



Rev. William E. Coleman
Pastor

LUTHER MEMORIAL CHURCH
LUTHER MEMORIAL ACADEMY
(A Christian Day School)

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Administrator

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March 30, 2020

Greeting to the faithful people of Luther Memorial Church,

Luther Memorial's Church Council has voted **to not hold worship services** at Luther Memorial Church on Sunday, April 5 (Palm Sunday), Thursday, April 9 (Maundy Thursday), Friday, April 10 (Good Friday) and Sunday, April 12 (Easter Sunday). Please note that Church Council will make the determination if additional services will be cancelled after Easter Sunday, and if that decision is made the congregation will be informed of that decision. While we will miss being in community for these special days within the church year, we will hold the world, this country, our city and church community in prayer.

We are trying to make the best of a difficult situation by providing worship, bible studies and words of encouragement through online resources. So once again, I am directing you to the three places below to stay connected. We will post a worship service on Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday, a bible study on Wednesdays, April 1 and April 8, and reading and reflection on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. To watch these video's you can find them in the following three places:

1. Luther Memorial Facebook Group page (if you are not included in our Facebook Group, search for "Luther Memorial Church Erie PA" and send a request to be included in the group and I will accept you when the request is made)
2. Luther Memorial's Church website under the "Resources" tab and then the "Sunday Morning Worship" tab. The church website is www.luthermemorialonline.org
3. Luther Memorial Church's YouTube Channel (Go to YouTube and search for Luther Memorial Church Erie PA)

I thank you for your continued financial offerings to this ministry. You are encouraged to consider what you would normally give each Sunday and make that same offering through the mail or through our webpage by going to the bottom of the page and clicking "Contribute Online". Also, I know that the Bethany Outreach Center very much will appreciate your continued support, as your giving to that organization is critical at this time. I thank you so much for your generosity.

You should also know that **we will not be mailing an April newsletter** because so much is uncertain for the month. Also, if you ordered Easter Flowers and once we are able to worship in our church again, we will have a special Sunday with lots of flowers to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus from his tomb, and our resurrection from the "tombs" of our homes!

Finally, a word of thanks to our staff and many volunteers who have been making and delivering food in a responsible way to those who may be limited in getting out of the house, or who need to stay home because of existing health concerns. Please keep checking in with one another with phone calls. Our staff has prepared a list of people we want to be checking in with, and if you hear of any need, please let us know. Thanks for all of your efforts so far! Remember that our building is closed but our church staff is working, so we can always be contacted.

Be well,
Pastor Bill Coleman

Coping with Stay at Home Orders

I hope all of you are following the Governor's orders to stay at home and coping with all that's going on, or should I say "not going on". I think we have all been well educated on the appropriate safe health procedures of COVID-19. I am concerned about the mental health affects this is having and will continue to have on all of us. Under the CDC website is a Coronavirus Disease-2019 page on how to Manage Anxiety and Stress. Their recommendations of things you can do to support yourself and family include:

- Take breaks from watching, reading or listening to news stories, including social media. Repeated stimulation can be upsetting. Focusing on the number of deaths can be very upsetting, so try to find the number of survivors. It is usually more.
- Take care of your body. Eat healthy well balanced meals. Get regular sleep and avoid alcohol and drugs. Exercise, even walking around the house will help, but the fresh air and seeing the crocuses and daffodils starting to bloom is good for the soul.
- Take time to unwind. Take deep breaths, stretch, meditate or PRAY.
- We can still connect with others. Go back to phone calls along with texts, messaging, and emails or face time. Share how you're feeling both physically and mentally.
- If you have children let them know its ok to be scared and upset. Help them develop skills to cope with this stress. And remember to remind yourself and your family that these strong feelings will fade.

We have all lived through many personal and worldwide tragedies and disasters and it will help to look at the "big picture" and be hopeful. In the ALOA (Adult Lutherans Organized for Action) newsletter, Mary Manz Simons writes: "We are moving through uncharted waters. Yet amid the chaos and confusion, God is present. The prophet, Elijah, looked for God in wind that shook a mountain, an earthquake that shattered rocks and in fire. But when he left his cave, he heard God speak in a soft whisper." As we hunker down in our 21st century caves, we too, can listen and look for God. He walks among us now!

Stay safe and healthy!

Blessings,
Linda Graffius, RN
Faith Community Nurse