



# Ascension Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Rev. Christina Auch, Pastor

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Grace and peace to you, siblings in Christ.

On Saturday, the NC Synod Council shared these recommendations with congregations and leaders.

As we reviewed our Core Values and Vision Statement, we noted that the last line of that vision is “all for the sake of the world.” With great sadness yet with firm conviction that for now, love for the world God so loves looks like an empty church building, we commend these three strong recommendations—even expectations.

- Following the directives of President Trump, Governor Cooper, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), we urge no gatherings of more than 10 people in any NC Synod congregation.
- Following the CDC and the recommendations this week of our ecumenical partners, we recommend this “no gatherings of more than 10 people in any NC Synod congregation” policy be extended until at least May 12.

Even so, especially so, we trust in God’s provision and the eventual Easter joy that we will all celebrate whenever we are able to gather again.

On Saturday evening, our own congregation council voted unanimously to adopt the Synod Council’s recommendations and suspend all in-person gatherings through at least May 12. **We will not gather face to face for Sunday worship through at least Sunday May 10.** The Council also agreed to continue payroll for me, Steve White, Cathy Hubbard, Debby Chaffin, Darla Wyatt and Dean Davis.

Enclosed you will find more information about what congregation life and pastoral care looks like now, and how to find ways to connect online and by phone for worship and evening prayer.

I will be continuing to work to address communication and connection, faith formation and home worship plans for Holy Week and Easter. If you identify other needs that I or our congregation may respond to while “church has left the building” please let me know. I can be reached by email at [pastorchristinaauch@gmail.com](mailto:pastorchristinaauch@gmail.com) or on the church cell phone at 704-472-7783.

Please continue, as you are able, to make your financial gifts to support our congregation’s ministry and mission. Already your offerings have supported us adding Zoom so that people without computers can access worship and evening prayer, helping us stay connected even when we are apart. Our mission of being an extension of the hands of Christ is more relevant than ever. You may mail your offerings to the church at PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151. We also offer online giving at the website as an option for both one-time and recurring gifts. You also can designate your Thrivent Choice Dollars before March 31.

And, please continue to pray as we live together as the body of Christ in this time of uncertainty. Peace be with you all.

In Christ,

The Rev. Christina L. Auch, Pastor