

# The Living Word

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## *Quite a Month for Pride*

- by Allison Mezzera

June is Pride Month in America, where we celebrate the lives of our LGBTQ+ neighbors. Back in simpler times (like last year!) people would line the streets, party, enjoy life, and show off their colors. Did you know that Pride began as a protest? An uprising, really. Early on the morning of June 28, 1969, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons rioted following a violent police raid on the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City. This riot and the protests over the following nights was a moment in the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement and the jumping off point for organizing pride marches on a much larger public scale.



Now 51 years later, people are still marching, although difficult to do in a Pandemic. This Pride month in particular is giving focus to black transgender lives. The conversation and uprising over racism and police brutality has brought light to the large number of black transgender people killed by police, bigots, and racists. These deaths have gone mostly unnoticed, as at least 15 black transgender or gender non-conforming people have been fatally shot or fatally attacked this year alone. But, it seems that things are starting to change. In the midst of the #blacklivesmatter uprising this month, a massive 15,000 person strong march took place in NYC and #blacktranslivesmatter took center stage. Just a few days and weeks after George Floyd was murdered, Tony McDade from Florida, Iyanna Dior from Minneapolis, Dominique "Rem'mie" Fells from Philadelphia, and Riah Milton from Ohio were all transgendered people murdered with very little recognition. SAY THEIR NAMES!

This year the Trump Administration announced that it was planning to roll back an important regulation about the Health Care Rights Law, the part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) which protects transgender people from discrimination in health care and insurance coverage. This is a frightening time for many in the community as not only do they constantly fear for their safety, but now they also fear they will not get care. Although in a bit of great hope and respite, last week the US Supreme Court ruled that the 1964 Civil Rights Act protects gay, lesbian, and transgender employees from discrimination based on sex. This declaration will ensure that transgender people cannot be discriminated against in workplaces, and many

believe this is a big step toward full non-discrimination in the healthcare and insurance sector as well. The road is still going to be rocky; however, this seems to be a hopeful step in the right direction!

**If you wish to donate to these justice causes, here are a few suggestions:**

- The Human Right Campaign <https://www.hrc.org/> Advocating for LGBTQ+ equality
- The Anti-Violence Project <https://avp.org/> Empowers LGBTQ+ and, HIV-affected communities and allies to end all forms of violence through organizing and education, and supports survivors
- Vote Proud <https://www.voteproud.org/> works to help LGBTQ+ people to vote
- TGI Justice <http://www.tgiip.org/> works to end human rights abuses committed against **transgender, gender variant and intersex** people in California prisons, jails, and detention centers

**If you wish to do some research on your own, here are my references and some informative readings:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/10M1ZuGcRPMYMNxOfT7b5t-](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10M1ZuGcRPMYMNxOfT7b5t-X4R1wsfkVnRGOUXw3sHTw/preview?pru=AAABcte68Hk*1iBmZy759b3ArynJJNjHiw)

[X4R1wsfkVnRGOUXw3sHTw/preview?pru=AAABcte68Hk\\*1iBmZy759b3ArynJJNjHiw](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10M1ZuGcRPMYMNxOfT7b5t-X4R1wsfkVnRGOUXw3sHTw/preview?pru=AAABcte68Hk*1iBmZy759b3ArynJJNjHiw)

[https://avp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/2013\\_NCAVP\\_HVReport\\_MR.pdf](https://avp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/2013_NCAVP_HVReport_MR.pdf)

<https://www.npr.org/2020/06/15/863498848/supreme-court-delivers-major-victory-to-lgbtq-employees>

<https://www.out.com/print/2019/11/20/how-we-can-end-violence-against-trans-women-color>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/when-black-lives-matter-black-trans-people-must-be-freed-ncna1228316>



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## *Living Stones*

*To change the world enough / you must cease to be afraid / of the poor.  
We experience your fear as the least pardonable of / humiliations; in the past  
it has sent us scurrying off / daunted and ashamed / into the shadows.  
Now, / the world ending / the only one all of us have known  
we seek the same / fresh light / you do: / the same high place / and ample table.  
The poor always believe / there is room enough / for all of us;  
the very rich never seem to have heard / of this.  
In us there is wisdom of how to share / loaves and fishes / however few;  
we do this everyday. / Learn from us, / we ask you.  
We enter now / the dreaded location / of Earth's reckoning;  
no longer far / off / or hidden in books / that claim to disclose / revelations;  
it is here. / We must walk together without fear. / There is no path without us  
—“To Change the World Enough” by Alice Walker*

Our faith boldly professes that there is, indeed, room enough for all of us. There is, indeed, enough blessing to go around. Our God is not a God of scarcity; our God desires that we all experience the abundant wonders and beauties of creation. And no one is disposable. As we confront the complexities of COVID-19 and the devastations of racism, we must acknowledge that we need one another. Our only path forward is **with** one another. We are interdependent, interconnected, interrelated. And for this reason, we continue to monitor the safety of resuming in-person worship. As of now, all best practices recommend waiting. We will not meet in person for worship at least through August 31. And we will reassess as we get closer to the fall. Yet, even as we continue to meet over Zoom and in other alternative ways, we continue to be the church. We've never stopped being the church! We continue to fight for justice. We continue to offer hope and hospitality. We continue to show up for one another. This is who we are and who we continue to be. No matter what.

