

Staying Connected

By Rev. John King

We're told to practice "social distancing." But we must still stay connected. We should avoid physical contact. But we must remain spiritually united. We are isolated in our homes, for the good of all. Yet we still gather, linked in prayer. For we need to hear a message of hope, not despair; a message of faith, not fear; a message of love, not isolation.

STAY CONNECTED WITH LIVESTREAMING WORSHIP - Like many churches, we have begun livestreaming our 10:15 Sunday service. Have you tried joining in? Here's how:

Go to www.RichfieldUCC.com on your favorite electronic device, like a smartphone, computer or iPad. Then click on the button that says "SUNDAY SERVICES Online." Then click on "View Live Stream." It's that easy.

You may have noticed that our first attempts had some technical difficulty caused by computer glitches. If you experienced some trouble, it wasn't your fault. It was ours.

A small team of very dedicated volunteers and I have been working really hard on this. I want to commend Greg Gerber and Jeff Braun who have put in countless hours. Of course, if we had lots of money and plenty of time, this would be easy. But this has been sprung on us suddenly with a tight budget. Hang in there. Please be patient with us. We'll get it right.

And if you can, maybe add some reactions and comments to the livestream. It's a way of letting others see you and you can see them too. Commenting helps us to be an active community, not merely "viewers." It helps us become a real community gathered in prayer, linked in spirit – wherever we are.

STAY CONNECTED BY PHONE - I've been texting, emailing and calling parishioners to try to stay in touch. I love hearing back from you with some of the beautiful and creative ways you are getting through a difficult time. Use your church directory to call one another with words of friendship and support.

STAY CONNECTED WITH ONLINE MEETINGS - Finally, I want to tell you about our church's new ZOOM account. This will help our church groups to meet digitally. You can join a video meeting or just use a traditional phone. I will share our account login credentials with leaders of boards and committees. If you would like to use ZOOM for your group, contact me and I'll help you out.

We'll get through this. It isn't easy. But it is slightly more bearable when we do it together.