

*And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age. Matthew 28:20b.*

March 26, 2020

Dear Trinity Family,

Jesus reminds us that not even the distance of time separates us from his loving presence. It is natural to feel somewhat isolated and lonely at this point in our coronavirus distancing efforts. Social media and phone calls can't replace the warmth of in-person fellowship; virtual play-dates can't replace the joy of spontaneous laughter on the playground. But we may take comfort in knowing that the Spirit of Christ still moves among us; that no distance is too great for him to cover. This is an excellent time to begin and end each day in prayer, asking God to enfold every moment in his grace and give us peace of mind and heart.

Thank you to all who, in the Spirit of God's grace, have volunteered to drive meals to those in need or provide childcare for healthcare workers, if and when we are asked to do so. I very much appreciate your compassion and selflessness! I have been made aware of another need: Keystone Health is short on face-masks and has asked those woodworkers or crafters who might have unused dust masks to consider donating them. They will now take those that are past their expiration dates, but prefer masks rated N95 or greater. You can drop them off at Keystone Urgent Care, 111 Chambers Hill Drive, Suite 100, any time between 7a and 8p. Or just let me know if you've got any to donate and I'll pick them up and drop them off for you.

Trinity's council voted this morning to extend online-only worship at least through Easter Sunday, April 12. You can join us through Facebook or our website at 9a Sunday March 29, 9a Sunday April 5 (Palm Sunday), 7p Friday April 10 (Good Friday), and 9a Sunday April 12 (Easter).

Thank you to Mary Jo Frey for once again donating palms for our Palm Sunday service, and to all who purchased flowers for our Easter service. We will decorate the chancel area with these items for the respective services. We also want to give folks a chance to collect a palm or the flowers that they purchased. To do so safely, we are setting up a "drive-thru" pickup in the church parking lot, probably on a day when Pastor Arlyn, Christie Brown, and I are in the office to meet or work on the worship service. We will put the items in the back seat or trunk of your car so that you may keep safe distance from us. Christie will share details about this when we get it arranged.

Council continues to monitor the church's financial situation. Thank you for offering your gifts and tithes by mailing them to the church, giving through the "Give" link on our website, or giving through our mobile app. As I mentioned in a previous communication, feel free to contact our Financial Secretary, Sue Derk, with any questions about giving. We are grateful to have sufficient reserves to be able to operate without layoffs or other dramatic reductions for the time being, although we recognize that our ability to maintain this standing in the long run will depend upon the congregation's ability to give over the coming weeks.

Acknowledging the difficulty of making yearlong giving estimates in the present fiscal climate, council has suspended the stewardship campaign and budget process. We have frozen the

FY2019-2020 budget until such time that we deem it feasible to meaningfully reengage budget planning for FY2020-2021.

For those committees planning to make endowment requests, the Endowment Committee has extended its application deadline until the end of April. Please plan to submit requests as usual; God still calls us to carry out the work of his kingdom and to commit our resources to it.

Even though we cannot fully close the distance between us through phone calls or social media, I encourage you to use these tools to reach out to one another. Some communication is better than none, and just the sound of a friendly voice can bring a needed dose of good cheer. Pastor Arlyn and I are calling members just about every day. Please feel free to be in touch with us if you have any special needs or prayer requests.

The Lord is with us.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Aaron