Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Transforming Lives and Building Community by Loving God and Serving Others

1390 East Larpenteur Avenue E.
St. Paul, MN 55109

office@orlcmn.org
www.orlcmn.org

651-772-2445
Fax 651-771-4548

We are here for each other!

Welcome to our Weekly Communication Update: March 25, 2020

Office Closure – As a result of the Governor's 'Stay at Home' Order for Minnesotans, our office will be closed beginning March 28 through April 10. However, the Our Redeemer staff will be working from home as well as checking office phone messages and stopping in to pick up the mail. Please feel welcome to reach out to them during this challenging time:

Pastor Karsten - karstenn@comcast.net	651-772-2445,	ext. 102
Deacon Jennifer – schneider1650@gmail.com	"	ext. 103
Finance Administrator, Lisa – Lisa@orlcmn.org	"	ext. 101
Office Administrator, Sally– office@orlcmn.org	"	ext. 101

Communication – We are sending out a weekly information (this) page every Wednesday with recent news and updates. This will come via email to the 2/3 of the congregation for whom we have emails and be sent in U.S. Mail to the other 1/3. We will also send via email only a smaller 'later in the week' communication to help us stay connected. At the end of the month, we will send out a smaller version of *The Good Newsletter*. We invite you to send in any information you may wish to include before Monday, March 30 to Sally at office@orlcmn.org.

Worship – With our social distancing in effect and now required shelter in place, you are invited to join a video-based worship service this Sunday at 10:00 a.m. by clicking on this link: http://bit.ly/ORLCMNyoutube. Last week we had almost 60 folks watching, and according to analytics from our YouTube page, it has been viewed—at least in part—almost 200 times. *(Note: We are keeping last Sunday's YouTube service in the link so you are able to view it at your convenience. Previous sermons are also available on our website.)*

Every week we are also sending out a 'Home Church' bulletin (click HERE) that you can use to lead your own worship at home – it is complete with some song words, scripture with questions, and prayers.

Send us Your Photos to Share! – We miss seeing and being with each other on Sundays and on other days of the week during our smaller events. On Sunday mornings, as well as in our weekly updates, we are going to share pictures of members during this challenging time. Send us a photo of yourself or your family from these recent weeks, and we will share them with our members. Email photos to Sally at office@orlcmn.org.

Church Directory Photos are Postponed– *Lifetouch* has cancelled our photo sessions scheduled this upcoming Friday and Saturday (March 27-28). We have tentatively rescheduled this to take place September 18 and 19, and we will let you know when you can go online to make a new appointment. If you signed up, you will be receiving an email notice and phone call from us about the cancellation.

Wednesday Meals – Our Redeemer is continuing to provide free community meals through the Loaves & Fishes program. This program is deemed an 'essential program' by the State and therefore will continue during this Coronavirus pandemic. Everyone is welcome! You are encouraged to stop by between 5:30-6:30 p.m. every Wednesday and pick up a "to go" meal. If you are interested in helping with cooking/serving/cleaning in order to make this ministry happen, please call the church at 651-772-2445 or email office@orlcmn.org.

Calling One Another – As we have begun making calls to our membership, we found there is such delight in being able to connect, even if it is only through a phone call. Most people share that they are doing fairly well making the necessary healthy changes and don't need much help, but being remembered and reaching out is appreciated. If you are able, consider being part of this web of care by try calling a few people—church members, friends, family, neighbors—this week just to say hi and visit.

"Ways to Care" – Can you Help? Or do you need Help? – As we have been making contact with our members and hearing about some of their specific needs, we are inviting you to consider helping them out. Or, if you would like someone to reach out to you to help you with special needs (driving/delivery, home repair, yard work, etc.), we encourage you to let us know. Call 651-772-2445 or email office@orlcmn.org.

Here are some specific needs we currently know of from our members, so please contact us if you can help out:

- Getting a computer up and working again
- Helping contact creditors with overdue bills
- Getting food delivered

Send us Prayer Requests – We can't emphasize enough that we are here for you! We continue to pray for all of you, but if you have a special prayer request, please email Pastor Karsten at karstenn@comcast.net or call him directly at 651-772-2445 ext. 102. If you would like your name added to a prayer list organized by Judy Koza, you can email her at jlk8888@outlook.com or call the office at 651-772-2445 and we will get the message to her. (Your name can be kept confidential in this prayer list if you wish.) Let Judy or us know if you would like to be a part of her prayer group receiving the requests.

