

Wednesday, March 18, 2020

Last night, members of Grace's Church Council, Board of Elders, and I met to discuss the coronavirus situation. Based on the orders and recommendations of our government and public safety officials, most church activities, including public worship services, have been canceled at Grace indefinitely. We will reassess the situation in the coming weeks to determine when and how we can resume these activities. At a minimum, our public worship services cannot resume until the State of Wisconsin rescinds its moratorium on mass gatherings of 10 people or more.

During this time, recordings of my sermons will be available on our website (gracelutheranracine.net) and on our YouTube channel, "Grace Lutheran Church, Racine, WI – LCMS." We will also attempt to livestream our worship services using Facebook Live. We will begin with tonight's Lenten service at 6:30 pm. This service is closed to everyone except me, the organist, the videographer, and perhaps one or two other people to assist with the service and the recording. I have never done this before, but my understanding is that you should be able to watch the service live through Grace's Facebook page. It should then be archived on our Facebook page as well, so that you can view it at a later time. If this experiment works tonight, we will use it on Sunday and for our worship services going forward until we can resume our public worship services again. The worship bulletins and the hymns can be downloaded from our website.

The plan is to keep the church office open during this time. I am willing and available to provide pastoral care to those who need or desire it. Please feel free to contact the church office or me directly if you would like to speak with me or if you would like to stop in to visit me. I will also make home and hospital visits as requested and permitted. The church phone number is 262-633-4831. My cell phone number is 608-567-9029.

The work and ministry of Grace continues during this difficult time. If you are able to do so, please mail your offering checks to Grace. You can also drop them off at the church office. The office is open Monday through Thursday from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm. Electronic giving is also available by contacting the church office. I know that some of you may be impacted financially by this crisis. May God bless and strengthen our individual families and our church family as we try to deal faithfully with these challenges.

Please continue to pray that God would bring a quick end to this crisis according to His good and gracious will. I deeply appreciate your continued prayers for me, that I would remain healthy and able to carry out my duties. I will keep you in my prayers also. Through it all, we rejoice that God is still in control. With His help, I am confident that we will get through this crisis together, as generations of Christians have done before us in their times of trial. As we remember especially during the Lenten and upcoming Easter seasons, Jesus lives; the victory's won!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Crane