

May 17, 2020

Subject: Coronavirus – Congregational May Response

Dear Disciples of St. Paul Lutheran Church,

Canadian author, Deborah Ellis, best describes what we are going through now in her quote, “These are unusual times. They call for ordinary people to do unusual things, just to get by.” People in this nation are impatient for normalcy, but are fearful of risking their health and the health of their loved ones.

For this reason, the St. Paul Church Council has been in discussion regarding the proper time for the re-opening of the Church. The Council’s main concern is the fear of opening too soon and risking the health and safety of the congregants, staff and visitors. In a meeting this past Monday night, the Council determined that the time for these plans to begin to be put into place is when the new cases of Coronavirus in the State of South Carolina start trending downward for 14 straight days. We are not there, yet. As South Carolina continues to aggressively test citizens, new cases will emerge and retard that downward trend. But we will be patient and watchful in evaluating the situation based on the data and share with you the so-called “game plan.”

In the meantime, there are things that need to be done. As per St. Paul’s Constitution, the month of May is the time for a Congregation meeting, the election of Council members and officers, approval of SC Synod Assembly Delegates, and Outgoing and Incoming Presidents’ remarks. Because of this “unusual time,” the Council, through an emergency vote, temporarily altered the timeframe, pushing decisions usually made in May at the Congregation Meeting to June including a “Stay in Place” order for an additional month for the Council members, officers and committee chairpersons. At this time, we are uncertain of the format of the June Congregation meeting. It is doubtful that it will be like a regular May Congregation

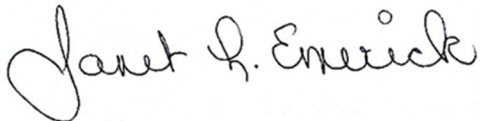
meeting after the 11:00 a.m. service. More than likely, during the week of June 28, 2020, Survey Monkey will be used for the voting process and a Power Point Program will be posted on the St. Paul website with all reports and information normally presented by the Council President, Vice President and Treasurer.

In the meantime, Council, staff and the Worship and Music Committee will be working on the plans that will need to be put into place taking us from a scattered to a gathered congregation. In order to return to a time of some normalcy, we, very likely, will need to get used to some temporary changes in the way we worship, like social distancing, the wearing of masks, the suspension of singing in church and the support we give to members 65 years and older to continue to STAY-PUT and watch streamed church services.

When my dog is stressed, she likes to run under the bed and hide. I am certain that during the past few months, there were times when most of us would like to have done the same. There may be more of these moments ahead. Let's be patient with one another, make careful decisions and re-open a St. Paul where everyone feels safe.

Sincerely yours,

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH



Janet Emerick

Congregation President



***"SEEKING TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST
BY LOVING AND SERVING ALL!"***