

Here is the latest synod statement concerning our current health situation:

How will congregations handle government restrictions on public gatherings?

Various governmental bodies have either advised or mandated that no public meetings with more than 50 people can be held. Additional restrictions may be imposed in the future. Some may be asking the question, “Is this a time when we should obey God rather than men?”

A couple things should be remembered.

1. The Fourth and Fifth Commandments apply in a situation like this. We are to obey and respect the governing authorities as they carry out their God-given responsibilities, and we are to do all we can to protect our neighbor and keep him from harm.
2. At the same time God certainly desires that Christians gather together regularly for worship.
3. In limiting the size of worship gatherings, the government is not attempting to deny our freedom of religion. Rather, government authorities have issued mandates that they believe will protect citizens from harm.
4. Since all of these biblical principles are valid, it is legitimate for our congregations to strive to comply with governmental regulations on the one hand and, on the other, to find alternate means to enable God’s people to be fed with Word and Sacrament.

WELS Conference of Presidents

Sooooo....

As a congregation we need to try to balance our confidence in God’s care and protection with respect for others and the advice of our government.

For this reason, your congregational leaders propose that (at least for the time being) we plan to continue holding our public worship services while encouraging our people, for the present, and as much as possible to participate in our services using our live stream web broadcast at www.starlutheran.org.

Those who plan on attending our services in person will certainly practice good hygiene before, during and after the services. We will try to practice “social distancing,” attempting to maintain six feet between ourselves and other people. We will greet people with a smile and a wave. No snacks or coffee will be offered. We will place the offering plate on a pew in the back and people can leave their offerings in the plate before or after the services.

Please stay home if you are in a demographic identified as vulnerable. And, of course, stay home if you are ill or not feeling well. God has blessed us with skilled and compassionate medical professionals to help us in times like this, so please avail yourselves of their services.

I have cancelled ESL for the foreseeable future. We will also be forgoing the Fellowship meals (including Easter brunch) for the time being.

If the situation changes and we need to go to 100% digital worship, it would not be because we are not trusting God’s protecting care. Rather, we would be making that decision out of love for others and respect for the advice of the government.

As things progress, please continue to pray and to do so with the sure confidence that our loving Father in heaven hears and answers.

Your servant in Christ, Pastor Michael Foley