Join us for Bible study
Every Wednesday from 9:30-10:30 a.m., join us remotely for Bible Study from your phone or computer as we use Zoom Meetings to draw us together. To participate, go to zoom.com and set up an account. This will be the link (https://zoom.us/ent?zcid=3172) which you can access to join us Wednesday mornings where we will discuss the upcoming Sunday text. You will see small pictures of the others who will participate. You can listen in but also join in conversation. Come try a new way to be the church.

The Call for Volunteer Help - As so many organizations are looking for help during this time, consider these places with some specific and important ways to volunteer:

Lutheran Social Service - https://www.lssmn.org/get-involved/volunteer
Interfaith Action (Project Home) - https://interfaithaction.org/2020/03/12/changes-in-interfaith-action-programs-due-to-covid-19/

What I miss (from Pastor Karsten) – Church feels different when I come in the doors. I realize I miss many things (and you probably do too). I miss: singing with a community (listening to me try to sing solo is not great), hugs and high fives and even fist bumps, the hum of people visiting together, those ½ donuts and rolls, hearing and studying more about world hunger, sharing study time together on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and simply seeing faces. What we are doing is necessary, but I await with eager anticipation the time when we are together again.

Our Redeemer's "First" YouTube Worship Service in the making…..

Pastor Karsten thanks all of you who watched our first YouTube production, and those who assisted him: Amy Lindquist, Cherie Kilbride, Dean & Diana Ersfeld, Hilary Hinrichs, Deacon Jennifer, Joe France, and Sally.

Please send Sally your photos! This is what happens when Sally isn't around people. Jesus had to come down to help her out for a photo shoot, landing appropriately near the plaque of Matthew 28:20, "Behold, I am with you always." (And to feed her chocolates—the office favorite during this season—Lindt for Lent.) Sally misses YOU!

Keeping us Tied Together Fridays! March 27

Communication – In these days of the Coronavirus pandemic, we know that information is helpful both from our elected leaders on this issue, and also from your church to help keep us tied together while we are unable to gather. We will send out a more extensive news/update piece on Wednesdays (via email and U.S. mail to those on mailing list) and a shorter one on Fridays (email only). Since next Wednesday is the beginning of a new month, the Wednesday mailing will serve as both the extensive update and a mini version of *The Good Newsletter*.

The church is temporarily closed – For these next two weeks as part of the expectations around the 'shelter in place' order, all of our meetings have either been cancelled or are happening via other formats such as phone calls or zoom meetings. The one thing that is continuing to happen is the Wednesday night *Loaves and Fishes* meals – this is deemed an essential service and is provided as a takeout meal at the front door. You are all welcome to come and pick up a "to go" meal as well.

Please know that we encourage you to call and leave messages for any of the staff, or to reach us via email:

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Worship –We invite you to consider utilizing one of two options we are providing. On Sundays, we are producing a 10:00 a.m. live worship (this is allowed even in this 'shelter at home' state), which can be viewed by clicking this link http://bit.ly/ORLCMNyoutube or going to *YouTube* and searching for Our Redeemer St Paul. We are also including a 'Home Church' (click HERE) format that you can use in your own personal setting.

Offerings – Your sustained financial support is important for the continued life and work of Our Redeemer, so please consider sending your offering either via mail to the church office, or by online giving (click HERE) (www.orlcmn.org/donate) either through an automatic withdraw from your bank or other financial institution or via a credit card. (There is a minimal charge deducted using a credit card. There is no charge going through a financial institution, which also allows the option of making a one-time donation or recurring.) You can also access it by going to our website at www.orlcmn.org and locating the "Make Donate" button at the lower right area of the first page.

Zoom & Bible Study– If you haven't heard about or tried connecting virtually through "Zoom," you may want to check it out. There is so much happening with individuals, organizations, and churches that by using this format it allows everyone to be connected virtually. This format allows people to log in together with either just a sound connection or visually seeing live pictures of others making for a good interactive meeting. Pastor Karsten used Zoom this past week on several occasions to connect 1:1 with another pastor, to participate with 9 others for a Long-Range Planning Team meeting, and to communicate with over 50 people for an Isaiah meeting. We will begin holding weekly **Bible Study** meetings on Wednesdays, **9:30-10:30 a.m.** for any who are interested. Sign up with Zoom on your computer or smartphone (zoom.com) and then use this link to join us: https://us04web.zoom.us/j/6392460217.