



St. Luke's Episcopal Church

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March 17, 2020

Brothers & Sisters in Christ,

It is with a heavy heart that I must report that I, in consultation with and the support of the Vestry, have decided to cancel all church services through April 1, 2020. This includes Sunday services and the Lenten dinners. The Choral Evensong currently scheduled for March 22 will be re-scheduled for a later date. However, one of the more important ministries in which St. Luke's engages, Room in the Inn, is currently still scheduled to go forward.

This decision is made after much reflection and in consultation with medical sources. Sunday, when the Vestry met, the CDC advised avoiding crowds of over 100 people. Before the end of the day, the CDC revised that guideline to avoiding crowds over 50 people. This situation is volatile and continues to evolve. As I write this, there are 52 confirmed cases in the State of Tennessee, jumping from 39 the previous day. Only two confirmed cases have been reported in West Tennessee, and both are in Shelby County. That being said, the virus has almost certainly spread much wider, and prudence dictates action to be taken to avoid further spread.

Christianity is a religion of community. Christ's greatest commandment is for us to love one another as he loves us. (John 13:34). This love is what marks us as Christians. So, although we will not gather for at least the next two weeks, that does not mean we should isolate ourselves. I encourage you to reach out to one another. We live in an age of unlimited communications options; use them. Especially if you are sick, let us know. Help us keep up with you. Please know that social distancing does not equal social isolation. And as new information becomes available and decision are made, I will communicate those to you as quickly as possible.

Hopefully, this will pass quickly and we will be able to gather and celebrate the rising of our Lord. Until then, take care of yourselves, and take care of each other.

In Christ,

Lee R. Sparks,
Senior Warden