

# Community Mennonite Church

## Newsletter

Friday, May 1, 2020

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### Rituals & Relationships

Relationships and rituals are necessary for the practice of our faith. We're accustomed to enjoying both of these in weekly (or at least monthly!) face-to-face encounters in worship. These days we're all engaged in an experiment for sustaining relationships and rituals during a long season of social distancing. I think of the 6th century BCE Jews in Babylon wondering how to sustain their faith when there was no place (Temple) and no people (scattered/exiled or killed in the siege of Jerusalem). These faith ancestors discovered that God was at work among them even under extremely challenging circumstances. Ultimately their diaspora model for a robust faith community led to synagogue faith that worked so well Jews throughout history (and later Christians) adopted it. This was true even after some returned to Palestine and the Temple was rebuilt!

We're not exiled survivors of war. We are living through a pandemic that is costly in terms of human life and social and economic systems on which we've depended. I wonder what church experiments in sustaining the relationships and rituals necessary for faith will prove to be valuable even beyond this particular chapter of our lives. On Easter, we shared the Lord's Supper from our homes. Last Sunday we celebrated retirees. This month we'll welcome new members. During our season of social distancing, we have not yet had a wedding, a death, or baptism within our congregation, but these events cannot necessarily be delayed and may require some adaptation and experimentation. Our pastoral team has a long practice of reviewing recent rituals and congregational events at each meeting. Thank you for being a congregation who takes rituals and relationships seriously, which both names losses and welcomes creative adaptation. May the rituals that emerge from our relationship with the Risen One bless and empower us as the people of God.

*-Pastor Jennifer Davis Sensenig*



**Cross # 8, Kume Bryant,**  
Korean American, used with permission

## Easter Season Worship

### May 3 - Fourth Sunday of Easter - Good Shepherd

Fellowship time on Zoom at 9:30 am

*John 10:1-10*

### May 10 - Fifth Sunday of Easter - I AM the Way, the Truth, the Life

*John 14:1-14*

### May 17 - 6th Sunday of Easter - Another Advocate

*John 14:15-21*



**The Good Shepherd**  
Anjolie Ela Menon, India

## CMC Notes & Announcements

### Virtual Fellowship Time This Sunday, May 3, at 9:30 am

CMCers are invited to attend another Sunday morning fellowship time on Zoom, this Sunday, May 3, at 9:30 am. Similar to our Easter morning fellowship time, we will form breakout groups facilitated by pastoral team members. A link and password to join the meeting will be distributed via email with this week's worship video.

*-Pastor Jason Gerlach*

### Upcoming Zoom Gatherings For CMC Parents and Business Workers & Owners

Members of CMC's pastoral team will be hosting several zoom gatherings for conversation and connection with specific groups from the congregation. Here are the dates for upcoming conversation circles.

<b>Parents with children at home:</b>	Monday, May 4, at 4:30 pm
<b>For those who are engaged in business:</b>	Thursday, May 7, at 7 pm

If you have questions, please contact me. Ben will distribute Zoom links to access the meetings to the congregation via email.

*-Pastor Byron, on behalf of Pastoral Team*

### Motivated Mask Makers Mitigate Microparticle Migration to Mennonite Mouths

We are thankful for the team of CMC sewers who have prolifically produced masks for members of our congregation and other local organizations. If you have requested a mask, but have not received one yet, we appreciate your patience. We also ask that you [check this document to confirm that we have accounted for your request](#). We are grateful to Nessa Stoltzfus, who has offered to coordinate mask distribution. We are still taking requests, so feel free to send them to the church office.

*-Ben Bailey, Church Administrator*



## Notes From the Harrisonburg Area & Beyond

**To those who purchased my book of poems, a big thank you.** And to those who said they would still like to buy one, please contact me directly. I have them available at our house and would be happy to deliver. The cost is \$13.99. Thank you! -Esther Stenson

**Open Doors Needs Volunteers** - Since opening their emergency Covid-19 response shelter at JMU's Godwin Hall, Open Doors has received an abundance of meals and supplies from the community. What is harder to find, though, are volunteers who are willing to be on-site, serving meals and providing leadership each night. [If you would like to help, here are four specific requests.](#) (Volunteers should be between the ages of 18 and 60 and have no high-risk health conditions.) If you wish to volunteer, or need more information, contact Jennifer Murch.

**Material Support for OCP during the Pandemic** - Our Community Place remains open, though in a greatly modified manner. They are serving more meals than in the past, and are [in need of these items](#). If you are able to provide some of these items, please bring them to the CMC building on Thursdays by 5 pm. There will be a box outside the north door (by the ramp). Please leave your donations there, and they will be collected and taken to OCP.

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## Need & Plenty

### CMCers are seeking...

...**a nylon string guitar** to borrow for 6-8 weeks or, perhaps, buy. Contact Joy Kreider.

### CMCers are offering...

...**guppies galore!** One of Reuben's fish had 19 babies and another is about to have more. Our tank should only hold 10. There are few better times than a pandemic to add a few pet fish to your life. Contact Matt Gingerich.