

October 16, 2020

Dear Friends,

This morning's [Psalm \(16\)](#) is titled a "Song of Trust and Security in God." You may wish to check the whole thing out. The psalmist declares (verse 2), "I say to the LORD, 'You are my Lord; I have no good apart from you.'"

I have no good apart from you. You may want to stop for 5 minutes, breath slowly and let these words cycle within you: *I have no good apart from you.*

As some of us feel the desperation of our own decline, may we reach out to the good One "from whom all blessings flow." God is with us.

Winter Well-Being

We need each others' help to lean into and live from the goodness of God. As we approach the winter, I am thinking about how we might mutually support each other with nobody bearing too heavy of a load.

Loosely, I am planning to facilitate a group of some sort which offers accountability and companionship as we seek wholeness this winter. We will share our plans to exercise and perhaps take occasional distanced group walks depending on Ottawa's regulations, we will share strategies for coping with anxiety and depression, and we will commit to and keep each other accountable to a life of prayer. The only way this will work is if everybody in the group sees themselves as a giver and a receiver, making space for each others' care.

Let me know if this appeals to you. I'm looking at a late November start.

Sunday Online Worship Gathering at 10 a.m.

We are citizens of earth; specifically, we are residents of Ottawa and citizens of Canada. And we are citizens of heaven. How do we live like Christ in the complexities of dual citizenship? In Sunday's Gospel reading, two groups who disagree with each other band together in their common dislike of Jesus. They try to trap him, getting him to express either rebellion against government or against God. It doesn't work. Jesus offers a loaded both/and answer: "Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's." There's wisdom in this text for today (Matthew 22:15-22).

For a link to the Zoom online meeting, please [contact me](#).

*Please join the Zoom meeting after 9:30 a.m. to avoid problems entering the meeting.

For this week's scripture readings and other announcements, go to [Sunday's bulletin](#).

Question or the Week

In any given week I am asked many questions, especially these days. Here's a question I was asked recently: "While churches haven't been legally required to close, should we be doing so given the increasing [Covid] numbers?"

As you know, we've kept our Sunday worship services on Zoom since March 15. (Fun Fact: This is our 32nd week online.) We opted to keep the larger Sunday gatherings on Zoom to keep us all together in an interactive setting.

Through Stage Two reopening on June 11 (followed by Stage Three reopening on July 17, and a return to modified Stage Two in Ottawa on October 9), we have had smaller in-person gatherings, strictly

adhering to Ottawa Public Health's [guidance for places of worship](#). Churches are exempt from the [new restrictions](#) which came out October 9: "Schools, child care centres, and places of worship will remain open in these communities and must continue to follow the public health measures in place. Before-school and after-school programs will also be exempt from these new restrictions."

My response to the good question above reiterated our strict adherence to all government regulations in an environment of minimal movement and no touch. (Check out Sunnyside's most up-to-date [Worshipping Together Guidelines](#).) I suggest that our type of gathering involves less contact than other situations which remain legitimately open in Ottawa. Given people's heightened need spiritually, mentally, and emotionally, I hope we can remain 'open' as long as the regulations allow it, always reminding people of their freedom to opt out. It is getting to the point where we are hearing of suicide risk or other mental health risks within our church; some contact in a context of strict adherence to the law is protective of the whole person. We will do everything in our power to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and we will do everything in our power to support people spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.

Sunday School for grades 4-6 at 11:15 a.m.

For a Zoom link to send your grade 4-6 child to Sunday School, please contact [our family pastor](#).

Tuesday Prayer Gathering: October 20

Please submit your prayer requests to the team [here](#).

Praying with the Psalmists: Healing (October 28)

We continue with small in-house gatherings at least one Wednesday evening per month. This month our Praying with the Psalmists theme is "Healing." Chris and Heather Barrett will be joining me to facilitate an evening of worship and prayer with Communion. Al and Beth Fleming will lead us in worship through music. Please [register here](#) for our October 28th gathering (7 p.m.).

With love and prayers,

Pastor Kerry Kronberg (with the whole team)