
Letter for the week of April 6, 2020

1 message

Our Savior's Lutheran Church <mail@flocknote.com>

Fri, Apr 3, 2020 at 9:39 AM

Reply-To: Our Savior's Lutheran Church <6637004.6kumwlpjtwl4ibfi5qjwvrzizgxfwa4bz8f09umhwh2xh86ghx@reply.flocknote.com>

To: Merry Burris <Burris.Merry@gmail.com>



Our Saviour's Lutheran Church – Update for April 6, 2020

It is Holy Week, the week from Palm Sunday to Easter. It is the most important week of the year for Christians. We follow the events of the last week of Jesus' earthly ministry, the events that are the most significant for our faith – Jesus' arrest, trial, suffering, death and resurrection. The week is meant to be a time of focusing and renewing in faith.

I need to say that this is the strangest Holy Week I have ever experienced. I'm used to lots of worship services this week; I'm used to egg hunts and all sorts of arrangements being made for Easter Sunday. It is usually a busy and wonderful time for the church. That is not happening this year. Instead we stay home, connect as best we can, and wonder what the next days will bring.

I do believe that the message of Holy Week is vital for this year; in fact it is this Holy Week message that we most need to hear in the confusions and threats of our day. Holy Week tells us of the God who knows of the craziness and pains and threats of

this world. This God sends His Son into the midst of that. Jesus bears our sins and needs to a cross and suffers our death. But He rises with newness and life and hope. My goodness, this year we need that message of newness and life and hope!

We are going to lift up and proclaim this Holy Week message. Last Sunday, Palm Sunday, we had our regular sermon time on Facebook and the church website. We will post special messages and sermons on Facebook and the church website for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday also. Please be looking for them. And we have some special plans for our Easter celebration. We are adding some things to our Sunday morning posting for Easter in the hopes of more worship and joy. Be sure to look at what we are doing and share it with your friends.

Some additional thoughts. One of the sad realities of this crisis is that we aren't able to worship together. I wish that were not the case. I dearly miss worship. But for now community worship and communion just aren't possible. But they are coming back. They will be back, and as soon as we are able we are going to have some great and joyful worship celebrations at the church. One of the ideas we are exploring is sometime this spring or summer, when we can worship again, to schedule our own Holy Week and share together in all of these special services. I've never had Easter in June, but maybe this year.

And there are resources for our faith that we can and must make use of in this time. It is true that we can't worship together as we like. But we can read the Bible and pray and help people. Those are all ways of renewing and sharing in the faith. Please be in prayer. Most of us have extra time now, use some of that time to pray. Pray for our community, our nation, our world. Pray for all who suffer and for those who are leading the fight. Pray!

And read the Bible. Let me give you all a homework assignment. This week, read Luke's account of that first Easter. I'm going to be preaching from Luke on Easter Sunday, please read the story ahead of time. Luke's Easter story is found in Luke 22. Sometime this week please read it. And you can go even further. If you would, read the whole Passion story in Luke, the whole account of Jesus' suffering and death and resurrection. It is found in Luke 22-24. Try reading the whole thing. A great way to mark Holy Week this year is by getting into the Word of God.

It is a strange time. But our Lord is One who meets us in the midst of strange times, and who gives new life in strange times. Let's keep looking to Him!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Mark

Holy Week Worship/Sermons On-Line

We will be posting on-line sermons on Thursday, Friday, and next Sunday as we focus on Holy Week. Next Sunday's posting will be an expanded service to celebrate Easter. Please find and follow these on our congregation's website or Facebook page.

Giving Questions

A number of people have called to ask about how to give financially during this time. Let me share a couple of thoughts. First, some of our members are struggling with this financial crisis. Please, if you face this struggle, cut back on your giving. Sometimes circumstances require us to slow down on our giving, as we understand that. In fact if you are facing financial struggles, please give Pastor Mark a call.

But for those who are able to give there are two options. One is to simply send a check to the church. We are checking our mail regularly, so that is no problem.

And second, you can give electronically. We have added a new Giving page to our website. It is now easier than ever to give to OSLC. You have two ways to donate on our website:

Online: There is a window on the Giving page that uses our electronic payment processing vendor's application, GivePlus. Individuals can use the guest feature which allows for a one-time payment. Alternatively, individuals can create an account. Account holders can choose to create a one-time payment, or recurring payments, as well as, view payment history. You have an option of paying with a credit card or your bank account. The application is a safe and secure payment method.

Mobile Devices: GivePlus Mobile is the name of the app that our members can install on their cell phones. It has the same safety and functionality as the online application and the payment methods are the same. Our website has the links to download either the Android or Apple cell-phone app.

Quote from Martin Luther

I have a great quote from Martin Luther. Luther lived through a crisis with the plague. Here is some of what he wrote:

"I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me, and I have done what he has expected of me, and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me, however, I shall not avoid place or person but will

*go freely as stated above. See this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither
brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God."*

- In a pamphlet called "Whether One May Flee From A Deadly Plague" by Martin
Luther in 1527

I'm afraid that pandemics have been a fact of history for far too many centuries. May
God give us faith and good sense as we navigate the challenges of our day!



Sent by Merry Burris

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