

May 18, 2020

Dear Holy Cross Family,

I hope this letter finds you all in good spirits and most importantly great health. We live in troubling times and there is a lot of uncertainty in the air. Church council wants you to know that even though the doors may be closed, every one of you are very much on our minds. I wanted to take a few minutes and tell you what has been happening behind the scenes. As you are aware, Pastor Chad, Lee Burnette, Craig Taylor and Dave Johnson have diligently worked to perfect Sunday Morning Worship on Facebook Live. The Sunday Morning Coffee Hour with Eric seems to be a great success.

I want to thank each of you for your generous offering during this difficult time. As of the end of April, our offering is down \$11,313.70 or 13% from the budgeted items. However, we have been able to cut expense down \$8639.44 or 10%. To try to stay ahead of the financial crisis for our church, a decision was made to temporarily cut benevolence to the NC SYNOD. We have been unable to pay this for the last 2 months. Hourly staff has also volunteered to cut back on hours to try to save money. We also made the decision to pay only the necessary expenses such as: power bill, water bill, mortgage, salaries, etc. Anything that could be viewed as optional was not paid. The NC SYNOD has reached out to Pastor Chad and make him aware of the CARES ACT approved by the federal government. Churches can apply for funds through this ACT and as long as at least 75% of the awarded money goes to salaries, then this will be viewed as a grant. This means that there will be NO COST to Holy Cross. At last night's council meeting it was decided to move forward with requesting this money. While Holy Cross may qualify for money, there is no guarantee there will be any money left by the time everything is approved. If you can and are willing, please continue to send your offering to the church office or by PushPay so we may continue our ministry.

Lastly, you may want to know when we can meet in person again. Trust me when I say you are not alone in this boat. Council spent a good amount of time discussing this matter last night. While we are all eager and wanting to see each other again we want to be sure we do it as safely as possible. Council is in the process of reviewing and creating guidelines for an on-site worship service. Council has called for a special council meeting in two weeks (May 31, 2020) to discuss these plans in greater detail. During this time, we will have more information on the spread of this virus as well as having information from the local health department to see how bad the spread is in Lincoln County. While this decision may not be the desired outcome of some, council believes it is the most prudent course of action.

It is important to know that we as a council are here for you. We hear your desire to reopen. We hear your cry for some type of normalcy. If you are struggling spiritually, emotionally or just need someone to talk to, Pastor Chad is still available as well as any other council person. If you want copies of reports (financial, council minutes, agendas, etc.) please reach out to the church office. We are an open book and want you to know that your church is here to help you in any way we can.

May God Bless You All,

Joey Wagoner

2020 Holy Cross Lutheran Church Council Chair