



On 31st Street between Minnehaha and 28th Avenues Minneapolis, MN 55406 • 612-729-8358 • office@htlcmpls.org • www.htlcmpls.org  
WORSHIP SERVICES: 8:45 and 11:00 a.m. • EDUCATION: 10:00 a.m. • Ingrid C. A. Rasmussen and Angela T. Khabeb, Pastors

## MESSAGE FROM PASTORS

As the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation evolves, we are in conversation with the staff, Council leadership, and Holy Trinity's resident public health experts. We are also monitoring the CDCs recommendations and suggestions from the State of Minnesota.

We find ourselves at a crossroads. Minnesota is now recommending the suspension of public gatherings (large gatherings with 250+ people and smaller gatherings with fewer than 250 people that are held in settings that do not allow social distancing of six feet per person). Experts say that collective action may help to flatten the virus' growth curve, which, in turn, has the potential to decrease the risk to those most vulnerable to the disease (e.g., the aged, those with underlying health conditions).

**It is out of our deep and abiding love for the neighbor that, effective immediately, we are cancelling Sunday and Wednesday worship, all programming, committee and working group meetings, choirs, and other events until April 1, 2020.** We have been in conversation with our building partners, including MetroWork Center, Bright Prospects Cooperative Preschool, Lutheran Volunteer Corps, the Minnesota Swahili Christian Congregation, and local organizations that use our facility throughout the week. All of them have chosen to cease programming by Wednesday, March 18.

We know this will be hard news to digest, particularly for a congregation that prides itself for gathering every week even as blizzards rage around us! Gathering is central to our understanding of Christian community; so much life, hope, and love is created when we are together at Holy Trinity. We know that many of you depend on worship for sustenance; the gathering, the Word, and Holy Communion give you nourishment for life's journey.

We trust that God will continue to guide our ministry during this time. Watch your email, our website, and social media for weekly updates about online worship and other opportunities for connection. Our faithful staff will continue to serve, even as we sanitize and maintain the building. Some staff may choose to work remotely, and we encourage anyone who feels sick or vulnerable to stay home. As a matter of justice, we will continue to pay all employees, including hourly wage earners, even if hours shift.

One of the implications of canceling Sunday morning worship is that our regular offering will not be collected. It's essential to support our staff and keep current with our responsibilities. Even in the midst of uncertainty, we are called to be generous. Please mail your offering to the church or give electronically (click on the "donate" button at htlcmpls.org). Knowing that our income could be impacted, we invite those with extra resources to consider making a special gift.

—Pastors Ingrid and Angela

## FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT

### READINGS

Samuel 16:1-13, Psalm 23, Ephesians 5:8-14, John 9:1-41

**ADULT FORUMS ARE CANCELED MARCH 22 AND 29**

### A LITANY FOR THE CORONAVIRUS

Creator God of the universe, God of a thousand names and faces, divine source of health and wholeness, whose compassion embraces the entire community of Earth: behold your fearful people all over the world as we confront the coronavirus. Out of the depths we cry to you, O God. Holy God, hear our voices. Let your ear be attentive to our cries as we pray for all who may be affected by the virus:

For all health caregivers – nurses, physicians, aides, EMTs, paramedics, technicians and therapists; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

For hospital and nursing home medical staff, assistants, and housekeepers who have close contact with patients and for the patients themselves; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

For all who travel for their daily work over land and sea and through the air—flight attendants, pilots, ship captains and sailors, bus drivers, passengers and long distance truck drivers; out of the depths, O God—

For all who handle money—bankers, supermarket, village market and convenience store cashiers; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

For all who pump gas and serve customers at Interstate rest areas; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

For restaurant workers—bartenders, coffee shop baristas, cooks, servers, chefs, and dishwashers; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

For hospitality workers—hotel and motel receptionists, servers and housekeepers; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

For daycare center staff who cuddle and comfort children and for all children; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

For teachers and professors, coaches and cafeteria workers at schools and universities across the world and students everywhere; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

For the homeless huddling for warmth over steam grates and under urban bridges; for the poor, the lonely, the vulnerable, migrants, and the isolated elderly who have no protectors; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

(cont. on back page)

## PARISH INFORMATION

For clergy and people who eat the bread of life, drink from the common cup and pass the sign of peace; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

For all who have tested positive, all who are waiting for test results, and all who are quarantined; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

For all who have already died of the coronavirus, now free from pain and suffering. May the God of hope carry them all the way home, and comfort their families and friends; out of the depths, O God—

**We cry out to you. Protect them.**

Loving God, hasten the day when the virus will have run its course; quicken scientists to develop medications and vaccines; call out the best instincts of your people—love, neighborliness, compassion, and a sense of caring for every member of your beloved community on Earth. We pray out of the depths to you, O God of hope, **Amen.**

### COMMUNITY CHURCH NEWSLETTER MOVING ONLINE

Until COVID-19 clears, our staff needs to make adjustments to our communication methods. ***This will be the final paper Community Church mailing for the foreseeable future.*** We will begin *emailing* the Community Church next week. All member households will receive the email automatically (if we have your email address). A link to the Community Church can be found on our website ([htlcmpls.org](http://htlcmpls.org)). If you are a regular reader but not a member and would like to continue receiving the Community Church Newsletter, please send the following information to us by email ([sroberts@htlcmpls.org](mailto:sroberts@htlcmpls.org)). We would be happy to include you!

\*Name(s)

\*Email address(es)

\*Mailing Address

\*Tell us about your connection to Holy Trinity (e.g., former member, live in the neighborhood, interested in the ministry).

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### PARISH EVENTS March 22-28, 2020

All events are canceled for this week.

#### HELP FROM OTHER MEMBERS

Do you need help with an errand? Please let us know. A few members have volunteered to assist those in need. On your computer, go to [forms.gle/X1m9Q8LM3Gdrb6Li8](https://forms.gle/X1m9Q8LM3Gdrb6Li8) and fill out the form or call the church office (612-729-8358). Someone will contact you within 48 hours.

#### SIMPLE SUNDAY WORSHIP

Physical distance does not mean disengagement. God has given us creative capacities for such a time as this. To view a simple Sunday worship service (recorded, not live), type this link into your browser: [vimeo.com/397723958](https://vimeo.com/397723958).

#### REACH OUT

The pastors and staff are going to use this period of time to connect with all member households by phone or by email. We invite you to check-in with your Holy Trinity pew mates, as well. Have you been curious about someone with whom you share the peace? Send them an email. Have you admired someone's gifts? Send them a note of encouragement. When the disease clears, let us look back at this time in our congregational history as a moment when we grew in vulnerability, trust, and relationship. We may be immobilized, but the Spirit is on the move. This Lent, let's be attentive to where she's leading us.

#### PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

Let us pray: O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**