



Late May, 2020

Dear ones,

We continue to live in unprecedented times. Each of us struggles during the pandemic: with daily living, with our work, with managing family responsibilities. We struggle because we cannot gather for worship and all the other activities that characterize our life together as Lutheran Christians at Trinity. In these difficult days we each attempt to make decisions that balance our need or desire to move about in society with both our personal safety and the greater good.

At Trinity, the Moving Forward task force is meeting regularly to assemble and synthesize information and to translate that information into a plan for our activities in the coming weeks, months, or perhaps even longer. With the information that is available, we attempt to assess risk. But we are a congregation of God's church, and so our primary and central concern is to continue to safely honor Trinity's mission statement in this unprecedented time:

1. How do we function as disciples of Christ?
2. How do we make new disciples of Christ?
3. How do we make a positive difference in our community?

Trinity's Tuesday morning Bible study is currently working through the New Testament book of Acts, studying the way God inspired those early followers of Jesus to come together to continue Jesus's work in the world. These verses remind us about "time," and that we are called by the Spirit to act faithfully, even when we don't know the way forward. We can be witnesses in unexpected ways and places:

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom...?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:6-8 NRSV)

We want a schedule, a timeline, a plan. But this is a time in our individual lives and in our life as God's people in God's church when we are forced to wait. We can only move ahead carefully, without a real idea of when things will happen, without even really knowing where we are going.

We've been getting used to that since March. We may not like it, but it is our reality. Around us, governments are allowing businesses to gradually re-open. This is in many ways good news for us. Yet, the novel coronavirus remains active. People continue to get sick and even die. There is risk associated with many activities that we used to take for granted.

Regardless of how limited we are, how confined to our homes, whether or not we are able to worship together in our sanctuary, we remain the church of God whose purpose is to share God's love in the world. *The church has never closed!*



As the path of the pandemic continues to evolve, we'll follow the best science and government recommendations to make decisions about our activities at Trinity. The Trinity Moving Forward task force will continue to meet for as long as needed, working in conjunction with the Trinity Council. We will communicate with you regularly via letters, the *Good News*, and the *Lantern*. As we are able, we'll present a plan with a timeline—recognizing that any such plans and timelines are subject to change!

We also invite your input! The enclosed survey asks just a few simple questions about how we'll interact together as we begin to gather again. As the task force makes recommendations to council, your input will help guide our thinking. Please mail your completed survey to Trinity or scan/snap and email to office@trinitycincy.org. You may phone the office if you'd like to give your answers to someone over the phone. Please complete and return by Sunday, June 7.

In addition to the survey, please share your thoughts, frustrations, and hopes for Trinity as God's church in the world on Kinney Avenue in Mt. Healthy. Please feel free to phone the office and leave a voice mail, mail a letter to Trinity, or send an email to or phone any of the task force members.

Know that even as we are apart, or seeing one another via *Zoom*, you're in my prayers. With you, I long for the day when we'll be able to be together again. But for now, we continue to share God's love by helping to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

Be well,

Pastor Jodi

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