



**One in Christ Lutheran Paris**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Dear Sisters and Brothers of One in Christ Lutheran Parish,

First of all, we continue to pray for you and your families, for your health and well-being, during this unprecedented time in our world. The confirmed cases continue to grow. We grow more restless and do not have an end in sight. Now we are getting conflicting messages (from our government and our health departments) as to what to do next. We all know that at some point we need to re-enter and re-engage our communities, places of work and business, and our faith communities. But I think most of us are realizing that it will come with risk to others and our own families.

**Events and activities of One in Christ Lutheran Parish continue to be cancelled as public gatherings.** We will continue to have worship online and we have had meetings via Zoom or conference calls. We have postponed Vacation Bible School (with no set plans), confirmations (till October 25<sup>th</sup>), and Holy Communion/baptisms/weddings/funerals until appropriate.

Most things have not changed much, but we have a few questions/concerns to address.

### **Worship**

On Monday, Governor Reynolds indicated spiritual and religious gatherings are not prohibited (weddings and funerals are not included), but can meet following Health Department guidelines of social distancing, increased hygiene, etc. The Northeastern Iowa Synod strongly recommends that congregations do not resume gathering for worship for the time being.

At this time, we will not be resuming gathered worship, but will be looking for the time when it will be reasonably safe to do so. We will continue to provide a recorded worship by 10:30 am Sunday morning which can be watched at any time. This is on the One in Christ Lutheran Parish – Facebook page and YouTube channel. The bulletin and weekly announcements have been sent weekly to those for whom we have emails, and are on the [www.oneinchristlutheranparish.org](http://www.oneinchristlutheranparish.org) web page. (When we return to gathered worship, we plan to provide a “live streamed” worship saved in the above venues.)

### **Community Life and Care**

If we didn't know it before, we know it now – we like being with each other. Keep in contact ... give each other regular phone calls ... try Zoom (have that virtual “cup of coffee” as a group) if you can. Pray for one another. Introduce yourself (via a phone call) to somebody who don't know all that well but want to get to know.

Look out for one another. Some neighbors and friends are unemployed and underemployed because of all this, and might be financially stressed. If this continues to persist, these situations will become more common. Be sensitive to these situations and suggest they call the parish office – we have had some people offer a willingness to provide assistance.

## **Funerals**

We have had some family and friends die these past weeks, and families have chosen different ways to manage their circumstances. We can have funerals and graveside burials, but not more than 10 people can gather. Some of our local funeral homes have been live-streaming those events. Some families are planning gatherings later this summer.

## **Finances**

Thank you for your faithful and dedicated and regular financial response to our congregations. We are financially weathering the storm at this time. You can send your gift as a check to your congregation. Or you can use the electronic giving – Tithe.ly – phone app, donate button on the OIC webpage, or enter tithe.ly/give on your internet browser – these can be one-time gifts or a recurring gift.

As a parish we applied, was approved, and received the money from the Payroll Protection Program, a forgivable loan (part of the federal stimulus package for small businesses). This resource will provide us with some relief with our payroll expenses for fulltime parish employees in May and June. This does not cover all the parish nor congregational expenses during this time, nor does it cover congregational employees. Please continue to financial support your congregation(s) during this time as you are able.

## **Contact Information**

We have discovered during this time that not all our contact information is up-to-date. If you have not received an email with the announcements and bulletin, then we probably do not have your email. Please check your church directory to see if your phone number is correct. If you are willing, please share your cell phone number with us as well. Phone numbers will not be listed in the directory if you indicate that you don't want to do that. Please send any and all of this updated information to [oneinchrist@oneinchristlutheranparish.org](mailto:oneinchrist@oneinchristlutheranparish.org) or call 641-567-3550.

We have all learned these past weeks that information and plans change – regularly. 😊 The information we have been given has not always been consistent, so we are having to learn how to discern what information applies to us and how to apply it in our circumstances. So we are doing that. If you have questions/concerns, please call us.

God is with us! Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ!  
That God has promised!

In our Lord's service and ministry,  
Pastor Bill & Pastor Randy  
One in Christ Lutheran Parish