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# Battery Park Christian Church

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## Letter from our Pastor

In the Gospel of Matthew, after the resurrection, Jesus says to the fearful and doubting disciples, “And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

Always! Not just when you are in church. Not only when you are a cheerful Christian. Not only when your prayer life is at the top of its game. Always! This includes these days when the Easter season “Hallelujah” feels put on hold for the daily trepidation.

There is a preaching directive that one is always first, foremost, and finally called to proclaim the good news of the gospel. That might be the seminary benediction but I don’t think it is only for the seminarian. Somehow in every chapter of our lives we are supposed to find that glimmer of grace. Grace is always present when Christ in the Spirit is present. And remember, Christ is with us always, to the end of the age.

It would be lovely if I could now offer the cure to the anxieties of health, economy, and the toll these days are taking on the lives of our friends, family, and church. Perhaps the least surprising truth of this letter is that I don’t have the simple answer.

But I know the simple promise with all its complex implications. Christ is with us. Christ is with you. Be at peace in this fact as you are able. And I ask that if and when you feel uncertain or alone that you will reach out to myself, the church, or perhaps most importantly each other.

In this spirit and living into this truth of Christ’s presence, BPCCC is joining and initiating new ways to be the presence of Jesus to our community.

**First, we have plenty of work to do around the church!** How wonderful it would be if on that Sunday when we all return to worship together, our church looks even more welcoming! Some of the needs are tidying up the sanctuary, working on rejuvenating the library, and some outside beautification for those who are willing and able to help around the grounds. We can do all these things while still safely practicing social distancing. If you would like to help, please contact the myself and/or the church office.

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As you would expect, more folks than ever are experiencing hunger and **canned goods and non-perishable items are needed**. St. Thomas Episcopal Church has done a wonderful job with their food pantry, supplying many folks with food every Thursday afternoon. Our church has contributed what has been collected and we hope to continue to embody Christ's particular love for the hungry. I would encourage all of us, perhaps using that hour usually spent on worship, to purchase as able some extra canned goods and non-perishable foods to donate. You can donate these items to St. Thomas on Thursday morning or, if you would prefer, I could pick them up from you on a prior evening and deliver them to St. Thomas on your behalf. For more information, please check their website at [stthomasrichmond.org](http://stthomasrichmond.org).

I hope that you have found some time to relax and read! Reading is certainly a gift to my soul, whether I am reading Scripture or fiction. Our little library for the community (between the parking lot and the office door) is in **special need of books in good condition!** This library is an easy way to contribute to our community. If you have those books lying around just waiting to be read, please donate them to the church office or if the office is closed, you could put them in the library yourself. We are creating bookmarks for the books that will have a word of Scripture and an invitation to join us on Sunday mornings once we are able to return.

Why stop there when Christ calls us to more?

I ask us all to imagine ourselves in a place of special anxiety today. Perhaps we are already there. What if we couldn't make it to the pharmacy? What if we didn't have access to food? What if we didn't even know if someone was praying for us? The word that comes up again and again in news conferences and conversation is "unprecedented". This is an unprecedented shared and sometimes scary experience. What if this was also an unprecedented opportunity for church?

I am proposing that we follow the lead of a local organization called For Richmond that has made an important, prophetic ask that churches "**adopt a block**". What if we could deliver to the neighborhoods around us a letter that invited folks to request prayers? What if we even came up with a list of needs that we could meet? We likely can't bear a financial burden, but we can offer faithful time and energy. If you feel called to participate in this, please contact me at [jonahbartlett@gmail.com](mailto:jonahbartlett@gmail.com). We need help composing the letter, distributing it, and being willing to pray and run small errands as we are able. Imagine if we are in a special anxiety yet we know that Battery Park Christian Church, that small place of faith and love just right up the road, is there to show the love of Jesus to us? Remember that old line? Because we have been blessed by God, we are called to be a blessing to others.

These are the opportunities presented to us in the month of May. More will come in June as businesses in our neighborhood continues to struggle, as the needs of our neighbors continue to grow, and as the needs of children in our city and state are more clearly identified. Battery Park Christian Church can be an agent of Christian change in our world even as we wonder about next steps. Beloved, all things are possible through God.

This seems like a lot because it is. It might be that we can't meet all these goals. Perhaps we can only accomplish some. But small as we might be, we can work toward the

Kingdom of God in astounding ways. Remember that Jesus told us that wherever two or three are gathered in Christ's name, so Jesus is there also. This is certainly true when we worship. But the presence of Jesus is also with us as we reach out prayerfully yet boldly to those who need the loving and transformative church in their lives today.

In Peace, Grace, and Discipleship,

Rev. Jonah Smith-Bartlett

# STAY CONNECTED

WE'RE NOT **CANCELLED**, WE'RE ONLINE!

Posted to BPCCC Facebook and BPCCC YouTube  
([www.facebook.com/batteryparkchristianchurch](http://www.facebook.com/batteryparkchristianchurch))  
([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) "Battery Park Christian Church")

**Sunday Sermons @ 11 am**

**Wednesday Meditations @ 5 pm**

Archived also on the Church Website



**The church office is open physically twice per week and virtually anytime!**

**Church Office: Monday and Thursday 8am – 1pm**

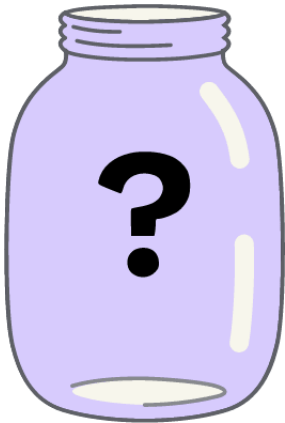
-Emails, Voicemails, Paper mail, and in house administration (bills, facility maintenance etc)

**Virtually: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday**

- Emails, Website, Tech Support, Prepping bi-weekly mailings and other duties as needed.

## Tech Support

Do you need technology help? Zoom, WebEx, GoToMeeting, Livestream, Facebook? Today's new virtual communications can be overwhelming! If you need help setting up your technology so you can connect with your family please contact Lisa and she can help you by phone or email for support!



## Rev. Jonah's Question Jar!

Do you have a question you've always wanted to ask? About God? the Bible? Church? About Faith?

Starting this Sunday (April 19) Rev. Jonah will be taking your questions and answering them live during the Wednesday reflection! Questions can be anonymous!

Submit your questions to him via Facebook, or  
JonahBartlett@Gmail.com

## Worship and Study Alternative Options

If you are not able to access our worship services online and would like a copy of Rev. Jonah's sermon mailed to your home please request these to  
Jonah or Lisa.

Also we still have a few copies of "Our Daily Bread" Devotional available for members who would like this mailed out.



### Income and Expenses, Jan 1 - Apr 30, 2020

|                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Income                         |          |
| Offering                       | 24,864   |
| Building use                   | 6,350    |
| Other                          | 2,129    |
| Total Income                   | 33,343   |
| Expenses                       |          |
| Personnel                      | 32,004   |
| Utilities and Maintenance      | 20,053   |
| Unexpected Major Expenses      | 2,495    |
| Other                          | 3,350    |
| Total expenses                 | 57,902   |
| Net loss (taken from reserves) | (24,559) |

### May Birthdays

|                          |      |
|--------------------------|------|
| Michelle Merrion         | 5/1  |
| Becca Heckman            | 5/2  |
| Cade Heckman             | 5/5  |
| Michael Wagner           | 5/11 |
| Richard Garrett          | 5/13 |
| Elizabeth Smith-Bartlett | 5/17 |
| Cole Heckman             | 5/18 |
| Miriam Blake             | 5/23 |