

3/14/2020 at 1pm

Things are rapidly changing in respect to responses to Covid-19.

After talking with Pastor Paul and Kevin Oppermann (council president) this morning, the decision has been made to **cancel EduWorship this weekend, Sunday, March 15th.** Our worshipping community includes many vulnerable people and we are unable to clean surfaces in the sanctuary between 8am and 10:30am if we hold EduWorship – though if you are there, your assistance in cleaning the pews will be greatly appreciated! Additionally, according to medical resources, the germs from the virus can stay on wood surfaces for a long time. We would need to clean the pews after EduWorship ends and there just isn't time to properly do so before the 10:30am worship. If you have attended EduWorship, please let me know your thoughts about it!

**Regular worship services will be held this weekend** (Saturday, March 14th at 5pm and Sunday, March 15th at 8am and 10:30am).

If your child is preparing for the **Communion Milestone** this spring, we WILL meet on Sunday at noon to paint chalices (not at 9:45am). Those who have not attended Communion Class, should plan to stay until 3pm. We will have class and hopefully be able to spread out in the Friendship Room and keep safe distances from each other. There will be some activities we will not engage in since they involved contact and infiltrate the safe space recommended between people. But, eliminating those activities should also allow us to still be done by 3pm. Our hope, pending further developments, is to still hold the 6:30pm Maundy Thursday Worship service, during which we will celebrate the Communion Milestone.

If you have a child in **Confirmation**, we will NOT meet until AFTER Easter. (April 15<sup>th</sup> for 7<sup>th</sup> grade youth and April 22<sup>nd</sup> for 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth.)

If you have a child attending **the Grace book study with Beth and Brad Berg**, they will NOT meet.

Additionally, suspension of worship services will be announced this weekend. There will be **NO Lent mid-week service and NO in-person worship services starting Wednesday, March 18th.** We **hope** to resume our worship services on the weekend of Palm Sunday (Saturday, April 4th and Sunday, April 5th) **WITH EduWorship, on Palm Sunday, April 5th at 9:15am.** But, the reality is that things are still developing, so watch your email, the church website, and Facebook for additional updates if they are needed.

We hope that by staying in line with the school district's closure, we can help fulfill the intent of Governor Tony Evers and the Department of Health Services mandate to close all Wisconsin schools. The goal is to keep people from congregating so that we can slow the spread of the virus. By slowing the spread, we will hopefully not overwhelm our clinics, hospitals, resources, and medical care providers. I know this will be a really difficult time for many working parents as they juggle child care needs and the ramifications of staying home to care for children. If any of you need help with food for your family, please let me know – no judgement, complete

confidentiality. We don't have all the answers yet as to how this will play out, but we will do our best to share information with you as we receive it.

This will also be a difficult time for our elderly. While you are home with your children, consider making phone calls to the vulnerable people you know to help keep them in good spirits during this time of isolation and nervousness. You may find you're able to meet some of their needs, too!

Please plan to keep an eye on our website and Facebook for any additional information as the situation changes.

God of mercy and grace,

During this time of uncertainty and anxiety, please help us find hope and peace in your love. For those who care for the ill, grant them patience, wellness, rest, and strength. For children who won't be at school, may they find structure, safe ways to run off steam, and the love of exhausted family. For parents, may you provide the strength to remain calm and bless others to help them find what they need to care for their families. For the decision makers, grant them the ability to see what is best for humanity and give them peace in their decisions. Thank you for those who are already giving of themselves. May all we do during these uncertain and anxious times be done to bring glory to you as we serve others, care for our families, keep watch over the vulnerable, and seek rest. In your holy name, we pray. Amen.

Remember the old adage - wash your hands and say your prayers cuz Jesus and germs are everywhere!!!

May peace surround you and hope sustain you.

Jen