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# Voices of St George's

SPRING | 2020



The image of the rainbow has been so strong throughout the COVID-19 crisis; we know the image to be a symbol of hope and a new future, one where we learn from our errors and wrongs in the past. In the grief that we are experiencing there are the expressions of hope, of desires to change and not return to how things have been.

We have seen and continue to see the inequality and inequity of society and place both here and overseas. We have seen community come together while apart, and we have seen nature begin to recover and reclaim its place.

This image is a prompt to consider and reflect on how you/we are painting this rainbow. What is the hope you see right now and what is the hope you see for the future?

## Helping Hands...

Sandra Legarde and Sue Brennand have made over 200 masks for distribution to friends and family. The list of individuals, companies and doctor's offices is growing.

Although they are currently waiting for more supplies to come in, they are continuing to cut out the material in preparation for delivery of the needed elastic and interfacing.

One company asked for twenty-four masks to be given to their staff. Sue and Sandra do not charge anyone for the masks since they believe it is their civic duty to supply them to people for their personal protection.



## Sean Simpson helps load Ann Koppel's vehicle with protein bars...

"It's nice to be able to fill a need"



### PROTEIN BAR DONATION

By Luke Edwards for Niagara This Week

The timing couldn't have been better for St. George's Anglican Church in St. Catharines.

Volunteers with the church run a daily breakfast program, serving about 50 people in need every morning, seven days a week. The COVID-19 outbreak has seen that need increase and, at the same time, affected their ability to provide breakfast. Their cereal supplier just told them they couldn't help for the time being.

Enter Simpson's Pharmacy in Virgil. A few weeks earlier, they were approached by the town about supporting long-term-care facilities by providing them with protein bars. Owner Sean Simpson made a few calls and before he knew it, he had access to thousands of power bars at a fraction of the regular cost.

"We went from about 1,600 bars to close to 16,000," he said as he was filling Ann Koppel's vehicle with box after box of

protein bars. Koppel is a member of St. George's Anglican Church, and was grateful for the donation.

"The need now is the greatest it's ever been," she said. The church has been running its breakfast program for 24 years. "It (the donation) is priceless."

Simpson said he was happy to be part of a small gesture to show their appreciation to front-line workers in long-term-care facilities, and also to help the community in this time of need.

He thanked **Vita Health**, the distributors for Pure Protein products in Canada, for helping to increase the support they could provide tenfold. "It's nice to be able to fill a need," Simpson said.

*Thank you for  
making it so  
utterly and  
totally obvious  
that the church  
isn't closed.*

# Healing in Uncertain Times

Each week since the Covid-19 upheaval has begun, I have come to Sunday services with a heavy heart. I don't have to tell you the content of that heaviness. You are living it too.

We're faced with uncertainties, radically altered lives, anguish for the millions of people suffering and dying in this pandemic, and in the midst of all of that, profound grief for our loved ones—in our families, and in our church—who are facing illness, loss, upsetting diagnoses and even death, all while being denied the comforts that we usually lean in to when times are tough.

Each week, a small skeleton crew has been leading worship from an empty sanctuary. Mari Shantz (and for a few weeks Nancy Moffett) leads our music. Scott and I have been taking turns preaching. Lori Martin and Rob Welch have taken turns being our lay reader. And Allison Kelly livestreams the service from the booth in our balcony out into the virtual reality of our physically-distanced church.

Each week, I come out of that worship service with my soul fed in a profound way. I feel connected. I feel my small little prayers become part of a prayer much bigger than anything I myself could offer.

I experience the power of the Holy Spirit's fellowship and the truth of this "great cloud of witnesses" of which we are part. I'm not just worshipping with the many people who are able to tune into the livestream in that moment. I'm worshipping into the "thin space" that so many of us have named when we get to gather at St. George's in person; I'm worshipping with the faithful here

and now, scattered and isolated; I'm worshipping with the saints who have gone before us, and even the ones who will come after us. I'm reconfigured in that identity in which we share as the Body of Christ, and in that reconfiguration, I know that Jesus powerfully walks with us.

