

Dear Fellow Church Members and Friends:

First of all, I want to thank those who reached out to me following last week's message, to share your thoughts and ideas for how we move forward to chart a course in these turbulent times of COVID 19. The Phasing Forward Task Force will present recommendations to the church council at the October 6 Council meeting, so be sure to read next week's message for a recap of the Council meeting and the plans for our next steps.

In the meantime, we've been testing the waters by gathering outside in small groups to ensure that social distancing and the wearing of masks can be maintained throughout the duration of an event. Respecting a distance of at least 6 feet from others is challenging for a faith community that likes to shake hands and give hugs. Wearing a mask for an extended period of time "feels odd" and can be uncomfortable as those in our midst who must wear a mask for hours on end during the workday can attest. We have learned from the knitters' gatherings, outdoor committee meetings, confirmation class gatherings, and the small Blessing of the Animals service. This weekend we will attempt a larger gathering to see how that goes.

WILD NOTES CONCERT ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2 P.M.:

We have enjoyed music by the Wild Notes for many years, and we are grateful for their willingness to perform for us on Sunday, October 4, at 2 p.m. This will be our first large gathering since March when the pandemic forced us to rethink everything. Here's how the Wild Notes concert will work in order to ensure the safety of all present:

- The Wild Notes will be set up in the Gazebo. Jane will offer opening comments and a prayer from the Gazebo. We ask that concert attendees do not gather at the Gazebo.
- We will follow the state guideline of no more than 100 people gathered for an outside event. There is no cost for the concert and admission is first come, first serve.
- Attendees are invited to bring a chair and sit in the field, or may stay in their own cars if preferred.
- The back row of parking near the field is reserved for those who wish to remain in their cars.
- Everyone in attendance is required to wear a mask and maintain social distancing.
- The church building will remain closed for this event.

- The Anniversary Committee will have a table set up with the beautiful commemorative Christmas ornaments for sale. The cost is \$12 and correct change is appreciated.

TWO MORE EVENTS TO NOTE FOR YOUR CALENDAR:

Book Discussion Group On Racism to be led by Rev. Jane Hawken on October 5 at 7 p.m. Details are in last week's Friday message. Email Jane at jhawken@sbcglobal.net if you would like the Zoom meeting invitation emailed to you.

Food Drive, Saturday, October 17, from 9-12 in the church parking lot. Details were in last week's letter and will be shared again in the coming weeks.

I close this week's letter with a feeling of incredible gratitude to all the church members who are making it possible for our congregation to remain engaged and relevant in these challenging times. I want to give a special shout out to Mike Enright, who has faithfully served as a Deacon and as chair of the Diaconate. Mike has found it necessary to step back from his leadership roles for a while. He has served with distinction as an extraordinary church leader and we owe him a debt of gratitude. Another shout out is coming George Law's way. George has graciously stepped in as chair of the Diaconate. As a congregation, we are fortunate to have Mike and George in our midst.

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