



# ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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March 11, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of St. Paul Lutheran Church,

Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

As our state, our nation and our world is adjusting the daily patterns of life in an attempt to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 so too at St. Paul's we must adjust our patterns. As pastors we are called to love and care for each of you and we are always concerned for your health and safety. We also desire for you to have easy access to Word and Sacrament. Because it is through these means of grace that we all receive great comfort and consolation, strength and courage to meet the daily challenges of life.

## Worship Life

The congregation will continue to gather for worship according to the following schedule during Lent.

Sunday	10:00 a.m. Holy Communion, English
Sunday	12:30 a.m. Holy Communion, Spanish
Wednesday	Noon Holy Communion, English (spoken, no music)
Wednesday	7:00 p.m. Vespers

The following *temporary* changes will occur for the season of Lent:

There will be sanitizing stations at each entrance. You are asked to wash your hands prior to entering the worship space.

During Sunday worship we will ask that you refrain from physical contact. Jazz hands, a peace sign or the star trek hand gesture are wonderful ways to greet another.

Offering plates will not be passed among the members of the congregation. There will be offering plates located at the entrance to each aisle. You may leave your offering there. (For other options and a note about giving during this time please read below)

The peace will not be shared.

The pastors will disinfect before presiding at communion.

Communion will be distributed by bread only. The pastors will essentially "drop" the bread into your hand.

The pastors will not be available for hugs or handshaking at the door. (We do not want the experience of the congregation in Washington DC in which the pastor was infected with COVID-19 and potentially infected his entire congregation this past Sunday morning.)

There will be no coffee or donuts served on Sundays.

There will be no soup suppers on Wednesdays.

There will be no Sunday School, Sunday morning Bible study or Adult Forum

*CONNECTING WITH GOD, EACH OTHER AND THE WORLD. . .*  
*CONECTANDO CON DIOS, UNOS A OTROS, Y CON EL MUNDO. . .*  
[WWW.STPAULLODI.COM](http://WWW.STPAULLODI.COM)



### Ministry Programs

During the season of Lent certain programs and groups will not meet in an attempt to reduce transmission, it is crucially important that we take these steps because a large portion of our church family is over the age of 60. Groups not meeting until after Easter include Wednesday evening Bible Study, High School Youth Group, Junior High Confirmation Class, and Stephens Ministers. We are also in contact with 16 other ministry groups and have asked them to adjust their schedules and patterns accordingly between now and Easter. If a group does decide to meet they will be asked to disinfect all of the spaces which they use.

### Giving and Stewardship

Offering income during a time like this could be a concern. How can you give if you can't make it to worship?

You can mail your offerings to the church office.

You can give online by going to [stpaulodi.com](http://stpaulodi.com), page down to Simply Giving and click on the Vanco link.

Here is what we and you CAN do

We can, after taking proper precautions, still gather for worship and worship will also be made available live and online through facebook, our website and other electronic means. A different communication will come out tomorrow outlining those options.

We will be making Bible Studies, theological presentations and weekly devotions available online.

Don't forget. Phones work. Call and connect with another from the church. Lets share our stories with each other and lets take special care to connect with those most vulnerable.

Good stewardship also involves selfcare. So be aware of your health. Engage in the best practices of handwashing, staying home if you are sick and social distancing. But also stay physically active and eat healthy.

You can go for a hike or a walk or a bike ride. Take time to enjoy God's creation and reflect on how wonderfully you are made. Don't spend your days sitting on the couch watching the news this will make you sick. Clean out a closet. Read a book. Engage in the creation of art.

You can pray – especially pray for those who are on the frontlines visiting and caring for the sick.

You can keep informed of the latest information from the county and state health departments.

***These are painful and disruptive steps. They are temporary and will be adjusted as events require. Be not afraid – this too shall pass.*** We are engaging in these steps because we are especially mindful of those members who have underlying healthy issues and those who have been identified as members of high risk groups. St. Paul's we are THAT church. We are resilient, responsive, strong in faith and strong in our connections with God each other and the world.

Remember you are loved!

