



GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

We are growing, making, nurturing disciples in Christ.

183 W. Main Street + Westborough, MA 01581 + 508.366.7095 Tel.

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America - *God's Work, Our Hands*



March 16, 2020

Dear Good Shepherd Community,

As you have likely heard, last night Governor Baker shut down schools in Massachusetts until April 7th and has prohibited public gatherings of more than 25 people until then as well. Even as we were digesting this news, the CDC recommended canceling or postponing gatherings of more than 50 people for the next eight weeks. These new developments commit us more deeply to the path we're already exploring: figuring out how to be church together in a time of physical distancing.

What does this mean for us?

In accordance with the governor's measures, we've canceled in-person gatherings at Good Shepherd through April 7th. This affects public worship, educational programming, and outside organizations that meet in our building. Our fervent hope and prayer is that we might be able to rejoin one another in worship during Holy Week and Easter.

In the meantime, the staff at Good Shepherd is figuring out how to build on our online offerings. Many of you joined us for a livestreamed worship service this past Sunday at 9am—thank you for being with us in that new medium. We'll continue to offer livestreamed worship on Sundays for the duration of the ban on public gatherings and will post the service on our YouTube channel by noon. You can find them by visiting the "Sermons" tab on goodshepherdcares.org.

What's going on this week?

We'll have two online offerings: Bible Study for Busy People will meet on Wednesday at 8:30 as usual (<https://zoom.us/j/318572656>). In addition, we're hosting a meeting tomorrow at noon to check in with one another and pray together (<https://zoom.us/j/528840156>), and we're offering a midweek prayer service at 7:30pm (<https://zoom.us/j/440049087>). All of these offerings will occur via Zoom, and it is possible to call in on this platform even if you do not wish or can't videochat.

What's going on next week?

Beginning next week, our plan is to expand these digital offerings with the hope of offering something every day except Saturday. Look for more details as the week unfolds.

What else can I do?

Right now, we're looking for a small crew to come together to build a "Called to Care" team. The members of this team would commit to calling 8-10 families a week to check in and see if there are any prayer requests or needs that the church can help to meet. The "Called to Care" people would then communicate those needs to the church staff, who would then work on resourcing them. Are you "Called to Care?" Please email or call the church office office@goodshepherdcares.org.

A final note: we're especially grateful to those of you who are finding ways to continue giving to the church even when we're not gathering regularly. Whether you've automated your donations through Simply Giving or you're mailing in or dropping off your envelopes, you're continuing to enable this whole community's ministry through your generosity, and we appreciate it deeply. Thank you.

A verse from 2 John 1:12 reads: "Although I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink; instead I hope to come to you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete."



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Oh, beloved. Know how deeply we appreciate your prayers and affirmation as we move through these uncharted waters of ministry, and how deeply we yearn for the completion of our joy in Christ that happens in the gathered community. In other words: we miss you. We hope you're well. We're praying for you. We can't wait until we're back together. May our joy be complete soon, and in the meantime, let's keep walking in the love of Christ.

--Pastors Jeff Goodrich and Victoria Larson