I know that not everyone has the technology to join us online. But I also know that in these days of worry and fear, there is a calling back into prayer and community and our shared responsibility toward one another that we are finding a whole variety of ways of accessing.

I get this amazing privilege of hearing your stories day by day. Of how you are struggling, yes. But also the stories of how you are reaching out, connecting, caring, praying, checking in and, as one parishioner has coined in, "being kinder than necessary."

I hear you speaking of how you are being more attentive to blessings, looking for the leading of God, and catching a glimpse of how we might work together to create a world where we don't try to go it alone and where nobody gets told that they don't belong or don't matter.

We don't know when we'll get to be physically together again. We know there will be joy and sadness and hopefully a newfound wisdom when we do. The joy will be in that physical closeness with one another that is so easy to take for granted. The sadness will be in recognizing the dear ones we have lost during our time in isolation and in looking for the much-needed healing of our hearts. The wisdom, I



pray, will be in recognizing what we truly need—God, one another, community, faith, prayer, hope—when the world as we know it crumbles apart.

Thank you for all that you do to care for one another. Thank you for each prayer you offer and each way you find of reaching out. Thank you for getting in touch with me and Reverend Scott to let us know how you are and how we can support you—we worry a lot about not having the regular channels of communication to know how our parish family is doing.

Thank you for making it so utterly and totally obvious that the church isn't closed. The church is you, the church is God's Spirit at work in you. Thank you.

— Martha



# Community Dinners



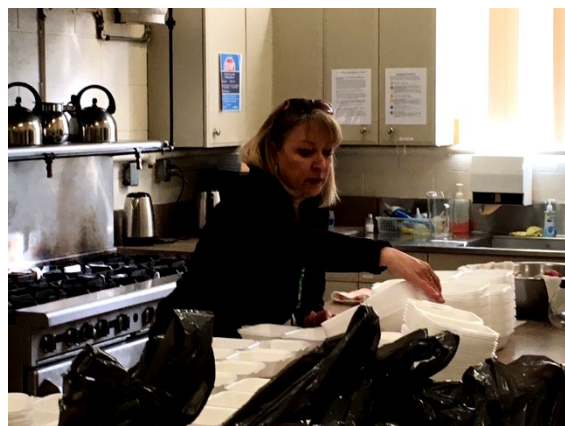
The Community Dinner is in its third year at St George's, but we have never had a dinner like we did in April. The Corona Virus pandemic has challenged us all.

Like the Breakfast Program, we have had to change our ways and deliver a takeout meal for our guests, all the time remembering social distancing.

Working in shifts, with many fewer than our normal 25 volunteers, dinners were prepared, packaged, and bagged so that our guests could easily take out the food. The hot food with salad, rolls, fruits and juices was greatly appreciated. Over 80 meals were served.

The program will continue as a takeout meal until it is safe to serve a sit-down dinner once again. We appreciate the support of the church with the donations of fresh fruit and cash that were received that help us continue this program. Our next dinner is **Wednesday May 27<sup>th</sup>** and we are planning our menu and as all of us are doing, planning the shopping.

Thank you to all who support this program through their donations of time, talent, and treasures. — Ann Koppel



# Lay Readers' Report



For almost two months we have found ourselves in the unique position of the entire congregation worshipping remotely. Physical distancing and isolation being new to us, it feels different leading the prayers of the people in an almost empty room.

Knowing that many are joining remotely is reassuring and wonderful. Holy Week brought a sense of urgency as we prepared for Maundy Thursday. It is already a somber time and the emptiness of the sanctuary magnified that somber feeling. What has struck us over the past couple of months is how true it is when we say, “the church isn’t the building and the building isn’t the church”.

Usually it is in the context of not being able to maintain the physical building and having to make some difficult decisions. But here we are unable to gather; in other words, without a building, and we are still a community worshipping together. How beautiful is that?

While we have shown that we are still a vibrant community of worship we do look forward to when we can all be together again. And finally, the two of us feel very privileged to be acting as Lay Readers during this unique time.

