



**GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH**

***We are growing, making, nurturing disciples in Christ.***

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



March 13, 2020

Good Shepherd plans amidst coronavirus

Dear friends in Christ,

How can we best be the faithful people of God in a time such as this? How can we best care for one another in a time of fear and anxiety? Followers of Jesus have been asking this question for centuries, and it is our turn to ask it in response to the coronavirus. Over the last few days, we have been monitoring the latest developments and consulting with the members of the congregation council.

In the end our concern for the health and wellbeing for the entire Good Shepherd community was the most important factor. God calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and in a time of pandemic, loving our neighbor looks like keeping our physical distance from each other. To that end, we have decided to cancel our worship services for Sunday March 15th and Sunday March 22nd, as well as all programs and activities scheduled for the upcoming week. We are postponing the town hall forum on the question of the size of the church council to April 19th at 12 PM. We are also postponing the pizza supper and talent show to a later date TBD. There will be no Wednesday night classes this week, and we will seek to reschedule the class led by the Russian Icon Museum for a later date.

While we will not have worship services for the next two Sundays, we will offer two alternatives. First, both pastors will be available in the sanctuary from 8 AM to 12 PM this Sunday March 15th. If you wish, you are welcome to come to the church for a time of individual prayer. However, after praying, we encourage you not to linger so that we are not gathering a large group of people. Second, we will have an abbreviated worship service streaming live on facebook from 9 AM until approximately 9:30 AM. It will be led only by the pastors, our music director Kirby Stalley, and our organist Yeon Soh. In order to view the live stream, go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and search for "Good Shepherd Lutheran Church of Westborough Massachusetts." Once you have navigated to our facebook page, the streaming video should pop up when it begins at 9 AM. If you experience technical difficulties, the video will be downloaded and posted to the church website by mid-day on Sunday. To access that, click on "sermons" at [www.goodshepherdcares.org](http://www.goodshepherdcares.org)

The situation is changing by the day, and we will send another update next week with where we stand going forward. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to your pastors or the church office anytime. If you need help, we are here to serve and assist in any way we can. Being part of a community means that we look out for one another, so please share your needs with others, and check in with each other to see if there's anything you can do to help. As we navigate these tumultuous times, let us walk together connected by a love of God and of each other.

In Christ,

Pastor Jeff and Pastor Larson



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*A prayer from an unknown author:*

*May we who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake.*

*May we who have no risk factors remember those who are most vulnerable.*

*May we who have the luxury of working from home remember those who must choose between preserving their health or making their rent.*

*May we who have the flexibility of taking care of our children when their schools close remember those who have no options.*

*May we who have to cancel our trips remember those who have no safe place to go.*

*May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of the economic market, remember those who have no margin at all.*

*May we who settle in for a quarantine at home remember those who have no home.*

*As fear grips our country, let us choose love.*

*During this time when we can not physically wrap our arms around each other, let us find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbors.*

*Amen.*