

Messiah Lutheran Church

March 19, 2020; 6:30pm

Pastor's Report

Rev. Chuck Harris

The past week has brought an incredible amount of change to our own individual lives, the life of our congregation, city, state, nation, and world. With coronavirus (COVID-19) now a world-wide pandemic, we are quickly leaving what was once "normal" and are entering into waters uncharted and brimming with uncertainty, confusion, and no small amount of anxiety.

However, this new chapter in our common life is also bringing opportunities for acts of compassion and kindness, creativity and exploration, along with the development of new skills and practices as individuals, families, churches, and communities. We will have much to mourn as the days and weeks pass, but I also believe we will give thanks for some unexpected and wonderful graces and gifts.

I'm quickly trying to summarize and update where we are at operationally at Messiah. This is the first time in 28 years of ministry I've placed a time on a pastor's report, but I feel the need because our life as God's people at Messiah is changing by the minute. The information below is to help orient us to our current situation. It is as accurate as possible under these fast-changing circumstances:

Worship

- No in-person worship as of Lenten midweek on 3/11/20.
- Livestreaming worship as of 3/15 including Sunday morning and Wednesday evening vespers.
- Sunday morning 3/15 worship over 1200 views; Wednesday evening 3/18 vespers over 298 views (so far).

Staff

- All staff are involved in making a dramatic pivot of Messiah ministry from primarily "in-person" to primarily online.
- New skills are being learned and utilized and new, creative practices are being undertaken.
- Savannah working at home due to roommate working in hospital.
- Lynne and Pam coming into office when empty due to health concerns at home.
- Chuck, Traci, Tia, Jan, and Katie working normal hours at church.
- At the direction of the Executive Team, Jan has shifted all duties away from Messiah Chorale to managing "front-end" social media activities and "back-end" technical changes.
- All staff have been working way over normal hours

Communication

- Website appearance and functionality changing daily. Updates to information daily.
- Instagram and Twitter accounts active and communicating information daily.
- Constant Contact mailings (367 unique addresses) and Facebook (405 followers); posts are frequent and focused.

Building Use

- Building is Closed.
- Office is closed.
- The only regularly scheduled groups to use the building are Sunday afternoon and Thursday evening Community Meals. The meals are distributed outside as "grab and go". Folks inside fixing food are social distancing.
- Same is true for Wednesday morning foodbank.

Operations

- Janitorial service is reduced to 4 hours on Monday and 4 hours on Friday.
- Garbage is now bi-weekly.

Care

- All households were called last Friday
- Care Team Zoom meeting this coming week.
- Phone calling, emails, Facebook, website all ways to continue to connect.