

Dear Friends and Family of St. John's

As we continue to navigate this unique and uncertain time together, I would like to provide some recent updates from Bishop Susan Goff and other news from our congregation. I am deeply aware that communication and connection are more important than ever, and will be making every effort to keep you posted as circumstances change.

During a meeting with the clergy of the diocese this afternoon, Bishop Goff informed us that **churches in the diocese are directed to be closed for public worship at least through Easter Day, April 12.** Congregations are encouraged to continue finding ways to worship, pray and learn together during this period using the electronic technology available to us. In keeping with Governor Northam's ban on meetings over 10 people, church meetings and gatherings will be limited to 10 people or less, and encouraged to meet electronically if possible.

The clergy and staff at St. John's have already begun responding to these recommendations by offering our Sunday morning worship service online, and will now be preparing to offer our Holy Week services using similar technology. We are also offering Zoom technology for church meetings, which can be arranged by contacting me directly. In addition, beginning this evening, we will be offering an online service of Compline at 8:00 p.m. on Wednesday evenings. The details are provided below.

I would also like to share news from our deacon, David Curtis. As many of you may have heard through local news, a resident of Westminster Canterbury Richmond tested positive for COVID-19. David is a staff chaplain there, and he is following guidance and taking precautions to keep safe. He has been working at home for the past week.

Lastly, some of you have asked how you can provide support to St. John's, each other, and our neighbors during this time, and here are some ways to do that:

- Continue to participate in our on-line worship services and other opportunities for prayer and learning to be offered in the coming weeks. Those of you who were able to join us last week for our online Sunday morning service have expressed your gratitude for the true sense of community that you experienced. Let's continue to be present to one another through our shared worship.
- Be in touch with each other. Phone calls, emails, written notes, posts on Facebook are all ways for us to take care of each other and nurture our beloved community while apart.
- Help one another stay healthy by practicing social distancing. If you or someone you love is in need of assistance with errands, transportation, or supplies, please reach out.
- Drop off your Food pantry donations at the church this coming Saturday between 10:00 a.m. and noon at the 24th street entrance. The pantry is in need of saltines, Vienna sausages, canned fruit, and canned chicken.
- Be faithful with your pledge payments to St. John's, as you are able. We are very grateful to those who have sent in checks or made payments electronically, and a link will

be provided for everyone in the congregation on our website and in our newsletters. Do not hesitate to call the parish office if you need assistance.

In closing, let us pray,

*O God of peace, you have taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength: By the might of your Spirit lift us, we pray, to your presence, where we may be still and know that you are God; **Amen.***

In Christ,

Amelie+