See you in (zoom) church,  
Christy

**ZOOM WORSHIP**

As we continue to shelter-in-place, we will continue to worship together online using Zoom. Bible Study begins at 9:30. Worship begins at 10:30. Please join us for any or all of this time together by clicking the link below and joining us through video. Or alternatively, you can dial in by calling the number below according to your time zone. The instructions to connect are fairly easy, but if you need help, please reach out.

In preparation for worship, please have communion elements of some form with you so that we can all partake together. This can be bread and juice—or any other elements that evoke the Last Supper for you. You may also want to light a candle near you as we worship together.

**Bible Study and Worship**

Weekly on Sundays, 9:30 a.m.—Bible Study  
10:30 a.m.—Worship

**WELCOMING THE SPIRIT: DIGGING, PLANTING, WATERING, BLOOMING, SHARING**

The liturgical season of Pentecost lasts about 6 months (from Pentecost Sunday—on May 31 this year—until the season of Advent begins—on November 29 this year). For this Pentecost season, our theme is *Welcoming the Spirit*, and we will focus on the varieties of ways the Spirit manifests in a garden—digging, planting, watering, blooming, sharing. Like in our garden at church, there is a time of preparing. A time of thought and intention. A time of nurture and hope. A time of expectation. A time of surprise and gratitude. A time of abundance and grace. And through it all, the Spirit moves and generates and creates. As we move through these next months together, you are invited to welcome the Spirit in all her manifestations—and to walk and work alongside her!

**WHEN WILL WE BE BACK IN CHURCH?**

That's something probably all of you have wondered over the last few weeks. We get mixed messages: Sacramento says churches can meet in person (with restrictions), local health departments add criteria, the reopening of workplaces and shops has begun and the number of Covid-19 cases is rising. In the face of all the uncertainty, the Administrative Council voted to keep the church building closed through August to all building users. That doesn't necessarily mean that in-person worship will resume in September; Admin will be reviewing the risks and benefits of reopening at their August meeting. Some churches have already resumed in-person worship; we hope to learn from them what a successful reopening will look like and what steps we need to take to keep everyone in our congregation safe. In the meantime, we are taking this opportunity to replace the well-worn carpet in the Sanctuary, parlor and stairs. When we get back together, it will be in a (finally!) completely refurbished Sanctuary.

Just because we won't be in the building doesn't mean we can't meet, however. The Elders are planning a gathering in the courtyard. While it may not be a full-blown worship service, it will be an opportunity to connect, to pray together, to feed our spirits with much-needed community. Stay tuned for more information. Until then, see you on Zoom.

Beth Grose

**EXPRESS YOURSELF!**



Looking for a peaceful way to have your say, to honor the victims, to speak out for justice, to demonstrate solidarity with our brothers and sisters who face violence and inhumane treatment in housing, employment, policing, and so many other ways we can name?



If we sometimes wear our hearts on our sleeve, how about we wear our faith and values on the garden? A few signs are in place. There is room for more.

Please feel free to write your rage, your prayer, your hope (all with love, of course) and post to the fence. If sidewalk chalk art appeals to you, do that.



We cannot meet in person, but here is a way to share our voices with our neighbors and demonstrate our own longing for justice.

If you need help mounting a sign, just call me or one of the other elders.

Suzanne Awalt

**WORSHIP LEADER – WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW?**

Thinking about being a Worship Leader, but not sure what that means? We are thinking of having a Worship Leader class soon, but in the meantime here are the basics. As a Worship Leader, you would do the following parts of the service: Welcome and Church News, Call to Worship, and Offering Meditation and sometimes the Centering Moment or Scripture. If we were in the sanctuary, you would do these all from the front, but because we are Zooming, you can do it from the comfort of your home, unless you are on vacation then you can do it from wherever you are on Sunday morning. It would be interesting to be a Worship Leader from the ocean shoreline.

So each area is just a little different, but I personally use a common theme. The theme can be based on the sermon or scripture, but there is no “law” saying you have to. The Welcome and Church News is the area we can welcome guests or people we have not seen

lately, announce the coming events (either yourself or someone else), and just get the service started. The Call to Worship is pretty much like it says, calling the congregation to come and gather to worship together. This can be done in many ways, with music, with poems, with responsive readings; let your imagination take hold. The Offering Mediation is a little more confusing. It is a call to offering. This part lets you express your feelings about what it means to give, or why do we give, or where the money goes. Some weeks we have a special offering – Reconciliation, Pentecost, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Week of Compassion, etc. – so these Sundays you might talk about what the monies will be used for. If you do not know about these offerings, please ask an Elder or Christy for this information. Also, because currently we cannot collect the offerings in person, you need to mention the many ways our offerings can be received.

