

Dear friends, members, adherents, and friends of St. Andrew's United Church Williams Lake

Now that I have all your email contacts in a list I can send a message to all of you by blind carbon copy so I'm not sharing your personal email addresses without your permission. This is good news and I am pleased.

I was - and still am - in the midst of making pastoral phone calls to each of you, to say "hi", check in and see how you're doing in the midst of everything this COVID-19 business has imposed on us all, share some information from the Board meeting Tuesday, and provide the latest updates.

Some of you I've already spoken to this week, and I'll keep calling and make my way through my list.

For those I haven't met yet, I'm Nancy, the new minister here. I'm looking forward to meeting you.

The Board met on Tuesday, March 17. We had a good meeting and made some important decisions about St. Andrew's United Church's response to the pandemic. Part of the point of my calls was to let you know what's happening. I'll switch to an email so I can get all of you at once.

Here's what's happening:

- **WORSHIP** - worship is suspended until April 15. The Board will meet again on the 14th and we'll review that decision taking into account current information at that time.
- **ST. ANDREW'S BUILDING**
 - is closed to ALL current rentals and ALL catering related to rentals is cancelled
 - is closed to the public, "soft closed" to the congregation (that will be explained below)
- **CHURCH COORDINATOR'S OFFICE and the MINISTER'S OFFICE**
 - will be open Tuesday to Friday from about 9:15 to 3:00 daily (subject to unexpected change)
 - will be staffed
 - the office coordinator is out of the office on a family matter until next week and in light of COVID-19 protocols no-one will be called in to cover her desk
 - in the meantime, for church coordinator things you can ask Nancy
- **MESSAGE ON THE OFFICE PHONE AND IN-COMING MESSAGES**
 - we'll keep the message on the office phone as updated as possible daily including contact information in case of a pastoral emergency
 - we'll aim to respond to messages left on the machine within 24 hours
 - messages will be checked once daily when the office is closed
- **PASTORAL CARE** - a plan is in the works for pastoral care - it will be all the more important to stay connected with each other even when we're not meeting for worship and other church groups
- The **CHURCH SANCTUARY** - is open for individual members of the congregation, or VERY small groups (2-4 people) to come and sit in prayer or silence during office hours
- **NEED HELP WITH GROCERIES OR SUCH?**
 - if you or someone you know needs help getting groceries or such, give the office a call and we can connect you with some folks who are willing to help

- **THE DROP BOX BY THE MAIN FRONT DOORS**
 - is gone from the wall - it had to come down for the siding project which is under way
 - you should have seen the wasp nest and a mud something or other, wasp like creature's nest - the young man who took the box down brought the nest in to show me - it was very cool (he told me the name of the bug but I forget now what he said)
- **FINANCIAL SUPPORT/OFFERINGS**
 - your loving financial support and your offerings are still important and much appreciated
 - please consider mailing your offerings to the office, signing up for PAR if you're not already on PAR, using post dated cheques, or dropping your offering off when the office is open
- **MOST OF ALL** - I want you to know that I'm thinking of you and you're in my prayers, and you're in the thoughts and prayers of the Board
- **The other thing to know - all is subject to unexpected change and/or change on short notice** - everything is unpredictable and very fluid with the ongoing pandemic interrupting and shifting everything. These really are unprecedented times
- **AND FINALLY - A WORD OF HOPE**
 - in time "all will be well, all manner of things shall be well"; we'll get through this TOGETHER; **we are not alone, God is with us, and as Isaiah says** (Songs for a Gospel People, "I will never forget you, my people", # 71):
 - "I will never forget you, my people, I have carved you on the palm of my hand. I will never forget you, I will not leave your orphaned, I will never forget my own." "I will never forget my own."
 - when you're washing your hands for 20 seconds at a time, remember to say a little prayer.

Thanks for taking the time to read all this. Take care of yourself and each other. Be blessed and be a blessing.

With gratitude, respect, and much love,

Nancy

Rev. Nancy Colton

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