



A Message from the Rector

April 1, 2020

Dear St. Andrew's;

I hope this letter finds you well and adjusting to these challenging days. It has been good to connect with many of you on the phone, via Zoom, email and text to learn of the ways you are making the best of these uncertain times. I am grateful for your resilience and inspired by your compassion and faithfulness.

This year the Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter Day traditions of worship will not be observed in the church building as we continue to practice distancing to avoid contagion. As much of a sense of loss which that realization brings, there is also space for curiosity and wonder as to how the stories of the passion, death and resurrection of Christ will be told in these days of global pandemic, and what new significance will be revealed. I hope you will be gentle with yourself and others, acknowledging that this is a new way of being and we are doing most of what we do, in the way we are doing it now, for the first time.

My invitation to you is to look what God is doing as we approach Holy Week and Easter. May you live into these days with your ears, eyes and heart, wide open, knowing that some of what you see, hear and feel will be hard. May the openness you dare, allow God to show you something precious and new. May you bless and be blessed in unexpected ways. May gratitude and grace live well with fear and uncertainty. May you grow in the knowledge of the interconnectedness of humanity and all of creation. May you be grounded in the love of God and the peace that passes understanding.

It is unclear when we will be back "in person" in the beautiful sacred space of St. Andrew's at 300 Third Street. Bishop Hollingsworth will take wise counsel and notify the parishes when that can take place.

Though the building is empty, let me assure you that worship, formation, outreach and in-reach continue faithfully. The Vestry and Commissions continue to work on the Strategic Plan which calls us to "Share God's Love." Sr. Warden, Doug Skladan and I check in several times each week, and the work of the administrative and finance offices continues. Please remember that the expenses of the church are not suspended and mail in your pledges and offerings as you are able. This would also be a good time to include St. Andrew's in the on-line payment practices set up with your bank.

I look forward to "seeing" you virtually during Holy Week and Easter and anticipate with joy the time when we can worship "in person" together again. A Holy Week packet has been mailed and can also be accessed at St. Andrew's website. Though we will be apart, we can be together in spirit and worship. Watch for updates on the website (www.standrewselyria.org), the Facebook Page, texts and emails. Virtual Diocesan-wide Easter service as well as virtual opportunities for Holy Week will be posted there. Know that I hold you in my prayers and I ask that you hold me in yours.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "June".