

March 12, 2020

Dearly Members and Friends of Freeborn Lutheran Church,

In this time of uncertainty, let us all take a deep breath and cling to the promise that nothing can separate us from the love of God. That is always our starting point.

Now, in light of that Good News, how do we handle the difficult news of the spread of COVID-19 and the recommendations regarding containing it? The most recent recommendations from health officials, advise (and in some cases, require) that all non-urgent public gatherings be canceled. Our church council made the difficult decision today that, **effective this Sunday, March 15th we will be keeping the building mostly closed and not holding worship through the end of March**, when we will revisit the issue.

Without our regular gatherings, we're going to have to be creative about how to love each other and our broader community, especially the most vulnerable. As significant as it is, congregational life is about more than worship. Enclosed is a draft for our new phone tree, so that everyone is in touch with the congregation in some way. If your number is wrong or anyone is missing that needs to be on it, please let Heather know. We did it quickly so we apologize for any errors or omissions. We are working on creative ways to bring church to you—check our website and Facebook pages for recorded sermons, and (if we can figure it out) possibly Sunday worship online: freebornchurch.org

For those of us who have the blessing of health, how might we be of practical assistance to others? Can we deliver groceries to anyone? Who can you call to check in on from time to time? Are there other services we can provide for you or loved ones? Please keep the church apprised of how you are doing--emotionally, physically, and spiritually--in this time of trial.

Also, please remember that even though we might not be gathering for worship, that the costs of the church continue. If you are able to mail your offering, we would appreciate that. The updated address is 2416 300th St NW, Stanwood, WA 98292.

Our neighbors at Faith Lutheran found out yesterday that Lakewood Schools will be closed for at least 6 weeks. Faith has come to learn that for many kids, schools are their only source of healthy meals and other services. They are looking into how the church might come alongside the schools, and could use the help of anyone who is able. Let me know if that's something you might be interested in. Ernie is reaching out to Josephine to see if we can be of help there also.

Our prayers are with you. Please pray for each other and for our entire community.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Erik", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Pastor Erik

Cell: 425-405-5752