

SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWS: CHURCH --



Pastor's Corner – These days of pandemic and politics, I'm grateful for a refreshing vitality when it comes to 'church.' From the 'food pantry' being present from the earliest days and our ongoing email 'Loop' with Zoom info and more, we've kept engaged— on into our book discussions of *White Fragility*, as well as our Sunday services/gatherings, and midweek chats. One premise of the book is true in so many ways: our conversations, our work, involve a lifelong process.

You may have noticed: activity on the land (wild flowers soon!) and building (deck staining), along with kindly calls made, letters mailed, yard care, a covenant posted on sign board. Faithful moderator Omi will fill in details. Remember, too, recent delights— like the surprise of a fresh-baked cinnamon roll arriving at homes during our congregational meeting. Good spirit!

Rethinking the sanctuary layout - our Zoom meetings have underscored the goodness of seeing other faces not often possible in our 'pew version' of Sunday. Carol Steffy noted this uniqueness, and is now assisting with artistic considerations as we make the most of this time away from our usual sanctuary space. With Julie Pingree, Worship Chair, the three of us are engaging fresh possibilities mulling ideas, history, collecting thoughts, meeting with others. Feel free to pass along your thoughts and ideas, to stop by and feel the freshly opened space.

I sense 'nudges of Spirit' woven through. Thank you all for your many ways of 'showing up' and being church. All the while, the Holy One sings in each of us, all of us. Gratitude, prayers, love, hope— Sally.

THE LOOP: For those who would like to receive information involving various activities or postings related to the church: sign up for "The Loop" email list. Simply send an email request to Sally at revbalmer@icloud.com and your name will be included in the mailings.

At 9:30 am on Sundays, Sally sends out part of the Sunday service via email. The emails include Zoom links to join a Sunday message and/or discussion starting around 10:00 am followed by a more informal coffee and chat time.

On Thursdays, around 4:00 pm, we have a happy hour Zoom gathering to talk about anything for about 45 minutes. Sometimes we connect that with other matters: we recently completed a book discussion on *White Fragility*. Zoom has been a meaningful way for 'seeing' each other. The app is free (on computers and tablets) and not especially difficult to learn; just ask if help is needed.

The Loop email list is also an open list, for posting a photo, comment, personal news, etc. You can do a 'reply' to whoever sent the latest post, or, a 'reply all' to the latest post; also, you can put a post 'out there' for all on the list. The Loop is a way, particularly in this pandemic, to keep communication and possibilities open.



A MESSAGE FROM OMI CUMMINGS, CHURCH MODERATOR - GUEMES CHURCH IS ALIVE AND WELL! Although the building is closed for events due to the COVID 19 virus, we have been busy being the Church beyond the walls.

Our Sunday morning worship services are now on Zoom. Some of us have enjoyed the change of venue as we become more involved with each other through the discussions and thought provoking exchanges. All are welcome to join us by simply letting Sally know. On Thursday afternoon we meet via Zoom to socially visit with each other and this month we have combined that with a discussion of the book "White Fragility". The church Council has met regularly via Zoom and has found it to be a convenient way to conduct our business. The minutes of those meetings are posted on the front doors of the Church.

A food pantry has been set up outside the entrance doors to the church and is regularly restocked. It is for use by anyone and at this time in the midst of a pandemic is being well used. We established a board for public comment and the council has sent a letter to our elected officials in support of the social justice issues facing us. We have a Grapevine group that continues to check in with our most vulnerable neighbors.

We have turned this time into the opportunity to do a little maintenance and sprucing on the interior. A group is looking at the sanctuary space and the rest of the building interior has a fresh coat of paint with soundproofing and new lighting ready for installation in the social hall area. Check out the back deck, which took gallons of stain to spruce up - even the picnic table has a fresh coat of paint. The grounds have been manicured and we are preparing to put a couple of areas into a wild flower meadow for future beauty next spring. The labyrinth is trimmed up for all to use. There are new signs at the church entrance with information about various activities.

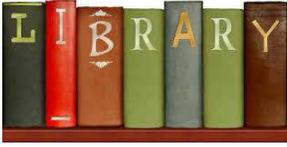
PLEDGES AND DONATIONS - A reminder that even though we aren't gathering at church these days, the bills still need to be paid so that we can reopen the doors and show our appreciation to Pastor Sally Balmer for all the goodness she brings to us. Checks can be mailed to the church and our ever-faithful treasurer, Carl Cady, will be most happy to deposit them. The GICC address is 7611 Guemes Island Road, Anacortes, WA 98221.

