



59 Grand Blvd., Scarsdale, NY 10583 (914) 472-4252 www.gracelutheranscarsdale.org

Pastoral Message – March 13, 2020
Suspension of Worship and Event at Grace
To curtail spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Members and Friends of Grace Lutheran Church:

Peace be with you.

In these days of high anxiety, it is the support of our faith community and our care for each other that becomes lifegiving. With the spread of the Coronavirus within Westchester County and the greater New York area, Grace leadership has determined it would be best to suspend worship for the next two Sundays – March 15 and 22 and conduct all church meetings on-line or by conference call. We will continue to evaluate these suspensions and keep you informed in the days ahead.

We are taking these actions out of the utmost caution, hoping to help slow the spread of the virus and flatten the curve of the infection rate. At the current time we are not aware of any members, school families or church/school staff confirmed with Coronavirus (Covid-19), nor are there any reported cases in the Eastchester Unified School District. However, with confirmed cases and school closings in Scarsdale and New Rochelle schools, the Eastchester Unified School District announce closure for Monday to Wednesday next week. Myself (Pastor Ann), Gigi (Creative Playtime Director) and Julia (Creative Playtime Board President) determined it would be best for Creative Playtime at Grace to close for all of next week and inform parents on Thursday about a possible second week. Thus, to limit the number of people in the building and to take care of additional cleaning in the school and church by your cleaning services, Anjali (Council President of Grace) and I determined we should also suspend worship for two Sundays. The AA group has also been informed they will need to suspend meetings.

Finding creative new ways for us to connect will be important in the days ahead. While health precautions call for social distancing (3 to 6 feet between us all with no handshaking or hug, etc...), we DO NOT have to be socially isolated. I am currently investigating the best platform to live stream a message on Sunday morning at our regular 10 am worship time. Please watch upcoming e-letter for details on how to connect.

If you are not getting my regular e-letter (*New for the People*), please call or email so I can get you connected. The council members established an emergency e-mail / telephone chain and will be connecting with all members to inform them of the suspension, but more importantly to check on everyone. Please let us know any way we can be of assistance. Please also call me if you or a family member becomes ill. I can be reached by email at pastor@gracelutheranscarsdale.org or my cell phone at 917-923-9520. Don't hesitate to reach out... let's stay connected as *The Living Body of Christ*.

Pastor Marsh Drege, Executive Director of Seafarer's and International House, had been scheduled to supply preach next Sunday. When I reached out to let him know we are suspending worship, he emailed back words of encouragement and shared this prayer that has provided support in times like these...

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 76)

May this prayer and the love of God surrounding us in community, sustain us.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann" followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature area.

Pastor Ann