— Lori Martin and Rob Welch

## Corporation Report

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in mid-March, we have been meeting weekly via the Internet to deal with issues such as Church finances, staffing, and security. Corporation, supported by Parish Council, has implemented a program of daily security patrols, three times a day, to provide property protection and a safe environment for clergy, staff, and parishioners.

Corporation has also worked with the leaders of our Breakfast and STEP programs to ensure these much-needed outreach ministries can continue during this pandemic. We are incredibly grateful for our program leaders, and for their wisdom, diligence, and care in making sure these programs are operating as safely as possible, while still meeting the needs of the community at this time.

We want to thank everyone for continuing to support St. George’s during these trying times. You can maintain your givings through:

- Pre-authorized payments
- E-transfers to: [info@stgeorgesanglican.ca](mailto:info@stgeorgesanglican.ca)
- Using the Canada Helps website at: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/25209>
- Payment by cheque in a sealed envelope dropped in the mailbox by the Church office door
- Or by mail

— Dave Bingham, People’s Warden



BAC has had an active winter but had to cancel our April 14 dinner meeting due to the closure of St. George's following the COVID-19 pandemic. At our January 14 meeting, we had Lori Martin give us a presentation on cartography. Louis Muscat talked to us about the progress to date with the STEP program on February 11.

We were to have Susan Vendetti from Start Me Up Niagara come to our dinner meeting on April 14 but had to cancel. Susan has kindly agreed to come to our fall meeting on October 13, assuming we can meet by then.

On the advice of Eric Crawford, our Executive and members of our Telephone Committee, we called each member to wish them Happy Easter and see how they were coping with the pandemic. This was much appreciated.

We continue to have 20 to 25 members come out to the dinner meetings. We meet 5 times a year, the second Tuesday evening of the month, in January, February, April, October, and November. Our November meeting will be November 10. New members are always welcome. Please call Tom Owens at 905-934-4289 or Dave Bingham at 905-938-1648.

## Spotlight on St. George's Youth

Our youth group should be called St. George's Virtual Youth Group!

We have been meeting electronically on Zoom to get together and chat about the current pandemic, daily struggles and the benefits of isolation. We also play games online and we relate to scripture.

It really has been a fun way to bond. When we started using this online App, we would have 4-6 youth attend the zoom. Some days now we have 14-15. It has been quite an

experience and we feel as a youth group that we will keep this electronic piece of time together in our scheduled routine.

Our youth have been sharing ways that they are helping others and staying positive through this tough time. It is delightful and really nice to see.

The Children and Youth Family Ministry Leaders within our diocese are meeting weekly over Zoom. We have created a Facebook page called the Anglican Family Hub. This page

provides online Sunday school lessons, colouring contests, random crafts to do and support.

In addition to this, I have been sending out a weekly lesson to our Sunday School children. It will be so nice to get back into the Church, however we are so very blessed to have our online technology right now and to be able to reach out to one another with support, friendship and fun.

Stay home and stay safe,  
Tanya Schleich



# Treasurer's Report

Thank you to everyone who has continued to make donations to St. George's Church during March and April using personal delivery to the church, the postal service, E-transfer or Canada Helps.

The post office has done a good job in bringing letters to the church but there have been some delays due to the volume of mail they have been asked to handle. If you corresponded in this manner, you may have found that your cheques were not deposited by the church as quickly as is the usual custom. Be assured that your donations are being received and that for social contact restriction reasons, they are being taken to the bank once a week. I wish good health to everyone as we seek the safety of our homes during the pandemic.

The financial information below is about regular envelope donations for the month of March. The data for April had not been organized as of the date of this report. Please note that our strong donations for January and February and our weaker donations in March were still sufficiently large to exceed the budgeted amount for the three months combined and thus maintain a small surplus.

At this point at the end of April, it appears that regular envelope donations will come close to our monthly budget amount but I anticipate that there will be another month with a shortfall.

## Financial report for March 2020

Budgeted regular offerings for March  
\$37,750.40

Actual regular offerings for March  
\$28,635.15

Shortfall for March  
\$ 9,114.85

Deficit Appeal donations in March  
0

Shortfall for March  
\$ 9,114.85

Year to date budgeted regular offerings to March 31  
\$113,250.00

Year to date actual regular offerings to March 31  
113,689.84

Year to date regular offerings surplus  
\$ 439.84

Less: Annual Deficit Appeal donations to March 31  
0

Net year to date surplus  
\$439.84

— Jim Jenter, Treasurer



## Gardening Guild Update

Signs of spring have sprung in the 'Memories' garden on the east side of our church (seen from the Link).

The new plants we put in last fall have all survived and they include some very special "spring ephemerals": Trilliums (still very small), clumps of Virginia Bluebells, ferns and Lily-of-the-Valley. Other woodland plants include Sweet Woodruff and some native geraniums.

We lost quite a few of the lovely hostas, day lilies and other donated perennials when the new retaining wall was installed last year, so we are looking for donations to add more permanent colour and foliage.

If you have plants to offer, please call Lois Marsh-Duggan at 905-646-9703.



# STEP Program

All you need is love, what a great song from the Beatles, especially in these uncertain times in our world.

I wish to share a happy story with everyone; we have had enough tragedy and sad stories for many weeks now and our prayers and condolences go out to the many families around the world and here at home for their losses, especially the 22 people killed in Nova Scotia and in the Snowbirds show.

My story is about the first STEP client that was mandated from the courts. This was the first referral from an outside agency to provide counseling to this individual. I have permission from the client to share the scenario with everyone.

I started Counseling this client on March 15, 2020 when the STEP program switched to appointment only due to COVID 19. The youth was homeless and dealing with many issues including anger, family issues, addiction and criminal charges for destroying and damaging his parents property.

I supported this individual in court on March 11th. The client's mom was in attendance, but the client advised me that his relationship with his parents was very stressful at that time.

I requested that he introduce me to his mom and sister who was also in attendance. When I introduced myself to the client's mother and sister, I could see the stress that they were going through as a family. I saw the look on the mother's face, one of love for her child. I started counseling him on a weekly basis face to face in a private setting.

We worked on many of his court mandated issues and the client was totally committed. One of the suggestions that was made to the client was to tell his parents that he loved them and ask for forgiveness, because we all need love and expressing that is not wrong.

Within 3 weeks of doing private one-on-one counseling, the relationship with his mom and stepfather is stronger than ever. I invited his mother inside the STEP centre following all COVID-19 protocols. She thanked me personally for helping her family and her son. The mother drops him off every day for his sessions and we are now working on getting him the required credits to graduate from high school.

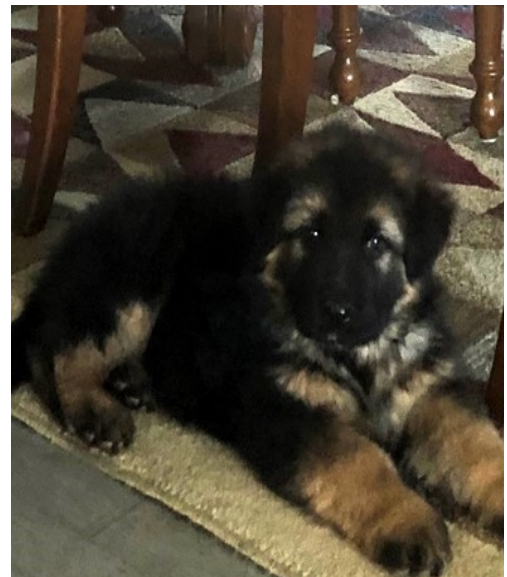
Yes the Beatles were ahead of their time; their music will never get old. And neither will telling your parents that you love them; it goes a long way to mend any relationship.

My most satisfying accomplishment as a professional counsellor is to see results, even if it takes a lot of time. My reflection on this case is that I used 3 approaches: counseling, mentoring, and my experience as a parent.

The most joyful time is when your kids can say "I love you, Dad." That is worth more than anything in the world. It was a great moment to see this youth with his family and himself being happy with a big smile on his face. He is no longer homeless and has now moved back in with his parents.

On another note, I just got my new German Shepherd puppy, named him Santana and will be enjoying giving him a lot of love. We are all kids at heart and it does not matter your age, it's just a number. All you need is Love!!!