Now, that doesn't seem to hard! All you need to do is take that first step and it will get easier. *There is no one judging you.* I personally like to try different things, to have some fun with the Call to Worship, to talk about what it truly means to give, and more. I feel the Worship team would be open to new ideas. Just let me know if you have questions. Below you can see we need Worship Leaders – so please sign up!

Here are the dates available:

July 26, Aug. 2, 16, 30, Sept. 6, 13, Oct. 4, 11, 18, Nov. 1, 22, 29, Dec. 6, 13, 27.

Give Jeanne a call at 707-332-6922 or email her at [jeannecordes@comcast.net](mailto:jeannecordes@comcast.net) to get your name on the list.

Now, if you would like to learn how to do the PowerPoint, just let Jon, Beth or myself know. That can be even more exciting.

Blessings, Carl Cordes

## NEWS ON THE POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN

The voices of our movement rang out loud and clear this weekend at the Mass Poor People's Assembly and Moral March on Washington!

More than two and a half million of you from all across the country and around the world viewed the program on Facebook alone, more than 42,000 of you uploaded selfies and stories on our website, and you sent nearly 300,000 letters to our elected officials insisting they implement the policy agenda of the Poor People's Campaign.

We were covered in the New York Times, CNN, NPR, the Washington Post, the Religious News Service and many more!

Momentum is growing. We released the summary of the Poor People's Moral Justice Jubilee Policy Platform, which offers an agenda that can heal the nation and restore our democracy. We've also got open house zoom calls hosted by state campaigns coming up later in July where you can learn about the organizing in your state and how to get involved, so stay tuned.

Now is the time, this is the place, and we are the people. Let's get to it. ***Forward together, not one step back!***

Rev. Dr. William Barber and Rev. Dr. Liz Theoharis, Co-Chairs, Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival

**MISSION ACTION: WE LEND A**

This Mission Action challenge appeared in the June issue of the *Living Word*: As July 1st approaches when officers and coordinators begin a new term, the Ministry Council proposes that our monthly outreach gift recipient going forward be selected being mindful of organizations that aid underrepresented groups and the most vulnerable. Our challenge will be to identify groups and organizations that promote racial justice along with social, economic, and environmental justice as it relates to vulnerable and historically underrepresented brethren - and prioritize such groups for our monthly outreach gift.

In keeping with this goal, our July Outreach gift of \$150 will be sent to the Equal Justice Initiative ([eji.org](http://eji.org)). Their work for justice is broad based: In the area of criminal justice, they advocate for opposition to the death penalty nationwide, overturning wrongful convictions and excessive punishments, challenging children in adult prisons and improving prison conditions in general. In the area of racial justice, they educate about the legacy of slavery and racial lynching, oppose all forms of racial segregation still happening in the country, and - especially in current times - directly challenge systemic racism and all forms of racial injustice.

We think you'll agree that this month's outreach gift is well focused.

**HELP THE HOPE CENTER**

During "face-to-face" Sunday worship time, church members would drop off non-perishable food items into large baskets at the rear of the narthex to be donated to the Amador Street Hope Center. Since that is not currently an option - but still wanting to support the Hope Center - some of our fresh vegetables have been given to them for their food give-away program. In addition, the Hope Center is creating a new lunch program (Kingdom Café) that will hopefully be up and running when the shelter-in-place orders are lifted. To that end, some FCC members have sent monetary donations to the Center, either directly or through their Go Fund Me account (Hope4Hope). Any ongoing donations of canned foods can always be sent to them by contacting their program director Charles at 334-0773. Or continued monetary donations can be sent to 929 Amador Street 94590. Helpers and clients at the Center continue to thank FCC for its support.

**DON'T FORGET:**

To help earn money for the church beyond your generous donations:

- ✓ Use [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) (instead of Google or Bing) for your internet searches.
- ✓ Start at [www.goodshop.com](http://www.goodshop.com) when shopping online.
- ✓ Sign up at [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) for when you patronize local stores and restaurants.
- ✓ Take your recycling to Valcore ([www.valcorerecycling.org](http://www.valcorerecycling.org)) and ask that the money go to the church.
- ✓ Use [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com). The first time you use it, you will be asked to select a charity to support. Pick our church, and don't forget to bookmark the page!

## Mark Your Calendar

Sunday, July 5	Zoom Bible Study and Worship
Wednesday, July 8	Zoom Administrative Council, 5:30 p.m.
Sunday, July 12	Zoom Bible Study and Worship
Sunday, July 19	Zoom Bible Study and Worship Zoom Elders' Meeting, following worship
Sunday, July 26	Zoom Bible Study and Worship
Wednesday, August 19	Zoom Ministry Council, 5:30 p.m.

*God of Mercy and Grace,  
You have called us from the east and from the west, from the south and from the north to be your  
body in this world. Keep us connected through you even in our physical distance.  
Bread for the World*