

#ResistHarm

IDEAS FOR APRIL

LIGHT

As the season of Lent draws to a close, and with it our month of lament, we look with hope toward the first light of Easter even in the midst of these uncertain and difficult times. Throughout the month of April, we invite you to remember, receive anew, and share afresh the light of Christ's love for ALL God's people.

Rising from the dead, Jesus gives us hope that fear and death do not have the last word, and shows us that death is powerless to extinguish the light of Christ's love, generously given and freely shared. As we deal with the global COVID-19 pandemic, we focus our resistance on saying no to the forces of exclusion, and marginalization. While most church building doors are closed, our engagement with the world as a faith communities is more active and open than ever. As the people of #ResistHarm, please share with us the ways you and your church are offering the light of Christ to the world. What is your church doing to #ResistHarm to the vulnerable? How are you #DoingGood by extending Christ's love and light to all in your community and around the world?

Throughout this month we'll be celebrating the ways in which faithful resistance is expressed across our connection—not just through opposition to the Traditional Plan, but in our active and visible commitments to inclusion and intersectional justice that shape the ways faith communities make a difference.

On the shore of the Sea of Galilee, Simon Peter was reminded that receiving the light of Christ's love meant committing to serve Christ's people. As we move through a month dedicated to bearing witness to the light we've received, may we be the light of Christ to others.

Easter reminds us that even death cannot extinguish the living light of God's love. Empire and injustice, sorrow and loss, fear and hopelessness have no power separate to us from Christ Jesus. The light of Christ in you, in us, and in the people called United Methodists will shine in the ways we continue faithfully to resist the forces of exclusion and scorn and bear witness to Christ's abundant love and illuminating light.

Together, let us "let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!"

CHURCH AND GROUPS

- **Work from home.** Making the call to work from home sends an important message by letting others know that you and your team are ready to do your civic duty.
- **Host a virtual worship service** focus on sharing the light of Christ to ALL God's people.
- **Offer ministry moments** in worship and social media that highlight how your group or church are offering the light of Christ through acts of service and advocacy.
- **Invite queer clergy** to preach (you aren't limited geographically now) or provide links to affirming churches so that LGBTQ people can connect more easily to churches that support inclusion and affirmation.
- **Explore ways to serve and connect virtually.** How can your church serve the community, especially the most vulnerable including older adults, people with disabilities, QTPOC, immigrants and those dealing with homelessness, food insecurity, and lack of medical insurance?
- **Encourage people to serve** and safely and/or virtually reach out to others who need help, who need to feel connected.
- **Share your stories** of how you, the people of #ResistHarm, are shining the light of Christ into the world. Share your stories [here](#).

INDIVIDUALS

- **Take care of yourself and others.** Limit the spread of the virus by following CDC guidelines. The CDC has a great primer [here](#).
- **Pray for Christ's light to shine** despite the fear and uncertainty of the global pandemic.
- **Light a candle** to remind you and others that Christ's light is still present.
- **Give to your church and other charities** to support the ministries that serve the community, especially charities that focus on vulnerable populations.
- **Share the light of Christ through acts of service.** Check on neighbors, church members and friends, especially those who are older adults, people with disabilities or vulnerable in other ways. Remember to follow safe guidelines, but call, text, Facebook message, and speak from a distance to let people know you care.
- **Help with Meals on Wheels** which feeds some of the most vulnerable populations - older adults.
- **Avoid purchasing items showing the "WIC" label** (usually near the price) to ensure that those items are available to those who need them.

The WIC Program, or Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children was created to provide nutritious food to low-income pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, as well as infants and children up to 5. If the WIC items are no longer available then a family will not be able to feed their family. Save short supplies for people in need, especially the first of every month when WIC vouchers go out to families.

- **Donate personal protective equipment** (face masks, gowns, gloves) to medical clinics and other health care facilities and people. Make gowns, and masks for people to wear and give them away to protect others.
- **Care for animals.** Make sure you have enough food (and, for cats, litter), check in with elderly neighbors to ensure to ensure their pets are cared for. If neighbors who are quarantined or elderly have animals with medical issues, helping transport their pets to appointments can be crucial. Some animal shelters need people to foster animals during this time. Contact shelters in your area and see how they are dealing with this crisis and how you can help.
- **Write and call your civic leaders** and lobby for Congress to support the most vulnerable. Call your representatives to find out what measures they're putting in place when it comes to paid sick leave, WIC and SNAP benefits, and other relief efforts for citizens. Ask them what they're doing to increase access to COVID-19 testing, and how they're preparing for the weeks and months ahead. Ask about those in prisons and detention facilities and how they are being protected. The General Board of Church and Society has been actively supporting legislation to protect the most vulnerable during the crisis. Learn more [here](#).
- **Help globally.** The General Board of Global Ministries is scaling up its response worldwide. Learn more [here](#).
- **Share your stories** of how you, the people of #ResistHarm, are shining the light of Christ in the world. Share your stories [here](#).