



CHRIST CHURCH WASHINGTON PARISH

AN EPISCOPAL CHURCH LOCATED ON CAPITOL HILL

March 18, 2020

Dear Christ Church Family,

I am writing to you to let you know of further developments in the closure policy of our Diocese, and the immediate effect it will have on Christ Church. As of yesterday, March 16th, Bishop Mariann ordered all Episcopal Churches in the Washington Diocese to stop all worship services and gatherings until MAY 16th.

This means that Palm Sunday, Holy Week, and Easter Worship service gatherings will not be happening as previously planned. However, our Staff, Vestry, and Liturgists, are looking into how we can still make it possible for everyone to participate in all of these services through media we are now investigating.

In the meantime, this presents a unique challenge to our life as a church family. I say unique, because even though it presents a real hardship, it also presents us with the chance to find new ways of celebrating worship, creating opportunities to fellowship, and doing outreach for those in need. Just because our buildings are temporarily shuttered is no reason to stop being The Church; God's people who do God's work in the world, our neighborhood, and with each other.

We can do this! We will do this! We will recover and thrive! All because of what Bishop Mariann has reminded us: this crisis will pass. No matter how this present storm may toss our church, Jesus is in this boat with us, and he has ultimate command over the wind and the waves, and our future!

The letter below is an edited version of Bishop Mariann's letter to the clergy of the Diocese. Other than the parts specifically for the clergy, all of it follows.

Courage,

Rick+

Bishop Mariann extends suspension of public worship until May 16

March 16, 2020

The Lord is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved . . .

Psalm 46:1-2

Dear Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Washington,

In keeping with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's most recent recommendation to cancel or postpone all gatherings of 50 or people for the next 8 weeks and in consultation with the Presiding Bishop, **I am instructing all public services and other church gatherings be suspended until May 16th.**

The spiritual, pastoral and financial implications of this pandemic are beyond what any of us can fully grasp or predict. But you belong to a diocesan community and we are in this together.

The diocesan staff are working to address financial hardships, coordinate resources, and ensure needed care, doing all we can to ease the load for you and your people.

The storm we are in will one day pass and getting through it is our primary task. How we pray now, how we lead now, how we support one another and our people now, how we serve our community in Christ's name now will inform our future ministries far longer than the storm itself.

Remember that Jesus is in the boat with us.

Faithfully,

Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde