HOLY TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH

November 2020

Dear Community of Holy Trinity,

In this season of thanksgiving, we want to express our gratitude for each of you and for your trust of Holy Trinity's leadership through this COVID-19 pandemic. Each decision has and continues to be made out of love for you and this church. Our decisions about our faith practices are made based three factors 1) our faith: the simple, yet profound words of Jesus to love God and love our neighbor, 2) the current health facts, and 3) the feelings of this community of faith.

The Minnesota Department of Health meets regularly with faith-based community leaders. During our most recent communication, the facilitators asked faith leaders to have bold leadership, believing their voices and communities can have influence at this critical time. Similarly, our Mayo Clinic regional leaders have encouraged us to share the latest report of our community health with you all. We are at the worst point yet in this COVID-19 pandemic and it is alarming: case numbers are rising exponentially, our health care system is struggling with facilities and staffing, and we are heading into a long winter with a challenging trajectory. Our prayers continue to be with those who are on the front-lines serving, as well as with those who are serving in research and development. A promising vaccine, as well as an antibody infusion, are both on the horizon. We marvel at how God has created us with gifts to develop such offerings.

Aware of the current reality, we are not without hope. Advent begins soon, the dawn of a new year in the church, and it is a season when we recognize hope is on the horizon. As people of faith, we hold onto this promise of hope.

Many of Paul's writings to the churches he loved contained words of encouragement: thanking them for their partnership in ministry, praying for them, asking them to care for each other, and to remain strong in faith. We are so proud of you, Holy Trinity. You have been faithful and flexible. For that, we say, "thank you" and encourage you to stay the course.

We recently invited you to share your feelings about our worship life together. There were a variety of feelings shared, and we appreciated all who took time to respond. After listening to faith, the current health facts, and your feelings- the Risk Management Team, Church Council, and pastors believe it is best to be vigilant at this time and remain in phase 2 of our COVID Preparedness Plan through the end of 2020. We will plan to review our plans monthly, or as otherwise necessary.

We keep the faith. We remain in hope. We proceed in love.

May the peace of God be within each of our hearts as God continues to lead us forward.

In Christ,
Pastors Alicia and Ben Hilding

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