

March 19, 2020

Dear EULC Congregation,

This is the second letter from Executive Leadership team of the East Union Lutheran Church Council regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Last week we made the difficult decision to suspend Sunday Worship Services, Sunday School, Lenten Services and all other congregational activities as a result of the pandemic crisis. We remain deeply concerned that gathering for worship or community activities might result in illness for members of the congregation.

Nothing has improved in terms of the pandemic. Decisions about resuming EULC worship and activities will be guided by federal, state and local government decisions. We pledge to continue to monitor this situation and communicate with you frequently using emails and the EULC Facebook page. Jason Wieland and Josh Bugbee are working on providing the technology that allow Pastor Sarah to provide a weekly sermon/message.

WE NEED YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS!!

The most effective way for us to communicate with the EULC Congregation is by email. If we do not already have your email address on file, please send a message to the church office eastunionlc@gmail.com and we will add you to the distribution list. THANK YOU!!

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ANY INTERNET ACCESS AVAILABLE TO YOU PLEASE CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE TO REQUEST THAT **EULC UPDATE LETTERS** BE MAILED TO YOUR HOME.

CHURCH ACCESS and OFFICE HOURS

The church office hours will be limited and may be inconsistent. Anyone needing to access the Sanctuary or Fellowship Hall should call in advance. As stated earlier in the letter, all EULC activities and non-church activities normally occurring in the Fellowship Hall have been cancelled. The church office telephone number is 952-448-3450, or you can call any member of the Executive Committee.

CONTACTING PASTOR SARAH BUNGE

Pastor Sarah will be available by cell phone 763-957-9494, home phone 763-494-9552 or by email at pastorsarahbunge@gmail.com. Please contact her directly for any support you may need during these uncertain times. Hospitals, nursing homes and affected individual residences will not allow even a pastor to visit now. We want to keep our Pastor healthy too.

Here is a message from Pastor Sarah Bunge:

Hey Church Family! I miss you! Seriously, I do.

It has been fun though to see what some of you are up to these days through Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat. If you are on any of those, please search for me. And, if you are on Facebook, go to "Groups"—we have a Group called East Union Lutheran Church Members. That's a place where we can post more information than is publicly appropriate. Feel free to share prayer requests, grocery needs, and general help for one another.

If you miss my face, there are some videos available on Facebook and on our church website.

Please continue each of your Lenten disciplines during this time:

Pray—always good, pray for our church family, those with compromised immune systems, those working from home while also tending to kids, those who live alone, and our nursing home elders that are further isolated from their families and support networks.

Read Scripture—Psalm 23, 121, The Gospel of Matthew, The Beatitudes—It's all good, of course. And, any version of the Bible 'counts,' so whether it's a Kid's Bible, the NRSV, or The Message version, read on!

Give—you will read below an update from your Church Council. I am so proud that even in the midst of worship cancellations, your Council has voted to give money away to make sure local school children and families are fed. Generosity is a HUGE part of our faith. I hope you will be generous fiscally, but also generous with forgiveness, possessions, grace, talent, kindness, mercy, time, and joy.

Encourage—boy oh boy, we can all use encouragement. Be sure when you practice this piece of our faith to include those closest to you.

Serve—now is the time for all good folks to come to the aid of their neighbors.

Worship—check out the videos. Gather your family and worship together with any church's livestream or videos. An upside is you can worship in your pjs!

Invite—you can't invite people to worship right now, but you can share the pieces you receive from us.

Fast—it is a classic Lenten thing to do, but you all are already fasting from so much. As your Pastor, I hereby exempt you from fasting this Lent.

May you know God's Love for you is infinite and ultimate.

In that Mighty Love,
Pastor

NOTES FROM THE EULC COUNCIL MEETING – March 17, 2020

Church council met Tuesday March 17th at 6pm by conference call. In attendance: Kathy Schallberg, Jamie Scott, Jeri Bowers, Jane Matthesen, Paul Lundquist, Jason Wieland, Larry Cruse, Kent Hasse, and Pastor Sarah.

Council discussed establishing a committee for the kitchen remodel. The initial need is to create a game plan or vision of what should be completed as part of this remodel.

The other planned form of construction for 2020 is the front door project, which will begin in April. We won't know exactly how long it will take until the construction begins. The doors are completely funded by the congregation!

It was decided that the Easter Special offering will again be donated to the ELCA Clean Water Initiative. In addition, \$2,000 from current funds will be distributed to area food shelves or local efforts to feed children and families.

There was a lengthy discussion around the novel coronavirus and COVID19. This is a fluid effort by the church council so expect to hear more. Josh Bugbee and Jason Wieland are going to chair EULC efforts to stream and record video and audio for the congregation to continue to hear God's good word on a weekly basis.

The plant sale is still proceeding as planned, but council is keeping a close eye on the Minnesota Department of Health's recommendations to ensure we reduce the risk of transmitting an infectious disease amongst our members and community. The proceeds from the plant sale will be used to replace and improve the children's playground adjacent to the parish center. Please contact Jamie Scott or a member of the plant sale committee to find out more.

The Parish center will remain locked until further notice. No events with groups larger than 10 may be conducted using church facilities during this time, and must be arranged with the Executive Committee in advance. With the church closure, please contact the office via phone. The Council is exploring the best method to monitor the property for safety and security. A solution will be approved and installed in the month of April.

There was also continued discussion about the possibility of hosting a summer child care program for older school age children at the Fellowship Hall. It will be operated by Children of Tomorrow. There is no decision or action to report at this time.

The property committee is also researching a digital sign along the highway to replace the existing sign.

God's Peace,
Jason Wieland
Council Secretary

OFFERINGS

The financial life of East Union Lutheran will undoubtedly be affected by the suspension of services. We ask that you will continue to contribute to East Union Lutheran by either mailing your offering using the pre-addressed offering envelopes, or by going to the following website <https://get.tithe.ly>. All employees of the church will continue to be employed and compensated as planned.

Please feel free to contact any member of the Executive Committee with concerns regarding our decision. We ask you to pray for those who are already dealing with this illness, and for those whose lives are being negatively impacted by the necessary responses being enacted for the well-being of our local, national and world communities.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Sarah Bunge, 763-957-9494
President, Kent Hasse, 612-867-3620
Vice President, Larry Cruse, 952-913-6658
Secretary, Jason Wieland, 612-643-1702