

# St. George's Episcopal Church

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Called to Serve

March 19, 2020

SAINT JOSEPH

Dear St Georgians; colleagues in ministry,

This is a time of recollection and prevention. The onslaught of the Coronavirus disease discovered in 2019 (COVID-19)—a coronavirus like the viruses that lead to SARS or MERS—has corralled my thoughts. Our current situation reminds me of the plague story of Moses, the Israelites and Pharaoh in the book of Exodus. It describes ten disasters inflicted on Egypt by Yahweh, the God of Israel, in order to force the Pharaoh to allow the Israelites to depart from slavery; they serve as "signs and marvels" given by God to answer Pharaoh's taunt that he does not know Yahweh: "The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD."

Now I'm not suggesting that we are like Egypt's Pharaoh, but I am suggesting we SHOULD take precautions to prevent COVID-19 from infecting us. Therefore, based on the facts about COVID-19 and the recent motion by the Diocesan Standing Committee and further action by your Vestry, we are suspending all public worship until further notice. Should things change we will re-evaluate our preventative measures.

Your Vestry took these measures to err on the side of prevention: all activities at St George's Episcopal Memorial Church will be suspended until April 1. This includes, but is not limited to, worship, meals, group gatherings, etc. However, we will be streaming our worship services on our Facebook page ([Facebook.com/St.Georges.Episcopal.Bismarck](https://www.facebook.com/St.Georges.Episcopal.Bismarck)) and website (<https://stgeorges-bismarck.org/>) during this time. Also, announcements for the good of congregation will be periodically posted on our website.

- To access our services on our Facebook page, go to: [Facebook.com/St.Georges.Episcopal.Bismarck](https://www.facebook.com/St.Georges.Episcopal.Bismarck). Then click on "pages" at the top of the page to get to our home page. In the middle of the page, go to "posts" and click on it. Then scroll down to the date you would like to watch and click on the video's picture. If you have any questions, contact Ted Poppke via text or call at 701.516.4282 or at [admin@stgeorges-bismarck.org](mailto:admin@stgeorges-bismarck.org).
- To access the stream of our services on our website, go to: <https://stgeorges-bismarck.org>. Then page down to "Sermons" and click on the date you are searching for. Then click on the ">" to start the video. You may have to adjust your volume.

Believe me when I say that your leadership is not taking this decision lightly.

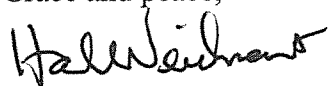
This is not a time to panic, but to take important precautions to reduce the spread of COVID-19 like: social distancing of at least 6', handwashing, and improved cleaning. I also encourage you to keep track of each other through phone calls, written notes and through social

media. I will be doing my best to check up on your fellow St Georgians and have instructed your Vestry to do the same.

I believe this is a time for the church to embrace a motive of the common good, taking these precautions for the health of others. That's really the message I would like for St Georgians to embrace—understanding that we do these protective measures—social distancing, handwashing, praying for each other, etc., —for the sake of those of us who are vulnerable. It's an act of charity and love, for the “least of these.”

If you have any questions, need to add someone to our prayer list, request a visit or call my me or our pastoral care committee, call the office at 701.223.1942 or my cellphone at 605.390.3570.

Grace and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hal Weidman". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

The Rev'd Canon Hal Weidman  
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