

**St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church Newsletter**  
**May 2020**



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**Return to Worship**

- Pastor Sorenson

“By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion.... How shall we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” (Psalm 137:1, 4)

For the last six weeks, we have sat down and wept in our homes remembering our Zion, the house of the Lord, the church we call home. As we used computer screens to try to sing the Lord’s song and hear His Word, we realized that worship in our homes is indeed worship in a foreign land. For worship is not meant to be done apart from the communion of the saints. The Church is not meant to be separated from the building which has been set apart and consecrated as the place where heaven meets earth, where God comes to serve us.

Recognizing this, and striving to obey our governmental authorities while also loving our neighbor, the time has come for us to return to worship, albeit in a slightly different way. As we do so, please know upfront that we will continue to abide by and uphold the guidelines given to us by our government, provided those guidelines do not prevent us from proclaiming the Gospel. We also will be taking every precaution possible to ensure the safety of all who come to worship.

To that end, beginning this Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, at 9:00 AM we will hold a drive-in worship service. We will do the same thing on Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>. Following those two Sundays, we will re-evaluate what the revised guidelines are and how we will continue having worship services.

So, what will a drive-in worship service look like? On Sunday morning, you will come to the church and enter the parking lot on the west side of the church (the side with the sanctuary). As you come into the parking lot, an elder/usher will be there, wearing gloves and a mask, to give you a bulletin and direct you as to where to park. Simply roll down your window enough to grab your bulletin and proceed to your parking spot. They will also have an offering plate if you would like to give an offering that day. If so, please have your offering ready before you enter the parking lot to speed up the process.

You will park facing the shelter house. Once you arrive in your parking spot, tune your car radio to AM 750. You will be able to hear the entire service over your radio. At 9:00 AM the bell will ring and the service will begin. Simply listen to your radio and participate in the service, as printed in your bulletin, as you would any other Sunday. Speak the responses with your family and know that your brothers and sisters in the cars around you are doing the same!

With the service being broadcast over your car radio, and in order to follow the proper guidelines, we ask that you do a few things. First, please park about eight feet apart or roughly the equivalent of one parking space between you and the cars next to you. The elders/ushers will assist you in this. Second, please keep your windows up throughout the service. This is a necessary precaution to prevent spreading the disease unknowingly. Third, please do not leave your car before, during, or after the service. The urge will be great to get out and talk to one another, but please do not do this. Instead, smile, wave, and talk to each other on your cell phones before the service begins or after the service ends.

Finally, the worship services both weeks will be like regular non-communion services, but there will be an opportunity to receive communion following the service each week. When the service ends, I will make an announcement that if you would not like to receive communion, you are welcome to leave at that point. If you would like to receive communion, however, please stay where you are and we will do a brief Service of the Sacrament over the radio. Please know there is absolutely no pressure for you to receive communion at any point, but especially now. If you do not wish to receive it, feel uncomfortable receiving it, or feel unsafe receiving it, please know there is no guilt or shame whatsoever in leaving at this

point. No one will look down on you. No one will wonder why you left. You are also not despising the Sacrament by doing so. You are simply doing what you need to do based on your own situation and conscience. No one is ever forced to receive communion.

If you do stay for communion, the process will be as follows. Following the announcement, I will go into the Sacristy of the church building to prepare the elements. After a few minutes I will bring them out to the altar where we will do a brief Service of the Sacrament over the radio. Following the Words of Institution, I will bring the Lord's Supper to your car. The driver of the car will take the elements and distribute them to whoever is communing in their vehicle. Following the distribution to your car, I will give the sending blessing and you may leave the parking lot whenever you desire.

These drive-in services will be a little different than normal, but, I pray, they will be a blessing to us as we gather together again as the saints of God at the house of God. If you have any questions regarding these drive-in services or if there is anything else I can do for you during this time, please let me know. You have all been in my prayers constantly during these days. May the peace and joy of Christ's resurrection be with you now and always! For Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia!

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### **Bible Studies Online!**

During this period when we are unable to gather in person, join Pastor Sorenson online for weekly Bible studies.