SUNDAY SERVICES: September 6 is Communion and birthdays Sunday with donations going to the Anacortes Family Center. Amanda Aikman will be speaking on September 13 and 20. Usually we celebrate September 13 as the birthday of our Church and Appreciation Sunday with a potluck barbecue, unfortunately this year it won't be happening but you can still celebrate at your own home remembering the Church in your thoughts and prayers.



FOOD PANTRY: There has been an uptick in pantry usage. The focus will continue to be on staples, particularly, items such as soups, chili, canned tuna and chicken. Some generous gardeners are leaving fresh veggies, which are always welcome. If you haven't checked out the pantry, now would be a good time. A standard, staple food box is also available. You can call Julie Pingree at 360-293-2269 or Connie Snell at 360-708-3589 to arrange pickup. There is no charge and all requests are strictly confidential.

SEPTEMBER 2020 NEWS: COMMUNITY--



GUEMES LIBRARY NEWS - This is an exciting time of transition for the Guemes Island Library. Carol and Howard Pellet are stepping down from their leadership roles. They have done an amazing job of starting and maintaining the library for almost 25 years. They will continue to serve on the board and work in the library. Morna McEachern has been elected president and Anne Caspersen has returned to the board and has been elected treasurer. Last year we received a grant and were accepted into the Washington Anytime Library Consortium— Islanders now have free access (the library pays a \$600/year membership fee) to digital and audio books.

Just last month we received a Washington Rural Heritage digitization grant (in collaboration with the Guemes Island Historical Society). The grant is for equipment to digitize historic photos and documents and contribute them to the Washington State Library's Rural Heritage database. In addition, the library has purchased a searchable online catalog, which is now available for searching and will soon be available for making reservations. We will also be able to send automatic email reminders when checked out items are due!

Recently the library received a very generous gift from the Guemes Island Church endowment fund—we requested \$500 and were granted \$1,000! The gift will support further development of our deep commitment to serving the community through education and building up the library's collection of books (both adult and children's) and films that support social justice learning—particularly those with an anti-racist focus. Since all is connected, items that address the intersections of racial, economic, and environmental justice will also be included. Some examples are: Robin DeAngelo's *White Fragility*, Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*, Thomas King's *The Inconvenient Indian*, Ibram Kendi's *How to be an Antiracist* and his *Antiracist Baby*. Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*. Jesmin Ward's *The Fire This Time*.

During the mandated COVID19 pandemic closure, we are cleaning, updating the collection, and continuing to offer free Wi-Fi. However, now that the community has access to our new online catalog (<https://19170.rmwebopac.com/>), we will begin to be open for deck side pickup on Mondays from 3:00-5:00 pm beginning August 31. Please go to the catalog, make a list of items you would like to check out and either email the list to gumeslibrary@gmail.com or bring the list with you on Mondays...and pick up a free book! Facemasks and social distancing will be required

Saturday, September 5 from 10:00 am-2:00 pm - The library will have a sale of Guemes Gear: Tee-shirts, sweat shirts, vests, cribbage boards and more will be available for purchase on the Community Center/Library deck. Come stock up—there will be no Fall Festival or Holiday Bazaar this year.



Has your voice been heard? If not, there's still time to respond to help ensure that you and everyone in our community are counted. The U.S. Constitution mandates a census of the population every 10 years. The 2020 Census counts everyone living in the U.S. on April 1, 2020. Census results determine the number of seats each state holds in the U.S. House of Representatives and how hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funds are allocated by local, state, and federal lawmakers every year for the next 10 years. Your response is required by law. And, the U.S. Census Bureau is legally bound to protect your answers and keep them strictly confidential.

A LETTER FROM FIRE CHIEF, OLIVIA SNELL

Hello Islanders,

Just want to give you a quick overview of how Guemes Island Fire Department responds to a possible Covid-19 med call.

We are mandated to wear on ALL calls a minimum of gloves and eye protection.

Our Skagit 911 dispatchers are trained to ask certain specific questions due to the Covid pandemic. If after questioning the caller, and the caller does in fact, have ANY Covid-19 symptoms, EMT providers are now mandated to wear at a minimum 1) Gloves 2) Eye Protection 3) N95 Mask 4) Gown, assigned coveralls, or Tyvek Suit. Our department would now be considered to be at **Level 3** and the EMT provider must be in full contact exposure PPE (Personal Protective Equipment). Guemes Island Fire Department has provided all of our EMT's with coveralls that they may wear in place of a gown if they choose to do so.

