



Monday, June 1, 2020

Brothers and Sisters in Christ and friends in the Ottumwa area,

All events at First Lutheran will continue to be proactively suspended until at least the end of June. This means that worship services and any meetings will be held using *only* online formats.

While restrictions on in-person worship gatherings have been lifted, the governor's guidelines require diligence in social distancing, sanitization, and hygiene measures. This combined with the scarcity of cleaning supplies for cleaning after worship gatherings is the reason for our decision.

While this whole situation has been a test of our patience and faith, it has also reminded us that God is ultimately in control. The silver lining in all of it is that God has led us to a new way of sharing the Gospel and connecting with people through online worship and social media. People with health risks and shut-ins have expressed their appreciation for being able to receive and participate in worship. Online has also been a wonderful way to connect with people from across the miles who would not have had a chance to connect with us under normal circumstances.

Once we start meeting in-person again, we are committed to keeping & improving our online worship formats.

Here's what we are asking YOU to continue to DO:

1. Feel free to share any information we share with you
2. Invest in your spiritual nourishment through God-Time in your home through the steps of Engage, Connect, Share, Pray (see the church's website for explanation)
3. Pray that God's presence would be made known through our church and our people in a way that others will come to know the compassion of Jesus
4. Invite an acquaintance to join us for online Chapel and Worship
5. Pray for our government leaders, our neighbors, and those directly affected by this illness
6. Check in with shut-ins and at-risk acquaintances
7. Continue to support the church financially so that, together, we can continue to renew hope in the community. Offerings can now be submitted online through the church's website:  
[www.RenewingHopeOttumwa.org](http://www.RenewingHopeOttumwa.org)

May God strengthen us so that we can be a blessing to others.

If you need to connect with me, please call or text me at 641-954-2753.

God's peace be with you!  
Pastor Mark