



The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
501 Fairfield Drive
Greensburg, Pennsylvania 15601-6101

March 18, 2020

Dear Good Shepherd Member,

Greetings to you! Pastor Frank here. I am writing this letter to share some important things with you regarding this time of **'HEALTH CONCERN'** and our congregational and worship life together. I address many things in the body of this letter. Please take your time to read and re-read it. At this uncertain time as things are changing daily and sometimes hourly, my prayer for you is that you and your family remain well, safe, and connected with me and with our church family. This **URGENT** communication with you now is intended to communicate with you about how worship, events on our church calendar and use of the building will be affected, changed, postponed, or cancelled. There are all kinds of varying responses from our culture about the COVID-19 Coronavirus that range from panic, selfishness, to care for our neighbor. As your Pastor, and as a church community, we will take this virus, the direction from the Center for Disease Control-CDC and public health department seriously so that our response is for wellness, safety and care for ourselves, each other and our neighbors. At this past Monday evening's Church Council meeting I, and our church leaders recommend the following. **Please read on for the protocol for Good Shepherd Lutheran Church...**

The Boy Scout Troop, Cub Scout Pack and Brownies have discontinued all their meetings and activities through Easter. Our Office Manager, Jenny Luffy will be notifying the Bridge Club, New Neighbors and Parkinson's Support group and other groups that use our building to let them know that the church building will be **CLOSED** for all gatherings until further notice. Other cancellations include Wednesday Soup and Sandwich suppers and Evening Prayer. The Community Feast scheduled for Wednesday, April 8, is cancelled. Saturday evening 5:30pm worship and Sunday morning 8:30am worship are cancelled until further notice. I plan to conduct worship at 10:30am through Facebook Live beginning this Sunday, March 22nd and weekly until further notice. This worship service will hopefully be able to go onto our Website as well for people to watch at another time if not able at 10:30am on Sunday mornings. **PLEASE** be patient with me as I try to discover ways to care for you and others, keep us connected, communicate, provide pastoral care, and lead worship in this new way. While this letter serves to share with you now our protocol, I will continue to use the church's Facebook page, our website, our April newsletter, email and text communication to those who have provided their email address or cell phone number to Jenny at the church office to share updates. I will conduct Confirmation Classes and First Holy Communion Classes online, as well as church meetings, utilizing Zoom Video/Audio conference calls with our committees and groups of our church. In conversation with our area funeral homes, I am taking their direction that as a death may occur, my plan will be to conduct a private graveside service with families, and a funeral/memorial service and luncheon will be scheduled with families in the future when things settle. Jenny Luffy will continue to carry out her work at the church office as long as she is well and able. Please feel free to call Jenny at the church office during office hours with any questions or needs. Please **DO NOT** come to the church building. Signs will be posted on all entrance doors stating that the building is closed for the common good of all. I will continue to be available for pastoral care **24/7** throughout this crisis. Please do not hesitate to call me if you have a need, are going to have a procedure or are in the hospital, and if you have prayer request and the like. I am here for you.

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HERE IS WHAT I NEED YOU TO DO... **FIRST: Attend worship at 10:30am on Facebook Live or visit the website to view Sunday worship.** If you are not equipped to access these mediums, please continue to pray for yourself and others, read your Bible, reach out to others and ask me how you may be able to help join me to help from a distance to care for one another. If you are an elderly member of our congregation and you need help during this time, with things such as grocery store runs, or **ANYTHING ELSE, etc.** Please do not hesitate to let me know. There are members in our congregation who are willing to help you. (If you are willing to help in this way, please contact me to let me know. My contact information is Cell phone-(724) 858-7816 and [email-preacherpod@comcast.net](mailto:preacherpod@comcast.net)) Also at this time we have a stocked food pantry for those who may need to utilize it. We continue to reach out to our West Point Elementary School with the Food 2 Go for Kids. I delivered the March delivery. We are up to help again for April. While you are not advised to purchase items as you have in the past, I do encourage you to give monetary donations so that these food items can be purchased. Please send them to the church and note on your check-‘FOOD 2 GO FOR KIDS-APRIL 2020.’ **SECONDLY: REMEMBER TO CONTINUE TO GIVE YOUR OFFERING.** As you and I are physically away from the church at this time, around the clock ministry continues. Your financial support is **VITAL.** Your weekly/monthly offering, however you choose to contribute, can be given by postal mail (Please do not send cash through the mail). Jenny will receive mail at the church. You can, if you haven’t already easily set up **ONLINE GIVING** with our Treasurer, Shelley Cottrill. Contact Jenny for how to do this. Lastly, there is a **DONATE Button** on our church website via PayPal. I made a donation just yesterday to try it out. It works well and provides the donor an email receipt. It goes directly into the church’s bank account. Simple go to the website- www.goodshepherdgbg.org go to the menu and at the very bottom is the DONATE button. Please contact Jenny if you need further help with this. I cannot emphasize enough how **VITAL** your continual regular offering is, but now especially, additional generosity is very important and needed as we will experience new needs. Without being like a TV Evangelist, I will be lifting this opportunity to **DONATE NOW** via our website, as I conduct Sunday online worship. Here is something I find very helpful that our member, Andrea Cuda shared with me... “It is not coincidental that this time of sacrifice in our world is coming during the Lenten season. It is a time when we should be thinking more inward, slowing our pace to reflect and to pray. I can’t think of another time where we’ve been forced to do so as a world so quickly. We can know that we aren’t being punished by God, but this is certainly a wake-up call. Nothing is really in our control. Maybe we can be a little more healed as a world when this is over.” Thank you Andrea.

FINALLY, I would GREATLY appreciate if you could let me know that you received and read this letter. Please contact me by email: preacherpod@comcast.net or cell phone text or call: (724) 858-7816. I am so very proud of you all and encouraged by your willingness to care for one another and our neighbors. This is where the rubber meets the road on our journey as Disciples of Jesus Christ. Equally, I am thankful for your flexibility and willingness to try new things. I close by reminding you of Jesus’ words to us, “**And remember, I am with you always until the end of the age.**” [Matthew 28:20.] I am with you as well, dear church. Let us care for one another, support our shared ministry and continue to trust in the Crucified and Risen Lord, Jesus, the Christ.

In Christ’s Love and Peace,

The Rev. Frank S. Podolinski Jr.