



ST. PETER LUTHERAN CHURCH

TO: St. Peter Lutheran Faith Community

FROM: Pastor Jennifer Michael

RE: Update on Fellowship and Worship Practices beginning July 31, 2020

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Marked
with the
cross of
Christ
forever, we
are claimed,
gathered,
and sent for
the sake of
the world.

Dear Friends,

This week, Governor Whitmer has signed two new executive orders, the first amends Michigan's Safe Start Order and the second issues revised workplace safeguards. Starting July 31, all indoor gatherings statewide will be limited to 10 people or less and, across most of the state, outdoor gatherings will be limited to 100 people or less.

Statistics gathered from the Michigan Health Department and our own Calhoun County health officials indicate that there has been a growing increase in cases of COVID-19. This rise in cases is closely associated with spreading at large social gatherings. Locally, Calhoun County has confirmed 150 new cases just in the month of July alone, bringing the total number of cases in our county to over 600. Nationwide, the number of deaths from COVID-19 has surpassed 150,000 and we must continue to do our part in reducing the spread and impact of this virus.

Thus, our church leadership has decided to return to a suspension of all activities in our church building until further notice. This includes in-person worship, small group meetings and all other activities. Pete's Pantry will return to its previous practice of curbside service. For church activities, we will continue to utilize our technology options with online worship service and Zoom meetings. If you need assistance with accessing these options, please contact me and I will be happy to help.

It is important to note that while a place of worship will not be penalized for willful violations of the Governor's orders, our church stands firm with the ELCA which does not support civil disobedience in times of pandemic. We have a responsibility to protect our rostered minister, congregation members, and the general public. We do this is by following the orders from our Governor, maintaining social distancing, and wearing masks. As Christ so loved us, these are ways we love one another in Jesus' name.

I agree with Bishop Satterlee who wrote this in his letter to the congregations of our synod, "We all long for a full return to normalcy; however, we must remain vigilant in reducing the spread of this virus. We are still Church Together even when we are apart and our distance does not impact our ability to share God's love, peace, and grace with our neighbors."

I continue to hold all of you in my prayers during this time of uncertainty.

Peace be with you...

Rev. Jennifer Michael