Kind Regards, Louis Muscat



# Breakfast Program Update

*Gracious God, in times of anxiety and stress, teach us to wait in quietness for your protection and defence, made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord*

## LAUNCHING A NEW TEAM

After almost a quarter of a century as Breakfast Program Convenor, Janet Veale has retired. One measure of Janet's leadership is the care and planning he took over the past 12 months to ensure the leadership baton was passed on. Her role as Program Convenor has been replaced by an Operations Team where the various responsibilities are shared by a team led by Program Chair, Duncan Moffett. Duncan can be reached by phone at 905-356-5180 or by email at nmoffett3@cogeco.ca.

## RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGE OF COVID-19



*Dino, at kitchen window, and Faye serve coffee and cereal to clients while all keep the required 2-m physical separation.*

Beginning on March 20, the breakfast format transitioned to takeout service. Using a smaller team of four volunteers each morning, under the direction of a "shift boss", we continue to serve juice, toasted sandwiches, cereal and coffee to about 50 clients. We have sufficient food to continue service, although donations are always welcome. Please see the next page for details on how you might contribute cereal. Stringent safety and separation procedures developed in

cooperation with Niagara Region Public Health, are designed to ensure the safety of both clients and volunteers. Three volunteers remain in the kitchen isolated from the dining room and any contact with clients.

The fourth volunteer and the shift boss work in the dining room while interacting with clients. In all cases a physical separation of 2-m or more is maintained between people. Shift bosses are assigned on a separate rotation from volunteer teams. The overall response to this set up is that volunteers feel safe as they serve. A very big thank you to the volunteers who continue to serve.

## HOW MANY CLIENTS ARE SERVED?

During January we served an average of 68 clients daily. The number was 62 in February, 55 in March and 48 in April.

## VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR'S REPORT

COVID-19 has resulted in a major reorganization of the volunteer teams. This happened as volunteers withdrew because of concerns for their health and the safety of their families. Also each team is now limited to four volunteers so that we can maintain the required 2 meter physical separation. Currently we have 31 teams with approximately 120 volunteers (down from more than 200)

We are making every effort to ensure we have good communication with all team leaders including those who have stepped back during COVID-19. We encourage all team leaders to share Program information (newsletters,



*Duncan Moffett, Program Chair*

quarterly reports, emails, etc.) with the individual volunteers on their team.

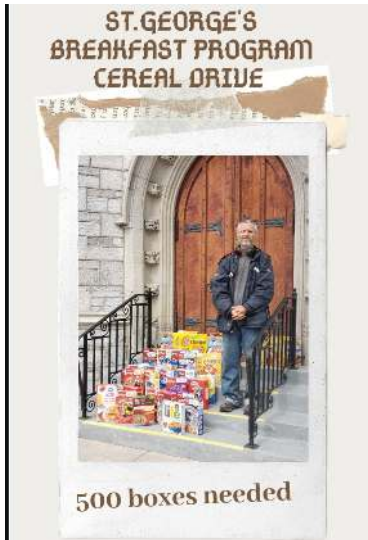
## TREASURER'S REPORT

Our budget for 2020 is \$3,500 per month or \$42,000 for the year. This is based on our total expenses for 2019, escalated by about 3 per cent. This money is raised entirely through donations from individuals, churches and community organizations.

During the first four months of 2020 (January 1-April 30) we received a total of \$16,000 in donations, on track at about one-third of our budget. However, our expenditures are significantly higher than normal because of the purchase of extra food, disposable cups, cereal containers and paper and plastic bags.

Our monthly costs have increased to about \$4,500 resulting in a revised annual budget of \$52,000. We started out the year with a cash balance which gives us some cushion to afford these additional costs. However, if we continue to operate as a takeout service for the remainder of the year we will need our donors to assist us in meeting these extraordinary expenses.

# Breakfast Program Cereal Drive!



Some weeks ago, our most generous supplier of cereals, Post Foods Canada Ltd., advised us that they would not be making any further donations for a while, placing us in a precarious position with respect to cereal.