- On **Tuesdays**, we will be studying a book of the Bible.
- On **Wednesdays**, we will be studying the upcoming Hymn of the Day.
- On **Thursdays**, we will be reading through portions of the Large Catechism.
- Each study begins at **2:00 PM** on the church Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/StPeterEvangelicalLutheranChurch>) and is also available to view in its entirety even after the study concludes.

### **Sermons and Devotional Resources:**

- Weekly sermons will be posted on our church website (<http://www.stpeterwaymansville.com>) on the sermon page under the "At St. Peter" tab. (Direct link to that page - [http://www.stpeterwaymansville.org/?page\\_id=417](http://www.stpeterwaymansville.org/?page_id=417))
- You can also find helpful resources for your home devotions on the "Devotional Resources" page under the "Resources" tab ([http://www.stpeterwaymansville.org/?page\\_id=489](http://www.stpeterwaymansville.org/?page_id=489)). Now is a great time to begin, continue, and strengthen a home devotional pattern by yourself and with your family.
- The April-June Portals of Prayer are now available in the narthex. You can drop by and pick one up or contact Pastor or the church office to have one delivered.

**Lord's Supper:** If you would like to receive the Lord's Supper during this time, please contact Pastor Sorenson via call, text, or email. His phone number is 812-371-1151 and his email is [pastoresorenson@gmail.com](mailto:pastoresorenson@gmail.com). He would be happy to meet you at the church for this purpose or to bring it to your home, making sure at all times to take the necessary safety precautions.

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May these resources assist you as you continue to hear the Word of God and cry out to Him in prayer.

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## **EVENTS & NEWS**

### **Cancelled Events:**

The following is a list of upcoming events that have been cancelled for the time being. Many will be rescheduled for a later date:

- May Book of Concord Study & Youth Group
- 5/9: Youth Golf Outing
- Strawberry Festival

### Library:

In an effort to build up our library and provide good theological resources for the congregation, we will have a special Book of the Month. The Book of the Month will be available in the Parish Hall library for you to look through and read. You may take the book home to read as well, but we ask that you please do not hold onto it for too long so other people can enjoy it as well. The May Book of the Month is *Being Lutheran: Living in the Faith You Have Received* by A. Trevor Sutton. Here is an excerpt from the book: "Personally, I am Lutheran because it means faithfully following Jesus. This confession allows me by the grace of God to follow Jesus so closely that I am stepping on the backs of His sandals. Thankfully, He does not mind. Following Jesus is not of my own doing; this is simply and totally the gift of God. I am Lutheran because this is the most faithful articulation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I am Lutheran because this is where the Gospel is clearly proclaimed, the Word of God is valued, the Sacraments are rightly administered, and the love of Christ is shared with others."

### FROM THE OFFICE

#### Electronic Donations:

During this time of absence from our services, if you would like to make contributions to the church through your personal online banking, it is very easy!

- Call the church office to get the church's bank account number. You **do not** have to give the church any of your personal banking information. Amy can be reached at (812) 342-4921 or (812) 390-2318.
- Use your own bank's online banking system to set up a transfer to the church account. Most systems will walk you through this set-up process step-by-step.
- This can be a one-time payment, something you do each week/as you can, or a recurring debit. Your online banking program will allow you to choose if the payment is recurring or not. This method of payment **does not** have to be something that is automatically deducted from your account. You can control when and how often you make a contribution.
- To assist in tracking and recording contributions to the correct contributor numbers, it is recommended that you send Amy an email ([amy@stpeterwaymansville.com](mailto:amy@stpeterwaymansville.com)) indicating the date and amount of the contribution. When online contributions are posted to the church's banks account, there is no identifying information about the sender.
- Don't hesitate to call Amy with further questions.

#### Contact Information:

Once we are able to join together in worship again, we would like to be able to contact everyone in a quick and timely manner. If you could please contact Amy or Pastor to update your contact information, especially phone number and email, that would help us tremendously and be greatly appreciated. Keep an eye on the church Facebook page for the most up-to-date information and help spread the word when that joyous day comes when we can come back together. Thank you!

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