

Due to the most recent guidelines from the CDC and the State of Wisconsin limiting assemblies to 10 or less people in order to stem the spread of the coronavirus (COVID 19), we will be cancelling public worship services at Good Shepherd until further notice.

### **Why?**

As Christians we remember the words of the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment where God tells us to honor those in governing positions. Even when we might disagree with government actions or decisions, we respect and obey them out of love for God who established government (Romans 13) for the benefit of society. As Christians we also recall the words of the 5<sup>th</sup> Commandment and remember our desire to care for not only our own health, but the health and lives of those in our congregation and community. Therefore, it seemed wise and loving for us to cancel public worship services at this point.

### **For how long?**

We are purposefully not putting a date on resuming worship because the situation is constantly changing. Our prayer is that the spread of this virus is halted quickly and that we can return to public worship soon. We will resume worship as soon as we can safely and legally do so.

### **Now what?**

Public worship is one of the primary ways that Christians connect with one another and to their Savior through his Word and Sacraments. While we may not be able to physically gather with one another we can stay connected! Here are some ways we plan to do that:

- **Good Shepherd's YouTube channel and Facebook page will offer livestreaming and pre-recorded worship services, sermons, devotions, Bible studies and Catechism lessons.** Specific links to all these can be found below. Look for notifications of livestreaming events and share them with others.
- **Make use of other Biblically sound resources.** Devotional and Bible study materials can be found at our Wisconsin Synod's website at [www.WELS.net](http://www.WELS.net). **Time of Grace Ministries** [www.timeofgrace.org](http://www.timeofgrace.org) also provides daily and weekly devotions, along with full-length sermons that can be watched online or on WKBT CBS Channel 8 on Sunday mornings at 7:00 am.
- **WELS churches in the immediate area that are also livestreaming worship** services include St. Paul's, Onalaska [www.stpaulsonalaska.org](http://www.stpaulsonalaska.org) and St. Matthew's, Stoddard [www.stmatthews-wels.com](http://www.stmatthews-wels.com)
- **Private Communion** is available from Pastor Kruschel upon request. Email [pastor@gsholmen.org](mailto:pastor@gsholmen.org) or call/text (608) 399-8200 to line up a time either at home or at the church office to regularly receive the blessings of the Lord's Supper.
- **Connect with one another!** Call, email, text, Tweet, Instagram, Snapchat with your fellow Christians. With social distancing comes the feeling of being disconnected from one another. Let's remind our fellow Christians that we're not alone. Not only does our God go with us, but God has given us one another. Continue to give and receive Christian encouragement!
- **Pray!!!** Pray for those around the world that are infected by this life-threatening virus. Pray for the government officials who are making difficult decisions. Pray for those in the medical field that are caring for the sick. Pray for families who are separated from or have lost loved ones. Pray for calm and compassion among people during these uncertain times. Pray for the

opportunity to point people to Christ who alone gives certainty through his unfailing promise of forgiveness, salvation and presence.

- **Look forward!!!** I hope that this time of absence from public worship will create in us a greater appreciation for being together in worship in the future. How good will it be when we can once again assemble without limits and “social distancing” to worship our Savior God beside one another.

May God bless us and guide us as we head into uncharted territory, confident that our God already knows how he will safely bring us through.

Pastor Kruschel & Good Shepherd Church Council