As the number of volunteers has declined and our churches have closed, this shortage has been worsened by a drop off in individual donations.

**Replacing Post's donation would cost us \$1,000 per month.** To address our need, we are launching an appeal for cereal. Cereal can be dropped off in the kitchen any morning at breakfast time (6:45-9:00 am).

We appreciate all donations of cereal: Shreddies, Raisin Bran and Honey Nut Cheerios are among the most popular.

**BREAKING NEWS:** A few days ago, Post was able to resume their donation! Jeff and Michael from NTEC arrived with a truck load of cereals.



Thank you all!! During the first 10 days, YOU!! my cherished friends donated a total of...

- ♥ 100 boxes of cereal! ♥
- ♥ 165 dollars!! ♥
- ♥ a full box of care packages ♥
- ♥ toiletries for the STEPS program ♥

Blessings to each and every one of you!!!  
Keep well, keep being an inspiration!!



And Anita Djorkovic's personal cereal drive on FaceBook was a big success!



# Parish Council Report

The Parish Council met on Zoom, a video conferencing service, on April 20. Jim Jenter reported on the federal government financial aid for staff salaries.

The Diocese will be applying for the Emergency Wage Subsidy for clergy and staff, including those of St. George's. The Diocese has also temporarily deferred our DM&M payment to help with reduced income.

Corporation reported that they are meeting weekly online to deal with any issues that may arise and for the most part the staff are working from home. Martha and Scott continue to live-stream our Sunday morning service as well as Wednesday evening Advent Cafe.

On Sunday morning they are joined by Mari Shantz for the music, either Lori Martin or Rob Welch as Lay Reader and Allison Kelly who does the recording. We are very grateful for the opportunity to continue to worship and are delighted with the number of people joining in worship with us, both from our congregation and much farther afield.

We have had to put on hold the hiring process to find a new Director of Music due to our present circumstances. Martha has been in contact with possible candidates to let them know we are keeping their applications on file. We have also had to postpone John Butler's celebration party, but look forward to our tribute to John sometime in the future for his many years of service to St. George's.

Parish Council were enthusiastic with their support of the hiring of Adam Pierce of Ignite Niagara Security Services. Adam will be addressing the security needs of our church on a daily basis.

Duncan Moffett, the new head of the Breakfast Program, reported that the take-out system is working very well and that they are able to maintain a safe environment for both the volunteers and the breakfast guests.

Faye Perkins, the new Outreach and Social Justice representative, outlined her mandate of supporting the Breakfast Program, supporting and strengthening the STEP Program

and rebuilding the Community Dinners with the new circumstances of Covid-19. Faye also wishes to work on the relationships between St. George's and the other community agencies.

— Liz Cunningham, Deputy  
Rector's Warden



## Senior Choir Socializes



What a strange Easter season it was for St. George's Senior Choir! The first time in living memory that there was no choir present for our holiest church week...

Not singing together has been a shock to us all, but at least we are able to see and speak to each other through the magic of video conferencing.

We are meeting each Thursday, the same day we would be rehearsing. What a joy to "be" together! Thanks to Julie Giesbrecht for setting up our first session.

We all hope we'll be back at St. George's soon to share the joy of singing together with our whole church family.

## Ecumenical Honorary Assistant

Hello fellow lovers of St. George's. It is a privilege to write a few lines to you for the newsletter during these very strange and often difficult times through which we are currently living. It is my hope that you, like myself, have been making the best of it and enjoying the many virtual worship opportunities that are being offered weekly, as well as taking part in the variety of online Zoom groups where we can see each other face to face, albeit online.

I want to take this time to remind everyone of the incredible job our clergy, Martha and Scott, continue to do on our behalf. The Covid 19 crisis has thrown them online in new formats and demanded of them many new learning curves which they have mastered. Each of us needs to keep them in our prayers daily, do our best not to add to their responsibilities, and to help in any way we can.

This crisis has burdened us all, to be sure. But I am experiencing in my own life, as I am sure you are as well, many bright and beautiful ways that our love of Christ, of each other, and of those we do not know is shining through and helping us see the world in better ways. We shall come out of this one day soon, and we will come out stronger, braver, and more compassionate. An old hymn reminds us that "God is working his purpose out." We may not see it now but, in our future days, we shall. Our job now can be summed up in two words. Love and Trust.

