

March 18, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ:

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” Psalm 46

We now find ourselves in uncharted waters. News and views surround us from all sides. As Christians we place our trust and hope in God and we seek to act according to his will in faith toward him and love toward one another.

We owe our local and national government authorities respect according to the Fourth Commandment. We owe them our constant prayers according to the specific directives of St. Paul. “I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way.” I Timothy 2

In addition we have a duty to love our neighbors according to the Fifth Commandment. “We should fear and loved God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.” (Luther’s Small Catechism)

Our Board of Directors had a special meeting on Tuesday evening (Saint Patrick’s Day) where we talked about the situation in our country and our community with respect to the coronavirus threat. Following a lengthy discussion from all angles I made the pastoral decision to cancel our worship services through March 29. The Board immediately passed a unanimous resolution supporting me in this decision. It is one not taken lightly, but taken with respect to those in authority and especially in love and concern for the health and well being of the members of our congregation.

At this point it is not clear if the cancellations will have to be extended. We have already cancelled use of our facility by outside groups through April 13, though many of them had already cancelled themselves. This would also include the Saturday morning Zippy’s fellowship, the Women’s Fellowship April 2, and the Palm Sunday Brunch.

In the meantime I would encourage all of you to remain faithful in your daily prayers and Bible reading. There are helps in the hymnal as well as a applications from the App Store called such as *Lutheran Public Radio* or *PrayNow*. *PrayNow* contains prayers and Bible readings for every day of the year. It was produced by Concordia Publishing House as a digital version of their *Treasury of Daily Prayer*. And don’t forget your *Portals of Prayer*. There are extra copies at church if you need one.

Private communion for individuals or family units. Schedule by appointment on Monday 9 to noon and 6pm-8pm Wednesday 11am to 1pm and 6 to 8 pm and Saturday 9 am to

noon. Each appointment will be set for 20 mins so please email me at pastor@ourredeemerlutheran.us to schedule an appointment. We are looking into ways to stream the service and we do post our services on our website at ourredeemerlutheran.us to listen to services at this time.

Thank you for your patience during this difficult time. I know we will be sending out more emails to keep us all in the loop as the changes unfold.

God's riches blessings,

Pastor Christian Rasmussen