

Newsletter for June 2020

Dear Church Family,

Sunday by Sunday we are learning new things about how to do our work. This Sunday evening at 5pm, our time, John Konieczko from South Carolina begins his hour for our Church-Without-a-Church (CWC), then Vern and Libby do an hour at 6pm. Hoping you will connect with Pastor John (retired now but pastored two different congregations), on at a convenient time, 5pm. We are also continuing filming programs for The Bible Study (done at home), The Rabbi and The Pastor (done via Zoom), and several coming up for Why We Are Christians (also will be via Zoom). In a week or two Curtis Roberts, former San Quentin inmate, will start hosting a Zoom meeting with the intention of reaching out to those who had been in prison. Curtis is often online with schools and colleges talking to young people about how to stay out of jail and out of addiction syndromes. A film is being made about him as well.

Andrea and Jeannette are doing wonderfully well up in the balcony studio filming, live-streaming, and recording the Sunday morning services. It is actually working, and by and by, more are tuning in. Vern has put a lot of time and effort in on this, finding solutions and new alternatives and teaching the crew.

Pastoral wise, life is a little different. The phone is a great tool. The divorce recovery workshop continues via Zoom, though we just finished our latest 8-week session. We will hold regular gatherings for this on Wednesday nights at 7pm at least through June. In addition, every weekday at 1pm to 2pm, Katie and I are on for talk and fellowship. We will also continue this through June at minimum.

The Little School opened Monday, June 1, with a much-reduced number of kids—23. Chevon Fisl, the director, has done wonderfully well. We were somewhat surprised that she opened this soon, but they worked it out with the powers that be and the parents.

We have had to move the Saturday morning food program to the front of the chapel, using the two old white pews and the four park-type benches, because it is necessary in terms of keeping the school safe from a large amount of unregulated public traffic. A big cleaning will be done on Sunday afternoons. We will not be using the kitchen or bathrooms off the hall for some period as well. All part of the plan.

Last week I went around the neighborhood inviting folks to come get food, and this week I will make a flyer and set it on doorsteps. We had more people show up for food yesterday than ever before. After this mess is over, we will be part of the San Francisco and Marin Food Bank as well, which needs a walk-in donation pantry in southern Marin. We were almost set to open this up in March when everything changed.

Finish flooring will be applied to the bathroom, foyer, and front office in the second week of June. Wood-like laminate will be used instead of carpet. Then on into the chapel, there will be good carpet that can eventually be extended into the rest of the room when finances build up. The interior painting in the mold-remediated areas is complete. What an ordeal!

Money wise, I am unsure, since we will not likely see full rent from the school until July. Some are starting to give via electronic means, any of which is accessible at our website, milleravenuechurch.org/giving.

One thing we are thinking about right now is breakfast on Sunday mornings, and any ideas will be considered. We are not looking forward to the same format as three months ago, because Katie and I are about tired out by the time breakfast is over. The work starts on Saturday morning with grocery shopping and food prep, then comes the actual cooking and serving between 8 – 9 on Sunday morning, then the cleanup, a lot more work to do. We want to gather for coffee and toaster-only goodies but not have to cook and clean up, which pretty well ruins any class time we might have also. For lunch, we are thinking of ordering a sandwich tray from Safeway, and anyone can bring other dishes. It will save us old folks some work and also save around \$200 a month.

Next, it looks like we will not have our traditional choir for a while, since singing while close together is on the nixed list due to virus safety concerns (not even the 6 ft. is okay), but we have some plans, and we want a good class before the morning service as well.

In the next edition of the Marin Interfaith newsletter will be a request for an organist for our Sunday morning service. We miss our Christina and our choir; but the guitars alone don't quite do it. For our choruses, okay, but I'd love to see our organ played.

We are making headway for our CWC online church, and that is important. Thankfully, we started to build this over a year before the virus forced the issue, so we were mostly prepared. Please go to milleravenuechurch.org/churchwithoutachurch and look around.