If Covid-19 is suspected, Skagit 911 pre-alerts crews through "Condition A (Airbone)" prompts. Professional judgement will be used in cases where there are not pre-determined COVID-19 or respiratory illness indicators. We cannot rely on dispatch to catch all possible cases of respiratory illness or possible COVID-19 through call screening. We are aware that there have been recognized cases of asymptomatic patients presenting with other complaints.

If we receive a Condition A from dispatch, we will limit the number of responders entering the area by only sending in 1 EMT to make initial patient contact, and attempt to maintain a 6 foot "social distancing" from any other members that may be in the area, such as patients family members. All patients will be required to wear a mask, which we will provide if they don't have one. Patients presenting with respiratory symptoms such as cough or sore throat shall have a surgical mask (paper mask) placed during treatment and transport. If patients do not tolerate a mask we will use a surgical mask with a nasal cannula (NC).

Once patient care is transferred to Anacortes Fire Department Medic Unit the EMT will document a report which will include all personnel that were on the call, including any assisting agencies. This will allow for trace contact and follow up, for potential exposure risk determination, should a COVID positive patient be identified post incident. The EMT will be monitored by our Health Officer and may be sent for testing/and or quarantine depending on circumstances of the call. Exposures to patients all fall in the "low" category when responders are properly wearing gloves, eye protection, N95 mask or half mask with appropriate N95/ P100 filter, and gown or assigned coveralls.

We are responsible for ensuring the cleanliness of our facility, apparatus and equipment. We will follow housekeeping policies and procedures as outlined by our agency, as well as any universal precautions in place. Any surfaces or equipment touched by the patient or suspected of contamination shall be cleaned using EPA List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 and UV Light protocol (if available) following each call. Under NO circumstances shall contaminated PPE be allowed to be laundered at home.

We hope that you are all doing your best to stay safe out there and continue to practice social distancing. Please don't hesitate to call if you have more questions or concerns.

Thank you,
Olivia Snell
Fire Chief
Skagit County Fire District #17
(360)-395-8047, olivias@guemesfire.org



GUEMES ISLAND COMMUNITY CENTER ASSOCIATION

ELECTION NEWS: The GICCA Board of Directors looked carefully at the question of how, when, or if to hold an election in November, as outlined in the by-laws. The nomination process is scheduled to begin in September, but the pandemic has placed

many challenges on holding the actual election. A meeting of the Board followed by an email ballot approved a motion. The vote was six in favor of delaying the election process until Phase 4 of Governor Inslee's Phased Reopening Plan and one abstained from voting. The motion can be viewed [here](#). The Board wishes to be inclusive of all community members, property owners, and residents. Safety during this pandemic is the primary concern.

The GICCA Board continues with essential business to maintain its properties and to complete projects already underway. GICCA Meetings resume in September via online platforms. The public is invited to attend. Information about meetings and other news can be found on myguemes.org.



GUEMES CONNECTS NEEDS DURABLE MEDICAL EQUIPMENT - Guemes

Connects has a supply of durable medical equipment available free to islanders in need. Our supply of wheelchairs, walkers with seats, bedside commodes, bed rails, and bedside tables is low. If you have equipment that you no longer need and is still in great shape, we would appreciate adding it to our inventory. Items are sanitized and will be ready for loan. Please contact Juby Fouts 360-770-9731 or Barb Ohms 303-521-9094 cell.

GUEMES ISLAND ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST (GIET): Due to Covid, we have had to curtail bringing in speakers to raise funds for youth scholarships to the North Cascade Institute (NCI). Our last fundraiser featured a wonderful and well-attended presentation by Paul Bannick, a Seattle photographer who specializes in owls. During this time, NCI has not been able to offer their normal programs for young people. We are looking forward to being able to support them again in the future. The Trust Board has sent them \$500 to help during this stressful time. If you would like to see GIET continue to support youth scholarships at NCI, send your donation to Connie Snell, 5889 S Shore Road, Anacortes 98221 & write NCI on the memo line.

GATHERING LUNCHESES: Unfortunately the Covid19 Pandemic has cancelled the Gathering Lunches through 2020 and possibly through Spring of 2021. All of us involved with the Gathering greatly miss seeing everyone. Since we are currently still in Phase 2, even if Skagit County reaches Phase 4 during that time, it would be difficult to restart the lunches because of the social distancing still required.

LOOKING FORWARD - The Red Bag Food Collection will resume Saturday, October 10. Drop your donation at the church between 8:00 and 9:00 am; they can be in any box or bag. For more information contact Connie Snell at 360-708-3589 or conniemsnell@gmail.com .