



The Standing Committee of The Episcopal Diocese of North Dakota

The Rev Dr John Floberg
The Very Rev Mark Strobel
The Rev Dn Terry Overbo

Mr. Donald Henderson
Mr. Robert Fox
Dr. Christie Iverson

March 30, 2020

Dear Diocesan Community:

Last evening the Standing Committee met via Zoom with a significant piece of our agenda being the Covid-19s effects on the church.

We are extending the cancelation of public worship in our congregations through April 30. We are encouraging clergy/congregations to make use of virtual worship services via Facebook or other electronic means. We wish to be supportive of reasonable plans that are safe and theologically responsible. Some with larger parking lots are considering gathering there and remaining in their vehicles while broadcasting the service. We don't know of a way to distribute communion to groups of people and continue to advise against the practice.

The parameters of our direction follow the advice of the CDC as well as State and Tribal Authorities. Keeps 6' from contact with anyone. Remain with those people that live with you. Don't be in groups of more than 10 people and observe the 6' rule. Disinfect before going out. Disinfect while being out. Disinfect when returning home. Disinfect things that you come into contact.

We aren't looking for creative ways of getting around the guidelines that have been established for our community's safety. We are interested to learn of creative solutions to be the church in worship and ministry in this time of necessary social distancing.

The Cathedral, St. Paul's in Grand Forks, St. Stephen's in Fargo, St. George's in Bismarck and Standing Rock through St. Luke's Facebook page have been posting livestream/recorded video worship services. There are scores of others outside of the diocese doing this as well. Hundreds of people are viewing each of these offerings.

Our prayers were offered for you and all of the diocese. We are doing our best and we remain open to the Spirit's creativity to continue to constitute the church in this place and in this time.

Please be sure to have your congregation send in their Our Fair Share reports. The Finance Committee is closely watching the financial well-being of our congregations in this crisis. They can only respond based on reports that are shared.

God's blessing and protective hand be with us all.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Floberg".

The Rev Dr John Floberg
Standing Committee President