



Trinity Parish Church, from Jeffrey Gill on March 7, 2020 at 2:05 pm

An important pastoral announcement regarding services at Trinity

Beloved in Christ,

The coronavirus situation here in our region has been a matter of utmost concern and attention these past days and weeks. As you know from our previous communications to all of you, we are doing our best to tend to the safety of all in our community, and to be the best stewards we can be of your trust and the trust of our wider community as we make decisions. All indications are that while we are most definitely in the midst of a public health crisis, we can, by following the best advice available to us, help to mitigate the spread of this virus and minimize its effects on our local and the wider community.

With that in mind, we have decided to cancel Sunday services this week and for as many weeks as may be necessary moving forward. We have done this in consultation with guidelines issued by King County and health officials, and with our own vestry and medical and public health professionals within our community. We believe it is in the best interests of everyone for the following reasons:

- The number of vulnerable people in our community, including persons over the age of sixty, those who are immune-compromised, people dealing with underlying chronic health conditions, those who are pregnant, and others who are vulnerable due to lack of access to health care;
- Our inability to guarantee six feet of personal space to each individual gathering for services;
- The challenges of providing the required safeguards in our facilities, including handwashing stations at entrances and keeping all surfaces disinfected at all times.

While we have not based our decision on what other churches are doing, it is the case that at least two other downtown Seattle churches have cancelled their Sunday services for the coming weeks. Foregoing the services and sacraments at the heart of our life together is a difficult step for all of us to take. Besides the public health concern, however, we feel strongly that Trinity bear the burdens and face the challenges of this crisis as the unified body of Christ that we aspire to be. For that reason, we have aimed to avoid steps that would exclude some members and segments of our community. We will work to carry on our shared life in the church, and invite your creativity and collaboration as we do so.

In addition to Sunday closure, we have also implemented the following measures:

- The Thrift Shop has closed until further notice, except that options are being explored for continuing to provide socks to our homeless customers who depend on the shop for clean socks.
- We are working closely with WHEEL to provide the safest possible spaces for those who depend on us for shelter, using the best advice of public health officials, and with the assistance of our own staff for assistance with their cleaning procedures.
- Friday Bible study has been cancelled until further notice. However, our weekly eNews will continue to provide a link to the Sunday lectionary as always, where people are encouraged to “read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest” the scriptures from their homes. Questions, comments, discussion on the lectionary may be facilitated through another medium if there are people who would like to engage in this.
- Our weekday Eucharists on Wednesday and Thursday are cancelled until further notice.
- Caring Community has been cancelled for next week.
- Next week’s vestry meeting will be held at its regular time via conference call. Information will be sent to the vestry.
- Some of our musical groups have already cancelled events through the end of March; others are still in the process of making decisions about this. We will post information about these events in our weekly eNews.

How will we cope with the negative effects of these cancellations?

- “Virtual” services – beginning this Sunday with a copy of the bulletin we had planned being sent to you later today, together with the sermon and the Sunday Chimes. On subsequent Sundays we hope to be able to offer a live service via Facebook Live Video. This is likely to be a Morning Prayer service, again with a bulletin prepared for your use. Stay tuned! And if you are not a Facebook user, it will be posted afterward to YouTube with links provided to you from the website or emails to the congregation.
- Increased pastoral connection via phone to those who are isolated from community;
- Regular communication to the parish about events, including when we are able to resume Sunday services;
- A gentle reminder that our not having services does not decrease our expenses, and that sustained giving is still necessary to our health and vitality as a parish. [You can give online here.](#)

Meanwhile, let us continue in our prayers for one another and for our community. Feel free to submit prayer requests for yourself or others that we can share with the parish during this time. Please send them to office@trinityseattle.org. Pray also for

those who are sick and dying from this virus, and for all who are caring for them, and all who are working to keep it from spreading – public officials and all medical and public health professionals. Pray for their wisdom and guidance, and for their strength and perseverance through this difficult time.

And please know that you all remain in our prayers as we face this difficult time. **Let's do our best to care for one another, check in on anyone you feel may be isolated or alone by calling them or dropping them a note.** And do keep us informed of any health-related challenges that you are facing so that we may pray for you or offer pastoral support in other ways.

God is with us! And may we all know the strength of God's love and mercy.

Faithfully,

Jeffrey Gill, Rector Luke Parker, Senior Warden

Resources

Follow this link to resources on our diocesan website: <https://ecww.org/covid-19-updates/>

A Coronavirus Prayer (from America magazine)

Jesus Christ, healer of all, stay by our side in this time of uncertainty and sorrow.

Be with those who have died from the virus. May they be at rest with you in your eternal peace.

Be with the families of those who are sick or have died. As they worry and grieve, defend them from illness and despair. May they know your peace.

Be with the doctors, nurses, researchers and all medical professionals who seek to heal and help those affected and who put themselves at risk in the process. May they know your protection and peace.

Be with the leaders of all nations. Give them the foresight to act with charity and true concern for the well-being of the people they are meant to serve. Give them the wisdom to invest in long-term solutions that will help prepare for or prevent future outbreaks. May they know your peace, as they work together to achieve it on earth.

Whether we are home or abroad, surrounded by many people suffering from this illness or only a few, Jesus Christ, stay with us as we endure and mourn, persist and prepare. In place of our anxiety, give us your peace.

Jesus Christ, heal us.