



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

First and foremost, please know that you are all in our thoughts and prayers during this time of uncertainty and that we are here for you throughout the weeks and months to come. In times of fear and panic the Church is called to be a calm, healing presence as we witness to the hope faith and love that we share in Jesus.

In consultation with the bishop of our diocese, The Rt. Rev. Mark Bourlakas, and out of an abundance of caution for the health and well-being of our parishioners and visitors, we will only be offering worship services at St. Paul's. All other activities will be suspended until further notice. We will have worship at both the 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Sunday services, and we will offer a nursery during the 10:30 a.m. service. Everything else will be suspended, including Sunday school for all ages, Body and Soul Café, and Coffee hour. We will continue with our Wednesday Eucharist at 5:30 p.m. but will not have our Lenten program or shared meal afterwards. We are also suspending all nonessential meetings at this time. We will continue ongoing discussions in the days and weeks about future activities and keep you all informed.

We are also currently following the bishop's recommendation that the Peace should not be exchanged with a handshake or an embrace. Please stay in your seat and love your neighbor by sharing a wave and a smile.

During communion, we cannot allow intinction (dipping) of the host into the chalice to receive the wine. This may seem to be a safer way to receive the wine, but too often a fingertip will make contact with the wine, or a palm with the lip of the chalice, as this can lead to the unintentional spread of germs.

As a reminder, communion of one element (bread/host) is communion in full. If you prefer to pass on the wine, simply return to your pew after receiving the host, or cross your arms across your chest as a sign that you will not sip from the chalice. You are also welcome to receive a blessing, which is likewise a form of communion and a full form of grace. You are also welcome to stay in your seat during the distribution of communion if you so choose.

We will not pass the offering plates, but rather we will have them placed at the bottom of the steps of the sanctuary for you to place your offering in as you come up for communion, or after the service if you choose not to come forward during communion.

Physically greeting people, as much as you care for them, before and after worship, should be avoided.

As you are well aware, the situation and spread of the COVID-19 virus is changing rapidly. For those who feel vulnerable to this or any other illness, please know that your personal decision to remain home is honored and respected. If you are scheduled to serve on a Sunday morning, but prefer to stay home, please let our office know if possible. However, under these circumstances, we are prepared to proceed even if there is an unscheduled or unforeseen absence. In addition, we are in the process of setting up live streaming of our 10:30 a.m. service on Facebook to begin Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>.

We will continue to monitor the situation and communicate need-to-know information to you by email and on our website. In the meantime, please pray for all who struggle with illness and loss. It is our Christian responsibility and privilege to do so. You are all in our prayers as we travel through the uncertainty of this health crisis and we ask that you pray for each other and us as well as we continue to be Christ's body to the world around us.

In Christ,

Diane+, Todd+ Bill+

**For more information, we suggest these links for your use:**

**[Concerning COVID-19 - Presiding Bishop Curry & The Episcopal Church](#)**

**[Faith-Based Response to Epidemics - Episcopal Relief & Development](#)**

**[Coronavirus: Safety Tips for Religious Organizations - Church Insurance Company](#)**

