



This is new territory for all of us, so we expect there to be hiccups here and there, but even though it may be imperfect, we believe that gathering in a virtual space is far better than not gathering. You can use this same information to connect every Sunday that we are gathering virtually, so please feel free to save it. We are still gathering at 10:30am.

### **Activity Updates**

Some of the most difficult decisions to make are about the activities at church. Our April community dinner is canceled, the Palm Sunday Soup and Bread Luncheon is canceled. We will be in touch with another communication about Holy Week services.

### **The Church is Not Canceled**

Although we are not gathering in-person on Sundays, and not doing some of our normal activities, this does not mean that the church is canceled. Now, perhaps, more than ever, we are learning what it means to *be* the church and not just *do* church. We are learning that being the church is not about the building, but it is about the people, and how the people reflect the Divine light into our communities. We are working hard to try to create ways to be socially connected even if we are physically distanced. Pastor Matthew is still available and is happy to talk, even by telephone or video. The church office is still open, though we ask that you call if you have a question or want to talk, rather than stopping in. Pastor Matthew is also recording brief video reflections Monday-Friday until we can gather again. You can look for Altamont Reformed Church on YouTube or go to our Facebook page at [facebook.com/altamontreformedchurch](https://facebook.com/altamontreformedchurch). He is also working on experimenting with ways to connect, to teach, and to continue ministering to the congregation and community.

### **Giving**

This is a particularly challenging time because of the myriad of ways that this impacts us, including financially. Although we are not gathering, we continue to have financial obligations as a church. The finance committee is working on trying to give us some help as to how to navigate this, but we are still largely reliant upon contributions. We want to be faithful to our commitments, particularly to our staff, and we plan to continue paying the staff. But this requires the whole church family to help. We know that this has financially impacted people in different ways. But if you are able to continue your contributions, we definitely need that. If you are able to send a little extra, that would be incredibly helpful as we try to make it through this season. You can mail contributions to the church at PO Box 671 in Altamont. We also now have a way that you can contribute online through PayPal, and you can find that information at <https://altamontreformed.org/onlinegiving.html>

Sisters and brothers, this is a challenging season. But the people of God continued to be the church through persecution and famine, through disease and war, through prosperity and poverty. If we are committed to Christ, committed to being the church together, and living into our calling as members of the body of Christ, there is no reason that we cannot weather this together, and maybe even learn something about what it means to be the church on the other side.

This is a significant challenge, but we believe there is an opportunity in here, as well. So please stay connected to one another, even if physically distanced. Be the church. Call people, write notes. Check in with people and help those who need it. This is the time that we can shine as a church, and we are invited to live into this.

We are grateful for you, people of God, let's continue to walk through this together.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Your Consistory

Elders

Bill Johnson

Clara Lasselle

Tulla Pangburn

Steve Simmons

Angie Stewart

Deacons

David Lasselle

Deb Ritzko

Barb Sargent

Nancy Twaddell

Nancy Webb

Minister

The Rev. Matthew van Maastricht