



March 17, 2020

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace to you and peace through our Savior, Jesus Christ!

Last night, our Elders, President, and Pastors met to make some decisions concerning corporate worship in the near future and some other related matters. The group has decided that the worship service schedule at St. Paul's remains intact with Wednesday services offered per usual this week. In addition to precautions already in force, the following steps are being implemented:

- Seating will be offered in the pews in an **every-other pew format**, with half of the pews available. We hope this will result in more distance between people. Ushers will also ask attendees to space themselves out if joining another family in a pew.
- **Communion cups will be spaced** wider apart on the trays, with every other hole and every other row of holes empty.
- **Children's clipboards** will no longer be available.
- The pre-service hymn sing is cancelled so worshipers will not have to touch hymnals that have not been sanitized.
- **Communion distribution** will take place in a continuous, walking format on the nave floor instead of at the Communion rail. We encourage people to maintain a safe distance between one another.

As I have stated previously, if you or any member of your household is feeling ill, please stay home.

In addition, if you or a member of your family has recently traveled to an area the CDC has identified as having a significant number of confirmed coronavirus cases, either domestic or international, please stay home.

On a positive note, by this weekend we will have the ability to post video recordings of worship on YouTube and link to them from our church website. Since we have not done this in the past, it has taken some time to get everything in order. Please watch for more information on this in the near future.

If public worship takes place this coming weekend (the Elders will decide this on Thursday morning) at St. Paul's, the following decisions were also reached last night:

- Sunday School is cancelled until further notice;
- Foundation Bible study is cancelled until further notice;
- Fellowship Breakfast is cancelled until further notice;
- Pastor's Bible Class in the gym (and on KFYO (850 AM) at 9:30 a.m.) and the Acts Bible Class led by Dr. Mark Seifrid are still "on" and will take place on Sunday mornings based on the information we have now.

I want to restate that it is a very individual decision as to whether you will or will not participate in public worship in the coming weeks. Please know that I support your decision, whatever it might be. Each person needs to decide, taking into account especially their age and overall health.

There will also be some news coming soon about additional resources and opportunities that will be available for those who are staying home.

Finally, as God assures us in Psalm 46:

*Be still, and know that I am God.
I will be exalted among the nations,
I will be exalted in the earth!"
The Lord of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our fortress (vv. 10-11).*

Pastor Thomas

Rev. Dr. Glen Thomas, Senior Pastor
St. Paul's Lutheran Church and School