From the Rector of Church of Our Saviour
Regarding COVID-19 Virus Precautions

Dear Folks:

Issues regarding the coronavirus have dramatically changed this week. Bp. Lee has asked that Episcopalians throughout the Diocese of Chicago suspend all person-to-person gathering until further notice. We at COS have been preparing for this possibility and will comply immediately. Click here to read the bishop's entire message.

It's still important that we continue, as best we can, to be a Christian congregation making our journey through Lent and on to a celebration of our Lord's resurrection at Easter. Below I'll go through all the upcoming programs and worship opportunities. In general, there will be no gathering of groups of people here in either the church proper or in the parish hall. However, we are working on ways that those interested in participating in worship or parish programming can connect virtually:

THIS WEEKEND

- Marriage Prep: Will continue as scheduled
- Episcopal Rosary: Cancelled - we will endeavor to make the booklets available online
- Altar Guild: Cancelled until further notice
- Sunday Worship: All masses cancelled-there will be an online video of the Sunday service, with homily, available that day on our Facebook page, and there will be a link to this page from our web site as well.
- 9:00 and 10:45 music rehearsals: Cancelled - choristers and band members will be kept informed by the music leaders
- Sunday School: Cancelled until further notice
- Nursery: Closed until further notice
- Adult Confirmation: There will be no gatherings of the adult Confirmation class until after the public health emergency abates, however, Brian will send weekly updates in the interim

REGULAR WEEKDAY ACTIVITIES

- Sunday Worship: Though there will be no public gathering, we will be offering a virtual worship experience each week, this week on our Facebook page, perhaps on other platforms as well in the future
- Care For Friends Programs: Please contact the Care For Friends office at 773.932.1010 for the most recent updates
- Sacred Ground Chicago: Sacred Ground Chicago programming will not be presented at COS until further notice. For more information, contact Sacred Ground at 773.549.5033
- Morning Glories: Cancelled-please contact Betsy Peterson for more information
- Staff Meeting: The staff will continue to be in the office on Tuesday mornings, and continue to be available by email. Other in-house staff gatherings will be minimal, though they will occur at various times through the week according to need
- Tuesday Morning Prayer: Cancelled until further notice
- Wednesday Tai Chi: Tai Chi will meet not at COS until the public health emergency abates. Please contact Daniel Thatcher for additional information
- Wednesday Yoga: Yoga will not meet at COS until the public health emergency abates. Please contact Gary Alexander for additional information
- Wednesday AA: Because AA is a vital part of health within the recovery community, we will not be canceling AA's regularly scheduled times at COS. For more information, however, the AA coordinator should be contacted
• Wednesday Vestry: The Vestry will not meet at COS in-person. Vestry members will be informed shortly about how the group will be gathering virtually, probably at the same time
• Wednesday Centering Prayer: Cancelled—please contact Sena Leikvold or Shannon Page for more information
• Thursday Lenten Program: Cancelled. Charlotte Long, this year's program speaker, will be making some virtual materials available. More information to come.

LOOKING AHEAD TO HOLY WEEK

At this time we do not know when person-to-person events will begin again at Episcopal churches in Chicago. It is important to remember that we have made this decision out of compassion for the world we share with others. It will be a loss for all of us, and we'll each feel it in one way or another. Holy Week is a particularly important time for the church, whether your household is deeply engaged in it all week long or simply looks forward to Easter Sunday itself. The bishop has cancelled the Chrism Mass on the Tuesday of Holy Week. We will follow suit and, at this time cancel the following:

• The Monday Reconciliation Mass
• The Wednesday Tenebrae Service
• The Thursday parish potluck supper

At this point we are still doing all of the following:

• The Tuesday Senior High Mass at 6:15 p.m.
• The Thursday night proper liturgy for Maundy Thursday—now moved to 6:15 p.m.
• The one-hour Watch at the Tomb following the Mandy Thursday liturgy
• The newly-planned Benediction service at the end of the Watch
• Stations of the Cross at 7:00 a.m. on Good Friday
• Morning Prayer on Good Friday at 8:00 a.m.
• Catechesis Holy Week Reflection at 11:00 a.m. on Good Friday
• Rosary and Three-hour open time in the church, 12:15 to 2:30 p.m. on Good Friday
• 10:45 choir rehearsal at 2:30 on Good Friday
• The liturgy of the day on Good Friday at 6:15 p.m.
• The Word at the Tomb at 9:00 a.m. on Holy Saturday
• All the regular liturgies on Easter Sunday morning, including the Easter Egg Hunt at 10:15 a.m.

This is a difficult time for us who love our association with COS. As a priest, not being part of Christian gatherings—both in the church at Sunday mass and in all the amazing COS programming that occurs every week—is a very sad reality. I will miss every time we gather until we are all together again.

I do want to reiterate what I said earlier this week. I will gladly visit any home if requested. We all must take special precautions to ensure each other's health, but within those limitations, I'm happy to be available. Please contact Katie Spero to make appointments for me to visit any of you at any time for any reason.

We will endeavor to stay in touch as a community that, for the next period of time, will be gathering in spirit and via the internet. My prayers and love for all of you remain as though I was seeing you for the pre-viral hugs we are now forgoing.

Pax,
Brian Hastings