

June 23, 2020

Dear Immanuel Members,

Greetings to you and peace from your church leaders. We trust and pray you and your family are safe and well. If you have a specific need, please contact your church family for assistance.

Idaho is presently in Stage 4 (June 13 – June 26) of Governor Brad Little’s ***Idaho Rebounds—Our Path to Prosperity***. Governor Little will host a press conference regarding ***Idaho Rebounds—Our Path to Prosperity*** at 12:00 pm on Thursday, June 25, 2020. The conference will be streamed to the public through Idaho Public Television and online.

But yesterday (Monday), significantly increasing COVID-19 infections in Ada County prompted Central District Health (CDH) to issue an order for **Ada County to return to Stage 3 operations, effective at 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, June 24, 2020**. For a copy of the Order, go to:

<https://cdhd.idaho.gov/pdfs/cd/Coronavirus/Order/CDH%20Ada%20County%20Quarantine%20and%20Restriction%20Order%206%2022%2020.pdf>

The CDH Order for Ada County includes some variations from the Idaho Stage 3 conditions:

- Ada County bars and nightclubs will NOT be allowed to remain open.
- Large venue gatherings in Ada County (concert venues, sporting venues, parades, festivals, etc.) are prohibited.
- Gatherings of more than 50 people, both public and private, should be avoided. People participating in gatherings of 50 or fewer people, while permitted, should adhere to social distancing & sanitation and wear face masks.
- Individuals not residing within the same household shall maintain at least six-foot distancing from other individuals whenever possible.
- All Ada County employers shall:
 - Ensure measures are in place so that employees and customers maintain at least six-foot physical distancing from other individuals whenever possible.
 - Provide adequate sanitation and personal hygiene for employees, vendors, and patrons; and
 - Frequently disinfect commonly touched and high-traffic areas and regularly clean those areas.
 - Visits to senior living facilities, the Ada County Jail and state correctional facilities are prohibited. Those employees and providers who do interact with residents, patients and inmates must adhere to strict protocols regarding hygiene and infection prevention.

Our Immanuel COVID-19 Task Force continues meeting regularly and interpreting the latest expert guidance from the CDC, State of Idaho, ELCA, ELCA Northwest Intermountain Synod,

and ELCA Treasure Valley Cluster COVID-19 Task Force. We are closely monitoring the effects of “opening up Idaho” under Stage 4 of the statewide reopening plan. We are also closely monitoring Ada County’s move back from Stage 4 to Stage 3 operations, effective June 24, 2020.

The Immanuel COVID-19 Task Force is working on specific plans for resuming in-person worship. There are many details to work out but rest assured, the safety of our congregation members is our primary concern. We will consider resuming in-person worship only after we have reached the lowest level of acceptable risk and when the recommended policies & procedures are in place, but not before July 19, 2020. As usual, we will continue to update you weekly and as conditions change.

We encourage you to check out our online worship services via YouTube. They have been well received and help us stay connected to our church family. There is a mixture of indoor and outdoor film footage, spiritual messaging from Pastor Gretchen and the worship assistants, as well as a variety of beautiful and stirring music provided by our musicians and vocalists. You can participate in online worship any time after you receive the link to the worship video (sent via email every Saturday). Access the online worship services via YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-4BoIBt8lOqbqDnZF7LUPA>.

If you would like to take communion in your home, you can follow along with Pastor Gretchen during the online worship service. Bishop Kristen Kuempel of our Northwest Intermountain Synod ELCA provided a document regarding Holy Communion during extraordinary times as a helpful guide and reference. To view that document go to <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5af9bf757e3c3a51713bb137/t/5e876ca71b82d754a85dec58/1585933550958/SpiritandLife.pdf>.

For today’s devotional message and prayer, I encourage you to view Casey Cross’s timely article in the Treasure Valley Prays website entitled, “Where Were You?”, by clicking accessing the website <https://tvprays.org/where-were-you>.

God’s Peace to you and your family,

Les Gieselman, President
Immanuel Lutheran Church