



# MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

*We seek to answer God's call to love*

Senior Pastor: Andrew Plocher  
Associate Pastor: Molly Eversoll

Parish Administrator: Jennifer Dodge  
Administrative Assistant: Inga Banitt

January 21, 2022

Siblings in Christ,

After much deliberation, and with heavy hearts, the COVID-19 Task Force and Messiah's Council have decided to suspend in-person worship and all in-person gatherings beginning with 5:00 worship on Saturday, January 22nd. We will begin with a pause for four weeks. If cases have declined for two consecutive weeks during that time, we will be able to return to gathering together in person the weekend of February 19th & 20th. If not, a longer pause may be necessary. Our hope is that this will be a brief pause.

In coming to this decision we have taken into consideration: the rapid rise in COVID cases over the last two weeks, our hospital nearing maximum capacity (specifically the ICU), personal stories about the inability to receive needed medical care (for illnesses other than COVID) because of a hospital that is overwhelmed, the fact that the Omicron variant is highly transmissible and that even fully vaccinated people are at risk of infection and able to spread the infection, as well as our fervent desire to try to keep all of you safe and healthy. We also wish to be a role model to our wider community by taking the Omicron variant seriously and by doing what we can to slow the spread so that the healthcare system does not fail those in need. While we fully understand the importance of in-person worship on the spiritual, social, and psychological lives of our congregation, we believe that we must pause momentarily.

This change means:

- We will continue to hold 8:30 am worship over the radio and online through Vimeo, Facebook, and YouTube. Worship services will alternate between traditional and contemporary, but there will only be one service per weekend.
- All activities at the church will shift online (Zoom) or pause at least for the initial four weeks.
- Our congregational meeting will be postponed to March 6th.
- The February 12th confirmation retreat will be postponed until March 12th.
- Sunday school will move online.
- Communion can be picked up at the church or you can call (or email) the office to have it delivered to you (if you're in Marquette).
- Your continued financial support is necessary for our ministry. Your offering can be mailed, dropped off in the office (or the dropbox outside the main entrance), or made online. Thank you for your continued support!

Know that this has been a difficult decision for the COVID-19 Task Force, Council, and your Pastors. We ask that you please extend us grace, patience, and understanding. Please keep us in your prayers during this time, as you are in ours.



These continue to be challenging times full of fast-changing circumstances and new information. As from the beginning of the pandemic, Messiah's leadership is watching our region's situation closely as we discern how our congregational life and practices will continue to be faithful, safe, and compassionate. We are so grateful for the ways you continue to adapt, engage, and support Messiah and our ministries.

In faith and gratitude,

Pr. Andrew and Pr. Molly