



North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

November 5, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

Peace be with you!

Yesterday, 100,000 new cases of COVID-19 were reported in the United States and 4,000 new cases were reported in Michigan. These numbers are part of an alarming trend of cases throughout the United States and we are once again called to take action and do our part in reducing the spread and impact of this virus.

Given this sharp increase in cases, I am joining the Southeast Michigan Synod in strongly recommending that congregations suspend indoor in-person worship starting November 15, 2020. I make this recommendation in order to protect our congregation members, rostered ministers, and the general public.

I know this recommendation will be a disappointment for many in our Synod. These past few months have been challenging and I know we all are eager to return to normal. However, as Christians, we are called to love, protect, and care for our neighbors and we must remain vigilant in reducing the spread of this virus. Wearing masks, keeping social distance, and refraining from indoor in-person worship are ways we embody Jesus' love and care for one another.

Pastors Rosanne, David, and I will continue to provide video sermons for congregations' virtual worship services and be available via phone, email, and Zoom. We will continue to watch the number of cases in Michigan and re-visit this recommendation as needed. As we continue forward, please know that you are surrounded in God's love and held in my prayers.

Eternal God, amid all the turmoil and changes of the world your love is steadfast and your strength never fails. In this time of danger and trouble, be to us a sure guardian and rock of defense. Guide the leaders of our nation with your wisdom, comfort those in distress, and grant us courage and hope to face the future; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

- *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

Peace,

The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Ph.D., Bishop