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Doing Good

"My help comes from God, the maker of heaven and earth." Psalm 121:1

Dear Ones,

Happy Sunday! I hope that you have found a way to worship today, either with our Moderator, The Right Reverend Richard Bott, or with another church community which is broadcasting its worship service. Joining this wider circle keeps us from being isolated, and connects us to the great company of saints!

We had a query this week from Carolyn who was asking how she could continue to support the local Food Banks in this time of isolation. Were we still gathering food at the church? I will give you the details on how to do this below, but what struck me immediately was the generosity and compassion which lie behind this question. It boils down to: I am a helper, how can I help?

The first thing I notice is about identity: "I am a helper." Even when we are keeping a safe distance from others, some of us in strictest isolation, our *identity as people of God* does not leave us. We are people who walk in the light. We are committed to being in the world as people who work for good:

"What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works?

Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,' and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead." (James 2:14-17)

The second thing I notice is about mission: "how can I help?" All of our former means of helping others may now be unavailable to us: visiting, baking, running errands, fixing their lawn mower. But this does not stop us from finding new ways to reach out. We are finding new "hows", like writing letters, making phone calls, or sending donations to agencies whose mission we support. Our *mission as people of God* does not leave us.

And when you add identity and mission you get *vocation* – which is our calling:

"We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.

We are not alone.

Thanks be to God."
(The New Creed of The United Church of Canada)

Grace to you, and peace,

Kate

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Post Script

How to support the food banks during this time:

- We cannot receive physical donations of food right now (we are actually discouraging them, anyway). If you have a bag of groceries, please leave it in the donation box which will be at the grocery store where you shop.
- We can still receive your monetary donations. You may designate a portion of your monthly PAR donation to any aspect of our mission, including the Food Banks. We support the Ailsa Craig Food Bank and Blessings Food Bank in Zurich.
- You can send a cheque to the church for processing, with Food Bank written in the memo line.
- You can make an electronic gift through our website, using the Giving tab, and choosing the Food Bank button. (<https://www.huronshoresunitedchurch.com/giving>)
- You can make a donation to the Grand Bend and Area Community Health Center's We Can Help Fund. We partner with GBACHC through this fund, which is administered by the social workers. (Cindy Maxfield cmaxfield@gbchc.com)
- You can make an online donation to the Huron County Food Distribution Center, which supports our wider area. (<http://www.huroncountyfoodbank.org/donate-now.html>)

You could say a prayer as make your donation, a prayer of blessing for the folks who will process it, and for the folks who will be nourished and strengthened by it when it is given to them.

*"Our relationship with God and each other strengthens us, and helps make the world a better place.
We welcome and include **everyone** into congregational life."*