Many blessings today and always,  
Doreen



# Music, Music, Music!...etc.

## The George Express

I had written a spring musical for our youth choir to present this June. Unfortunately, one of the characters that I had created was a germaphobe! As I have said to some, "Having a character who is a germaphobe seemed like a funny thing before March, 2020. After the arrival of the coronavirus, however, that character is far less funny.

I have had to re-work the story quite a

learn our script for the musical and they are making terrific progress.

## Music for Sunday Services

I have been playing piano and singing in the weekly Sunday morning services while John keeps a healthy distance. The pared-down format of the service feels so strange, but I am grateful to be able to continue to serve through music.

funny! Touching, especially, when Kent Chisholm sang "When You Walk Through A Storm" to Dick Netherway. Funny, when at the outset of the pandemic, we tried to rehearse together (via zoom) with all of our microphones on. The time lag was different for each computer, so we sounded like we were trying to sing a round – with no clear start time for anyone! Seeing and hearing the laughter felt good.



bit, in order to create the same lighthearted approach, without stirring up painful feelings about the changes we are now experiencing. The theme of the musical concerns the inception of the faith community that we now call "St. George's."

Wonderfully, we began our January-June season by getting a head start on many of the songs that will be included in the musical.

We are now in a situation that makes musical rehearsals much more difficult, so I am thankful to have covered all of that musical ground before we needed to start practicing self-isolation. The youth choir has begun rehearsing online as a group to

## Confirmation Class

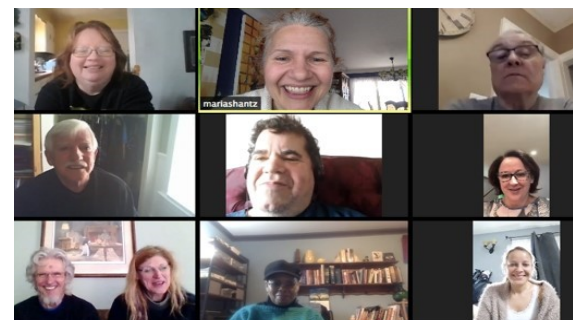
The Confirmation class is meeting over Zoom on alternate weeks, and they also watching a video presentation every other week. In conversing with confirmation students, one of the big takeaways they say they are getting from this new experience of self-isolation is that most people are taking this as an opportunity to show others that they love them. How touching to hear these words.

Another theme that surfaced was the importance of self-awareness: when using the earth's resources, when maintaining good hygiene, and when paying attention to how their actions affect others. Some are working through difficult feelings, longing to see ill family members who are self-isolated.

## Krehbiel Chorale

My rehearsals with The Krehbiel Chorale have been both touching and

Those who are able continue to meet weekly and encourage one another with the sharing of individual songs. For differing reasons, some members are unable to connect on Zoom, so we continue to periodically privately email or phone one another. The old expression, "Say it with flowers!" has become a bit of a standby, as we



seek to support local greenhouses, demonstrate our love, and also practice physical distancing.

**Blessings to you all,  
Mari Shantz**

# Kinder Than Necessary

Allison & Gerald Of Infinitely More offered their support to all of the dedicated front line workers by using creativity. Allison painted these gorgeous wooden elements were skillfully painted and lovingly placed on her front step to brighten the day of all who passed by



Laura Revel-Grant very generously offered to sew masks for Krehbiel Chorale members from some of the material that she had left over from a project.

Linda Telega's grandkids made her this beautiful "stained glass" image in a frame.



This arrived folded up in an envelope: "Since we must stay far apart, here's a gift that is 'from the heart'. **A paper hug...safe as can be.**"

# A MOTHER'S STRENGTH THROUGH A CHILD'S EYES

DRAWING BY CECILIA TATARNIC



*(MOMMY LION)*

"DEDICATED TO ALL OF THE STRONG, CARING AND LOVING  
PEOPLE IN OUR LIVES"