



FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Rev. Debra North, Pastor

PO Box 228 (550 Rt. 940)
Blakeslee, PA 18610-0228

Phone: 570-646-0309
Fax: 570-643-6853
Email: faithlut@epix.net

IMPORTANT CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENT

March 17, 2020

Dear Faith Family,

It is unsettling to see how quickly this pandemic is impacting our lives in so many ways. Last Thursday the council prepared a contingency plan for how to continue a somewhat normal schedule while practicing appropriate safety measures. These were implemented on Sunday, and everyone seemed to feel we were coping well.

Now just two days later, as the whole country seems to be coming to grips with the potential severity of this virus and the need to do whatever it takes to try and minimize its continued growth, the council has agreed that we must follow the guidelines laid out by State and Federal agencies, and **cancel all church activities** for the next two weeks. Governor Wolf declared a State of Emergency requiring non-essential business to close for 2 weeks. The White House has recommended that everyone avoid meetings of 10 people or more. If more people follow these guidelines and avoid being out in public as much as possible, fewer people will be exposed and the sooner we can return to a more normal way of living.

We are facing a lot of unknowns, but know that I and the Council are keeping a close eye on things and will continue to make what seems to be the most responsible decisions for all concerned.

Personally, I believe firmly that we can always trust God to reveal the seeds of new life in the middle of even the worst situations... that's what resurrection is all about! We are being forced right now to 'think outside the box'... to consider how we can still be church when we don't have our building. Watch your emails and the website for updates as we develop ways to share 'virtual worship' in the days ahead.

In the meantime, here are a few ways we can all continue to be the church from a distance:

1. Pray for each other. Stay in touch. I will be available by phone at 570-481-4474 and email at revdeb527@gmail.com. Let's be creative in finding ways to stay connected and care for each other's spiritual needs.

2. Practice Sabbath. Downtime can be a gift... a time to read a little more... your Bible, a new novel, a devotional, etc. Play games... do a puzzle...take a walk in the woods.
3. Check on your neighbors...your older neighbors, someone on chemo, a neighbor who needs help with childcare. We are called to be the Body of Christ for the world. And if YOU need some extra help... someone to get groceries or other items you cannot get out for, **call me or someone else in church. We will find someone who can help out!**
4. Support the church leadership by trusting that we are not taking any of these decisions lightly. Know that we have your best interests at heart. And if you have suggestions for new ways to stay in touch and help meet everyone's spiritual needs... let us know!
5. Support the church financially. Even though the church is closed, our financial obligations remain pretty much the same. Now's a good time to explore our on-line giving options. There is a direct link and instructions on the website: www.faithlutheranblakeslee.org Your bank also probably has on-line bill pay options. And if you can't give on-line, please mail your pledge in. It doesn't take much for the church to fall into a hole when attendance and offerings are down.

At this time we are hoping to be able to resume worship in April when we are scheduled to return to two services at 8:00 and 10:30. Holy Week begins on April 5th with Palm/Passion Sunday, followed by Maundy Thursday at 7 pm, Good Friday at 7 pm, and Easter Sunday on the 12th.

So, watch your emails, Facebook and the website for further communications in the days and weeks ahead. And if you know of someone who cannot receive communications electronically, please pass on all information you receive.

In Christ's peace and love,

Pastor Debby

570-481-4474

revdeb527@gmail.com