On March 15th, 2020 we made a difficult decision to temporarily close the doors of our beloved church to protect our congregation amid the Covid -19 crisis. It was a moment stamped in history and it has changed us all. It changed how we conduct church services, bible studies, how we perform pastoral care, and even how we share art exhibitions. While much has changed during Covid-19, the steady constant is our full devotion to serving and caring for each other and our neighbors in Christ’s name, Amen!

We started with a Covid 19 message to reassure and uphold our faith <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ae8I2fikjEk> . We added midweek reflections and Sunday services to meet our congregational needs. We delightfully discovered that more people were viewing our services on youtube than on a typical Sunday prior to Covid-19.

Through dedicated teams of youth, families, lay leaders, musicians and film makers we created new ways to celebrate our faith traditions. Our youth and families created a unique Stations of the Cross program you could participate in from home. [https://youtu.be/WsXgs9zeymE](https://nam12.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fyoutu.be%2FWsXgs9zeymE&data=02%7C01%7C%7Cf30efcb61a6f47ee4f5a08d7d8d405fd%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637216277444715873&sdata=yTi%2BuqXbEAy%2F5yQFveyGne2SD0VcS7K%2BIPILmsJakt4%3D&reserved=0)

Palm Sunday became a compilation of beloved hymns and a separate Holy Eucharist and Passion of the Christ service. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OwN9SqhfQ1E&t=204s>

Our Easter service celebrated with a musical finale of some parish member photos. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmI8Mkvqr7I&t=295s>

We discovered that mid-week reflections performed by our Interim Rector <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Rz05370ulk> garnered viewers beyond our congregation. Some of the reflections included songs from artists Aaron Neville, Cat Stevens, Aretha Franklin, Lauren Daigle and Bruce Springsteen. This gave us an alternative music experience reminiscent of the civil rights era, 1960’s and 70’s which also reflected peaceful protests, civil unrest and strife – which we still wrestle with today.

Our lectionary study group met “virtually” online Sunday mornings to continue their faith studies.

A phone chain was established and calls and notes were sent to sustain our connection to each other.

Our community outreach continued with children chalking the sidewalk, in front and alongside of our church telling all those who strode by “You are loved”. <https://www.facebook.com/ceclax/photos/pcb.3053062558080531/3053062528080534/>

“Children’s” sermons reminded us that sometimes the best sermons are both visual and simple. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_wiBH5XU4s&feature=youtu.be>

We supported area students returning to school and victims of abuse with “drop off” donation drives

<https://www.facebook.com/salvationarmylacrosseco/photos/a.775451389179734/3263120833746098/>

A planned drive-in movie night with social distancing and masks was unfortunately cancelled due to a rise in local cases. Our youth and family commitment to our community remains strong with the Confirmand project to build a Free Little Pantry benefitting college students and others in need just outside our doors. Our doors may be temporarily closed, but we are strong and committed to build our mission and ministry despite challenges we may face in the future.