



Coronavirus Special Edition - March 13, 2020

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Glen Arbor, Michigan

As you are already aware, the world is now facing a pandemic and you have heard the symptoms many times. You have all heard of the need to take precautions to protect yourself from the Covid 19 virus. As a church, Bethlehem has taken the following steps to protect your safety.

- 1) The Sharing of Peace handshakes and hugs have been replaced with elbow or fist bumps.
- 2) The ushers will hold the collection plates at the end of each aisle (or come to you if you are sitting by yourself) and we ask that you pass your offering envelope to the next person to place it in the offering plate. After the offering is collected and placed on the credence table, the ushers and acolyte will sanitize their hands.
- 3) Holy Communion Changes
 - a) The ushers will offer you hand sanitizer prior to coming to the Communion Rail.
 - b) The chalice will not be available and only individual cup distribution will be practiced.
 - c) The pastor and all those associated with the Distribution will use hand sanitizer prior to distribution.
- 4) Church Closure is not anticipated at this time as Governor Whitmer has set the threshold at groups of 100 people.
- 5) Self Exclusion is an option you may choose to use. If you do, please consider mailing your offering to the church office as our expenditures are pretty well fixed and we do need a steady cash flow to meet our bills.
- 6) Sanitizing of Fellowship Hall – If you choose to stay for fellowship, please know that hand sanitizer is available to use prior to taking any food. (Please rub the sanitizer on your hands for 15 seconds.) Following Fellowship, the tables will be wiped down with Clorox Wipes that are approved for sanitizing against Covid 19.

Please see a powerful message from Pastor Andrzejewski of Historic Trinity – Detroit on the backside that places our current situation in God’s light and hands.

Dear People of God, as much as we can urge you to take the necessary precautions to care for your body, we will continue to care for your soul. This is our sacred duty. Be assured, we will be diligent in our preparations for hosting public worship, we will keep ourselves dutifully informed, but know that the sacred joy of tending to your soul is our most glorious calling. We will never give that up. So to that end:

1. We will be here to worship (Heb 10:25). If you are sick, stay home... we'll come to you. If not in person, then in prayer.
2. We will rejoice in the Lord. Always (Phil 4:4). If you are anxious about tomorrow, we'll help you find a better way.
3. We will love (1 Jn 3:11) and encourage (1 Thes 5:11) you. If you think the world is going crazy, you're right... but it's been that way since Genesis 3. Wildly different strains of sin or sickness will still be met with the immovable and immeasurable grace of God. That never changes. And it won't change here. Same Lord. Same love.
4. We will keep our eyes fixed on Jesus (Heb 12:2). If you are feeling distracted or dismayed, we will help you guard your heart (Phil 4:7).
5. We will weather the storm (Ps 57:1). He is your refuge and fortress (Ps 46). We call it a "sanctuary" for a reason. You'll always be welcomed to hide in Christ (Col 3:3) here!



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