Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I pray this congregational update finds you well and resting in the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As you are well aware by now COVID-19 has had a profound impact upon day to day activities within our communities.  Congregations and ministries too have felt the impact.  While our goal will be to ensure that Word and Sacrament Ministries continue, careful thought will be given to how this will look for the foreseeable future.  Last night, Praise Lutheran/Little Praiser leaders met to identify a plan for moving forward that allows for us to continue our Gospel ministries while following the guidelines and recommendations of national, state, and community leaders who are closely monitoring the health needs of our communities.

Thus, the following steps will be take effect immediately:

* All in-person ministry functions, meals, events, educational gatherings, and Worship services will temporarily be suspended.
* Worship services (beginning with tomorrow evening's 7pm Wednesday service) will move to an electronic audio/video format.  More specifically, we will be utilizing our real time feature connected with Praise Lutheran's Facebook page (click this link to access:  <https://www.facebook.com/praiselutheranchurchFW/> )  Our Wednesday (7pm) and Sunday morning (10:30am) services will continue as scheduled from this electronic platform.
* Bulletins and Worship liturgy will continue to serve as additional resources for those joining us for our online Wednesday and Sunday services.  If you are not yet receiving our worship bulletins in an electronic format and would like to have access to such, please email the church office at: office@praiselutheran.org
* As for Distribution of Holy Communion we will be exploring further options to ensure that this precious means of grace continues to God's people.  The Chancel Area of our Sanctuary space will serve as our controlled/cleaned area for Distribution during the week.  This area will see very limited foot traffic during the weeks ahead and will continue to be cleaned with the help of our scheduled cleaning company.  Additional considerations and directions will be shared at a later time.
* During our leadership meeting we discussed the valuable opportunity set before us to continue ministering to those in our congregation. school, and community who may have needs such as groceries, supplies, etc.  Over the upcoming days we will be developing an online opportunity to submit expressions of need that others in the congregation have agreed to assist with.  You are also encouraged to call the church office at 260-490-7729 to pass along expressions of need for yourself, your family, or someone you know.
* At a time like this when many are electing to self-isolate, we recognize all the more need to stay connected with one another.  Over the days to come, your church leadership and I will be making follow up phone calls to learn how you are doing, pray with you, enjoy conversation, pass along God's Word, and mutually build one another up.  If you would like to join other leaders and me in contacting folks please let me know.
* Little Praisers will continue to operate throughout the week in a way that sees us serving those in our community who are serving us (medical staff, health care professionals, law enforcement, etc.) Through the leadership of our program proactive steps are already being taken to ensure the health and well-being of those who enter/leave our campus and facility.  Effective this week, Little Praisers will limit activities to the school's wing of our shared campus and facilities.  Here too, our scheduled cleaning staff will be playing a vital role in the health and care of our Praise/Little Praisers community.
* Please be sure to stay up to date by visiting our congregation's website ([www.praiselutheran.org](http://www.praiselutheran.org/)) or Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/praiselutheranchurchFW/>).

While reports and recommendations continue to spill forth resulting in changes within our nation and community, we rest in the comfort and direction of God's Word for us.  Here, we are reminded of what will never change: God's love for you.  As St. Paul reminds us:

**38**For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, **39**neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38-39)

God's grace, mercy, and peace be yours in abundance through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Pastor Seth Korte