



Letter # 9 - Palm Sunday,

April 5, 2020

"All of humanity's problems stem from not being able to sit quietly in a room alone." - Blaise Pascal

Dear friends,

Keep taking three deep breaths! Keep doing! Create Hope both in the world and in yourself!

We always begin with a prayer for our medical professionals, our essential services workers, our community and relationships – and for ourselves. In our prayer list, I have added prayers for the members of Alice Kawasaki’s extended family who have experienced loss and current illness related to Covid 19. Alice is the first person I know whose family has been directly affected by Covid 19. Our prayers for them and for other’s who have lost loved ones and who are currently ill from Covid 19.

Some have mentioned they have appreciated these “Letters”. People can go to the website “Aldersgatepa.org” to access past letters.

A little fun...



Generational Miscommunication in this Age of Pandemic

A friend shared this true story. As her daughter was preparing to go back to work (out of the area), her mother kept asking if she had masks with her. The daughter answered, “Yea, yea... I have masks”. Later, the mother continued to remind the daughter to wear her mask when she goes out. The daughter started

to question, “Why do I need to wear it out?” After a few back and forth sessions, the daughter finally sent a picture of her masks.

For those who are not familiar with these masks (another generational characteristic), they look like these photos. (All I could think was what if she actually wore her “masks” out!)



More Fun...Communion in the “Upper Zoom”

(using the Zoom online app to communicate)

Church Donations

Some have asked if there was a way to give their offering online. Just a reminder, anyone with a credit card can give their pledges and donations online via the church website at “Aldersgatepa.org.”

We understand this Covid 19 pandemic has put tremendous strain on some families financially so we understand if people cannot give at this time. The church will do the best it can through this pandemic, and of course, any support will be deeply appreciated. (Note: The church hardcopy Easter newsletter will be going out next week and it will have an envelope included for people to send their offering.)

For our Japanese speaking members and friends:

I received this gracious email from Mimune Tsukumoto, Lay leader of Wesley UMC Nichigo-bu and Rev. Hajime Yamamoto, Japanese Language Pastor, Wesley UMC.

Greetings Rev Roger Morimoto,

We pray this mail finds you and your church filled with God’s spirit in this difficult time.

The purpose of this mail is to ask you to consider a possible use of our video streaming and video recordings for your Japanese speaking congregation. As you may be aware, we at Nichigo-bu of Wesley United Methodist Church in San Jose has been posting video recordings of Sunday worship on Youtube since late 1998. And because of Shelter-in-Place currently in effect, we started live broadcasting of Sunday worship since March 15th.

The Nichigo worship is lead by Rev Hajime Yamamoto, and in fact, the recent services have been broadcast from his personage, again due to SIL. Rev Hajime also live casts his Bible Study on Thursdays at 1pm.

You can find recent videos on the Youtube channel “WUMC Chapel”, and the recordings of the past services by searching “Wesley Nichigo” or “Nichigo Worship”. The next live cast is scheduled for 10am next Sunday (4/5/20), also on the “WUMC Chapel” channel. The URLs are:

WUMC Chapel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFx81GYQOKFR_d8nHrc3thg

4/5/20 Worship: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9IDR_9KVt7Y

We are writing this mail in the hope that you will share this information with your Japanese speaking members. With SIP in effect for a foreseeable future, we feel it is important for people to be able to participate in worship in their native language.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us. And if you have any feedback on the contents or format of the video, please also let us know.

Blessings,

Rev Hajime Yamamoto
Japanese Language Pastor, Wesley UMC

Mimune Tsukamoto
Lay Leader, Wesley UMC Nichigo-bu

Roger's Reflection for the Day

Palm Sunday - "Some Things Lost, Some Things Gained"

In Letter # 6, I wrote about how we will all be changed by the time we come to the end/normalization of this pandemic. None of us saw this coming but by now, it is all too clear how it is transforming the world in which we live and how we perceive and receive the world. It is will truly be a new day in an unknown land.

Even now as we are moving through this time, we recognize so much is being lost and may never recover. The most obvious is for the victims and families of the Covid 19 virus. Then, we think of the economy - lost wages, lost jobs, lost businesses and even corporations. And most intimidating to us, perhaps, we realize the directions we were moving, our hopes and dreams have will have shifted and maybe even how we feel inside. Our own sense of self may shift.

Yet, as we experience loss and change, we discover it creates space – new and open space that previously did not exist. For most, this new space is perhaps unsettling in the least, but for others, they begin to discover new possibilities that we would not have imagined otherwise.

In a recent Zoom conference with some Fellowship Night families, during the check-in, many families commented they have appreciated the time with their children and just as a family unit. (One mentioned, they didn't think their cat approved of everyone being home... but that's a cat for you.) Each comment carried a slight sense of guilty pleasure since this pandemic was creating so many problems for so many people, it was hard to express a positive in its midst.

I had to wonder if these the "Shelter-in-Place" made a decision for many of us to slow down and to spend time together in a way that would not have been apropos in the old ways of the world (prior to March 2020). I know it is true for me. While I remain busy, so much has changed within my context, which has led to some relief from stress related to issues of the denomination and ways I have worked in the "old ways of the world". I know it will be different for me going forward. It will be better. And yes, I say this with a bit of guilty pleasure.

For others, we may not yet have had a sense of discovering a new nugget of life in the open space created by our loss; but maybe at this point, we just need to begin to realize that even in the midst of loss, we are creating open space – where something new may grow. We are reminded that sometimes we need the open space before anything new can begin to emerge.

Today, is Palm Sunday, the beginning of Holy Week, the day Jesus rides into Jerusalem with the citizens waving palm branches at him. As he rides in, he must be imagining how all of this will change is such a short time. The people will turn against him, his closest followers will flee, he will be crucified, and then rise again – and the world will never be the same. It will be a new world.

Holy week is all about loss, grieve and creating new spaces. It is about creating new spaces so we can grow as individuals, as a people, and as a global community. The old ways will not work in the new world.

Today is Palm Sunday.

Roger

Our Weekly Prayers 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, Patricia Orr, Jamie Campbell, Mel Imai, Harry Hatasaka, Amy Shao, Hiroko Yoshida, Patrick Chow, Patricia Orr, Ray Narimatsu, and Rev. Mariellen Sawada Yoshino.

Prayers for Alice Kawasaki's extended family: On her mother's side, her cousin's stepmother in-law passed away from Covid 19. On her father's side, her cousin, Sue Lemba, in New Jersey is in ICU with Covid 19. She is a surgical nurse.

Copyright © 2020 Aldersgate United Methodist Church, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this e-mail because you opted to receive Aldersgate UMC newsletters by e-mail.

Our mailing address is:

Aldersgate United Methodist Church
4243 Manuela Ave.
Palo Alto, CA 94306