

# Messiah Lutheran Church

April 16, 2020; 11:00am

# Pastor's Report

Rev. Chuck Harris

This past month has seen a fundamental shift in how Messiah does church. **We are now primarily an online community and engage in worship, faith formation, pastoral care, service, and fellowship activities through multiple web-based channels.** It is difficult to quantify how many persons are part of this online Messiah community, but anecdotally we seem to be engaging a wider variety of people in a deeper manner than might have been expected.

News reports and endless broadcast commentary are all speculating about when the world might "return to normal" or to a "new normal". **I am resisting such an impulse to speculate.** There is a great freedom in meeting the challenges of the day, doing good ministry, sleeping, and then getting up to do it all over again. This doesn't mean we should not start to plan what a future Messiah might look like, but it does us little good to fixate or worry too deeply about it.

Therefore, I'm taking my daily, operational advice from a recent **quote by the Dalai Lama**: "If a problem is fixable, if a situation is such that you can do something about it, then there is no need to worry. If it's not fixable, then there is no help in worrying. There is no benefit in worrying whatsoever." Blessings!

## Worship

- No in-person worship continues. Combination of live stream and pre-recorded worship opportunities.
- We are currently using iPhones and Switcher to broadcast over Facebook and webpage. Scott Gillette and Tia exploring options for when we can be in sanctuary as a large group again
- When that time comes, we will ramp up slowly. Unsure as to how many folks will be comfortable coming to worship in person.
- My idea is to start with one, blended service, monitor physical attendance, and then move forward from there.

## Staff

- All staff are working hard to produce and present online worship and faith formation opportunities.
- Staff comes into office at staggered times. There is some overlap, but social distancing is practiced. Staff keeping office area sanitized.
- Jan continues to manage some "front-end" social media activities and all "back-end" technical changes. There are opportunities for her to really develop an integrated and robust web and social media presence.
- I'm connecting with her about a draft proposal.

## Communication

- Website appearance and functionality continues. Updates to information daily.
- Instagram and Twitter accounts active and communicating information daily.
- Constant Contact mailings (387 unique addresses now, up 20 in last month) and Facebook (455 followers now, up 50 in last month); posts are frequent and focused.

## Building Use

- Building continues to be closed.
- Office is closed.
- The only scheduled groups continue to be 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 Wednesday and 4 hours on Friday. Service is also donating free of charge 4-8 hours per week for 8 weeks
- Garbage is now bi-weekly with smaller bins.

## Care

- Lots of phone calling, emails, and Zoom chats
- Care Team Zoom meeting this coming week.
- 33 members receiving weekly calls from 12 Care Team volunteers.