

Guidelines for Sharing Your Covid-19 Story

Dear Friends:

We are all missing human connection in these strange days. A warm hug from a far-way loved one, coffee with a friend, or a face-to-face conversation with an acquaintance would be so nice right now, wouldn't it? Human beings are created to be connected and one of the best ways we do that is to share our stories. Indeed, our sacred book, the Bible, is a collection of stories about how God is at work in the world and in the lives of human beings. The Bible describes human life in all its complexity, the glory and the tragedy, and allows us to see God in all of it.

We each have our own "shelter in place" stories. Some are sweet, some funny, some reflective, and some are sad. In earlier days, we would share these unusual experiences with each other after church on Sunday. Many of us miss the communal aspect of Sunday mornings, particularly Coffee Hour - so important to Episcopalians that it is often referred to as the Eighth Sacrament. We will be together again, although we don't yet know when. In the meantime, let's share our "shelter in place" stories virtually. It doesn't need to be long and it doesn't need to be "writerly." Just a couple of paragraphs describing your day, a revelation you got on a walk or sitting on the porch, your hopes for the future, or your struggles and worries. The most important feature is that it comes from your heart. Sharing our pandemic stories is another way we can "be the Church" for each other.

Here's how this will work:

- Imagine you are at Coffee Hour after a service. You see a friend who asks "How is it going for you?" Write down your reply.
- Positive reflections are wonderful but it's also the case that plenty of situations right now are not positive. If it's helpful to you, share your challenges. Remember, we all have our own versions of pandemic experience. There is no judgment in any of this.
- I encourage you to sign your story because friends may want to give you a call or drop you a note to follow up on your reflection, and I hope they will. However, you aren't required to sign your name.
- Nothing divisive.
- I'll review each reflection before sharing with the wider community simply to ensure it's appropriate and within these broad guidelines. The frequency of distribution will depend on the number of reflections received. Send them to me at lex@stthomasmedina.org or drop them in the mail if you prefer.

We are in "liminal space" these days. This word comes from the Latin "limina" which means "threshold." It describes living with one foot in one space and the other foot in a new space. Staying tethered in liminal space requires effort. It requires connection with others. We have a wonderful opportunity here at St Thomas to deepen our connections with one another even when we can't be physically together. So please don't be shy. Please don't say, "I don't have anything to say that anyone else will be interested in." Please don't be shy. **Let us hear your voice.** It is unique and important. Sharing a story will help each of us to know that we are not alone.

Faithfully,
Lex

Mail reflections to: Lex c/o St. Thomas Church, 8398 NE 12th Street, Medina, WA 98039

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