

To: Zion Lutheran Church  
From: Vacancy Pastor Pflughoeft  
Regarding: All Church Activities Cancelled Due to COVID-19  
Date: March 21, 2020

Dear Members of Zion Lutheran Church,

With the consensus of our church President and the Board of Elders, and at the suggestion of our synod that, for the next two weeks, we be as restrictive as possible, I'm writing to announce that all church activities, including our Sunday and midweek worship services, are cancelled through Friday, April 3. Lord willing, we'll resume our regular church activities on Sunday, April 5.

On Thursday, March 19, the Wyoming Department of Health issued a "Statewide Public Health Order" closing various business. Although this Order doesn't close the churches, please consider some of what it says:

- "COVID-19. . .can result in severe disease including hospitalization, admission, admission to an intensive care unit, and death, especially among older adults and persons with serious underlying health conditions";
- "On March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a national emergency";
- "On March 13, 2020, Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon declared a State of Emergency and Public Health Emergency";
- "A significant number of Wyoming citizens are at risk of serious health complications. . .even asymptomatic persons with COViD-19 place other vulnerable members of the public at significant risk";
- "Exemptions. . .may be granted. . .if the business can demonstrate. . .that they will limit customers within the business to no more than ten at any given time, that at least 6 feet of space will be maintained between customers at all times, and that effective cleaning will be performed between customers";
- "Any person or legal entity that violates this Order shall be subject to criminal prosecution."

(continued)

Although the “letter” of this Order doesn’t apply to the churches, the “spirit” of this Order does and is clear, that our federal, state, and local governments are working hard to try to stop the spread of COVID-19 by limiting, necessarily, the contact we have with one another.

Accordingly, I, with our church President and the Board of Elders, believe that we have a responsibility to submit to the “spirit” of this Order and to help our governments in their work; the Apostle Paul wrote, “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. . .the one who is in authority. . .is God’s servant for your good” (Romans 13:1, 3, 4; also, the Fourth Commandment and the Fifth Commandment).

Lord willing, between Sunday, March 22, and Friday, April 3, I’ll be providing you with:

- An online Sunday worship service (through “Worship Anew,” broadcast from our Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana; please visit [www.worshipanew.org](http://www.worshipanew.org) to watch the service on Sunday, March 22, and Sunday, March 29);
- A daily devotion posted to Zion’s website (these devotions will emphasize how our Lord God Triune uses suffering to fix our attention on the Gospel of Jesus Christ and, through this Gospel, to strengthen our Christian faith);

Also, Lord willing, I’ll continue working from my church office. Please feel free to call (office, 334-2336; home, 334-2287) or email ([stpauls@wyoming.com](mailto:stpauls@wyoming.com)). And, should you have an emergency need for pastoral care, please don’t hesitate to contact me. I’m happy to come and help.

Together in Jesus Christ,  
Vacancy Pastor Pflughoeft

“Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22);

“In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:6-7);