



EMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

“My eyes are ever toward the LORD, For He shall pluck my feet out of the net. Turn Yourself to me, and have mercy on me, For I am desolate and afflicted.” (Psa 25:15-16) The introit or entrance Psalm for Oculi, the third Sunday in Lent, calls us to fix our eyes upon Jesus. These words are echoed by the writer of Hebrews, *“Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.”* (Heb 12:1-2) As our world runs in fear of COVID-19, we fix our eyes on our Emmanuel - the God/Man Jesus Christ who is with us here and now in His Word and Sacraments as He has promised. (Matthew 18:20)

Living in hope in Christ’s Kingdom of Grace, we also live to serve our neighbors as good citizens. Our Lord Jesus Christ rules also through the kingdom of the left - the state - and we are called to show proper respect to those who are placed over us. (Romans 13:1-4a). Government authority serves to maintain peace and order in our chaotic world through upholding and enforcing the rule of natural law. In light of this present pandemic our president has recommended, along with the Centers for Disease Control, to limit all social gatherings to ten or less people. These recommendations are not to punish or impugn our God given right of free assembly, but to limit the spread and scope of COVID-19. After much prayerful consideration and discussion our church council has decided to comply with this recommendation. We will suspend services at Emmanuel for the next two weeks until March 31st. We will meet again as a Church Council on March 30th at 6:30p.m. to plan further for when we will resume services.

As a congregation we care for your bodily and spiritual needs. If you are in need of help please do not hesitate to contact our church council members. They are listed below:

2020 Council Members

President	Neal Warner	812-547-4720	neal@wamcollc.com
Vice-President	Gary Greubel	812-547-4942	ggreubel@sbcglobal.net
Recording Secretary	Pat Ebersberger	734-777-6729	pebersberger@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Randy Lautner	812-608-0492	emmanuel@psci.net
Elders	Kelly Stephens	812-608-1555	kelly.stephens@bearwoodeng.com
	Pat Jarboe	812-836-4204	pat.jarboe@tellcity.k12.in.us
Trustee	Tony Mogan	812-608-0162	mandimogan@gmail.com
Deacon	Jack Huebschman	812-547-2887	
Board of Parish Ed.	Mandi Mogan	812-608-0163	mandimogan@gmail.com

In addition you can contact Pastor Rusert directly at (507)236-2779 njruser@juno.com,
Or through leaving a message on our church phone: (812)547-4215.
Or through his wife, Lori Rusert at (507)236-4551 laruser@gmail.com.

In addition Pastor or an elder will be calling your phone to check in on your well being over this next week.

We are concerned about meeting your spiritual needs in these trying times. During these next two weeks we will follow the government’s guidelines of not meeting in groups of more than 10 people at a time to limit the spread of this virus. Pastor Rusert will pray Matins (or a morning prayer service) at 9a.m. daily in our sanctuary Sunday through Friday, and Vespers (or an evening prayer service) at 3p.m.. These services will all be spoken or sung A capella (without musical accompaniment.) If you are in need of private

absolution and or the Lord's Supper contact Pastor to make arrangements. He is willing to hold family services for family groups of nine or less as per CDC guidelines during the suspension of our regular Sunday services.

If you are in need of hymnals to conduct daily family devotions in your homes we do have some "Lutheran Worship" hymnals or our older "The Lutheran Hymnal" hymnals for our church family to take home and keep. In both hymnals you will find the order of Matins and Vespers, plus daily Scripture and Psalm readings for your household. They will be available for anyone to pick up on the table near pastor's study Monday through Thursday from 8a.m. to 2p.m.. If you are unable to come to the church building, please contact Pastor or one of our elders and we would be willing to deliver it to your home. We will have devotional materials also available by the hymnals for your taking.

In addition, if you desire to take time to pray in the sanctuary during this crisis, the door nearest our parking lot will be open during the normal hours that pastor is here. We just ask that you respect the recommended social distancing and use good hand washing hygiene. If you or someone in your household is sick please respect your neighbor by staying home.

We have compiled a list of Scripture readings for your daily home devotions during this illness. If you are in need of any other resources, please do not hesitate to call. For those who have internet access we have also included a list of web sites for Lutheran devotions, sermons, Bible studies, and hymnody. Take a break from all the noise of the news and use this time to grow in God's Word and in your prayers during these days. One of the greatest devotional resources that we have as Lutherans is "The Small Catechism" pray it daily. Dr. Luther said that he never finished learning and praying it. A good practice is to pray, by reading them out loud and meditating on: the "Ten Commandments and their explanation" and read the "*Table of Duties(TOD)*" "*To bishops, pastors, and preachers*" "*What the Hearers Owe Their Pastors*" on Monday. Tuesday - pray "The Apostle's Creed & explanation" & TOD - "*Of Civil Government*"; "*Of Citizens.*" Wednesday - pray "The Lord's Prayer & explanation" & TOD - "*To Husbands*"; "*To Wives.*" Thursday - pray "The Sacrament of Holy Baptism" & TOD - "*To Parents*"; "*To Children.*" Friday - pray "Confession & The Office of the Keys" & TOD - "*To Workers of All Kinds*"; "*To Employers and Supervisors.*" Saturday - pray "The Sacrament of the Altar" & TOD "*To Youth*"; "*To Widows*"; "*To Everyone;*" and "*Christian Questions with their Answers.*"

On the first Sunday in Lent we heard Jesus counter the devil's temptation to think that God doesn't care about His children by saying, *But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD.'*" (Mat 4:4). Satan does the utmost to lead us into false belief and despair by stealing God's Word from us in trying times. Feed yourself and your family daily upon the living Bread - the Word of God - Jesus Christ by taking the time to read it out loud in your homes, listen to it, sing it, pray it, and trust that God's Word and promise in Jesus cannot be broken. If you are in need of pastoral care, prayers, or physical needs - do not hesitate to contact us that as the body of Christ we may care for one another.

Pray for all our health care workers, government officials, members of Emmanuel, and all those suffering from this virus. This upcoming Sunday is called "Laetare" - in the middle of Lent we are called to: "*Rejoice with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all you who love her; that you may feed and be satisfied with the consolation of her bosom.*" (Isaiah 66:10-11) The Christian Church, the Mother of us all, still feeds us with the pure milk of God's Word. Take heart our Lord Jesus promises that the "gates of hell will not prevail against His Church." St. Paul from the isolation of prison calls us to, "*Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*" (Php 4:4-7)

In Christ,
Rev. Nathan J. Rusert, Pastor LC-MS
Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Tell City, IN