas as they may apply to us as a congregation and community.

Local

1. Prayers and support to one another both for those we personally know who may be directly affected by Covid 19 or maybe going through unrelated physical and mental issues at this time.

A. I have received news that Glen Narimatsu’s father, Raymond is hospitalized and “not doing well” with pneumonia. The Dr’s do not believe it is Covid 19 but he has been tested. Please keep Raymond in your prayers.

B. Our Weekly Prayer List: Haruye Ng, Paul Osaki, Sue Nakamura, Tak Nishiura, Sam Nieda, Kiyo Shizuru, Lea Haratani, Hitoshi Tachibana, Chloe Gong, Ginger Powell, Kamila Young, Jieun Lee, David Nelson, Jamie Campbell, Day Kusakai, Mel Imai, Harry Hatasaka, Amy Shao, Hiroko Yoshida, Patrick Chow, Jim Shizuru, Dee Imazeki and Rev. Mariellen Sawada Yoshino.

C. Keep Mary Tsukushi and her family and they grieve the loss of Kimi Tsukushi. (Please no visitors or calls at this time. Thank you.)

D. Prayers for those financially impacted by this pandemic.

2. Check-in with one another. Give an encouraging and empathetic word – especially for our seniors.

3. Is anyone in need of having groceries or supplies delivered? Please contact me at RVM878@gmail.com or text/call at 650-575-2250? I am sure we can find someone to assist.

4. In these stressful times, dig deep to be kind, understanding and compassionate. Many will be frustrated and are concerned about finances and the safety of their loved ones. A smile, thank you, and cooperation will be the Spirit needed.

National

The primary tool to combat Covid 19 as it relates to us is “social distancing”. Shutting down sports, gatherings and even worship services are not a sign of a lack of faith; but it is a tool to spread out the impact of the pandemics. The goal is to lower the peak of severe cases (flattening the curve) so our medical services are not overwhelmed. Please pray for our front-line medical professionals and teams.

The shutting down of American life creates “shock” and “fear” but remember, this is really a tool to combat the virus. It is not a sign that we are losing but it is the very action (or non-action) needed. Staying home (to the best that we can) and finding other means of spending our day is participating in the fight against Covid 19.

Global

For most of us, the global context seems beyond us; but we can pray for our world leaders to cooperate and to work together to combat this pandemic. We can encourage our representatives to work together for all the complex needs that a pandemic creates.

Personal Reflection

Many are wondering where is God in all this? Where is the divine Spirit?

I think the answer is ... it is in us!

It is in our capacity to calm our fears so we can draw from a deeper well of faith, courage, and hope. From this well, we can draw up patience and perseverance. We can draw up compassion and love.

All these things we do not need to buy from Costco but are within us right where we are.

This is where Christ is and where the Spirit is. Therefore, do not lose heart but be affirmed that God is not only with you, but God is certainly within you.

Lastly

Take a moment and take three deep breaths breathing out slowly with no sound (military breathing). Repeat as needed.

Peace and Love,

Roger