



St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church

Prairie du Chien, WI



Mission and Ministry at St. Peter during the Covid-19 Pandemic:

(Updated March 25th, 2020)

“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.” -Isaiah 41:10

Our shared ministries here at St. Peter are vital. It is also vital to work together to protect the most vulnerable in our communities, particularly our elderly members and those with underlying health conditions. In addition, we are under a “Safer at Home” order from the Wisconsin Governor that limits the size of our gatherings to fewer than 10 people and asks for as much of our work as possible to be done remotely or virtually in order to slow the spread of Covid-19.

In light of the Covid-19 Pandemic and the “Safer at Home” order, the Church Council has decided on some temporary changes. The Church Council believes the temporary changes are truly in the best interest of all, particularly our most vulnerable. We are a part of a community effort to save lives, and I am so proud of all that you and your families are doing as a part of that effort. The Church Council will continue to evaluate these changes with the hope of us all returning to gathering together for worship and ministry opportunities as soon as safely possible. **Please watch for updates via Facebook, Email, radio, and our website.**

Church Building Use: While the “Safer at Home Order” is in effect, the church building will be open ***only*** to staff for use throughout the week and to the small worship teams that are helping with broadcasting/streaming worship services. Other in-person meetings are discouraged at this time.

Worship: We are broadcasting live at 9am Sunday mornings via 104.3 FM and 980 AM and streaming through our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/stpeterpdc/) using a small team of 3-7 people. If you are not able to watch live, the Facebook stream is also available to view later in the day/week (click on “videos” within our Facebook page). Bulletins for the services will be available on our website (www.stpeterpdc.org/). Lenten services (Wednesdays at 6:30pm) and Maundy Thursday (6:30pm) and Good Friday (6:30pm) services will also be broadcast on the radio and live-streamed on Facebook (click on the Facebook link on our website). In-person worship is temporarily suspended.

Pastoral Care: Please do not hesitate to reach out to the office at 608-326-6411 if you or someone you know could use assistance. The plan is to continue to staff the church office for the purposes of communication, planning, and pastoral care. Staff members will also be encouraged to work from home when able. If staff members are working from home, calls will be forwarded to staff members, so the staff will continue to be accessible during business hours. Pastoral Care will take place over the phone or in virtual ways whenever possible. If we have a death in the congregation during this time, we will need to follow the current health guidelines set out by the state, which means we will likely be limited to fewer than 10 people total for the gathering; we will likely need to have a small family service now with the possibility of planning a larger memorial service at a later time.

Christian Education and Fellowship Ministries: Sunday School, Confirmation, Lenten Meals, Church Choir, etc. are temporarily cancelled. Groups are encouraged to seek out ways to connect over the phone and in virtual ways through Facebook, Zoom, etc. We will be reaching out to families via email and Facebook regarding opportunities for connecting virtually and accessing home-based discipleship resources: here is a family devotional that could get you started: <https://www.wichurches.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Pandemic-Hope-Devotional.pdf> We also continue to offer a weekly devotion on WPRE radio at 104.3 FM and 980 AM at about 9:15am on Wednesday mornings.

Committees and Leadership Teams: All committees, volunteer groups, and leadership teams are encouraged to seek out ways to connect over the phone, via email, and in virtual ways through Facebook, Zoom, etc. All in-person meetings are discouraged at this time.

Staying Connected: The Council formed a Covid-19 Response Team to address congregation and community concerns. One of our first action steps is that we are creating a phone tree to connect with members. We will be reaching out to you soon to check-in. ***Please make sure that the church office has your most up-to-date email address and phone number.*** We will continue to think creatively about how we can best care for one another and stay connected during this time; please share your ideas with us.

Serving our Community: We offered Come For Supper in March as Take-Out only, and this went very well; thank you to the volunteers that worked together to offer that important meal. Our Covid-19 Response Team has reached out to local schools and county services to offer our help; we are on their lists, and they know that we are willing and able to mobilize volunteers to help address community needs. Individual members are checking in on one another via the phone and Facebook and dropping off food for those sheltering in place. The Council approved a request to have St. Peter serve as a potential drive-through Covid-19 testing site; we have not yet heard if they have chosen our site. We have members that are ready to be called upon if we know of members of the church or community that are in need of having groceries, supplies, or medicines delivered; we are currently researching the best approach to do this.

Offering: As the congregation continues its mission to bring the love of God in Christ Jesus to all, we are finding new ways to do it while staying safe. Our congregation needs to feel your support not only through your prayers and your care for your neighbors, but also through your continued generosity in financial giving. There are three options for continuing to support the operations and ministries of St. Peter and our mission partners during these difficult and unprecedented times.

1. You can mail your check to the church at 201 S Michigan St., Prairie du Chien, WI 53821.
2. You can give through Simply Giving, an automated online giving program we have used successfully for years here at St. Peter. An authorization form is included with this newsletter, or you can find it online at https://htlcpls.org/website/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/vanco_auth_form1.pdf
3. You can also set up an offering at your bank using free Bill Pay service to have the bank print and mail your check to the church.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to the church office (608-326-6411), Pastor Miranda, or the Church Council with needs, concerns, or ways the church can be helpful to you in this uncertain time.

How You Can Show Love in These Times:

- Wash hands & use hand sanitizer.
- Stay home as much as possible.
- Check on others over the phone.
- Listen for ways to help provide for the needs of others.
- Stay Connected- please let the office know your latest contact information.
- Continue to give offering to support our ministry now and in the future. There will be some members that need to decrease giving at this time, so for those members who are able to increase giving at this time we invite you to do so in order for us to continue to support our ministry and our mission partners.
- Contact the office if you are or someone you know is in need of pastoral care, is in need of help picking up groceries or medications, or has other needs the church might assist with.
- Pray, knowing that God is near to you and hears you.
- Trust God- Joshua 1:9 tells us to "Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for God is with us."