



ST. DEMETRIOS GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

Rev. Fr. Photios Dumont, Protopresbyter

Saturday, March 14, 2020

Dear Beloved of St. Demetrios,

This is a critical moment in the growing outbreak of COVID-19 in King County. Public Health — Seattle & King County is working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to protect the public's health. And we at St Demetrios want to assure that we are doing all within our power to protect our community as well.

On March 11, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee ordered the prohibition of gatherings of more than 250 people in King County and other western Washington counties. In addition, Dr. Jeff Duchin, Health Officer for Public Health — Seattle & King County, issued a parallel local Health Officer Order for King County to prohibit gatherings of fewer than 250 people unless measures are taken by event organizers to minimize risk.

Effective immediately and until April 24, consistent with the Governor's order, we will postpone/delay or cancel the following:

- Sunday School
- Greek School
- Greek Dance
- YiaYia/Papouthes Lunch Groups
- HOPE
- Dynamis
- All coffee hours following liturgy and potlucks following Lenten Services
- Greek Independence Day Celebration
- Saturday of Lazarus breakfast and Cross making following liturgy
- Palm Sunday Luncheon
- Paschal Meal following the Holy Saturday Midnight Service
- St Demetrios Auction May 16, 2020
- Philoptochos meetings & bake sale

Under this state and local Order **Church services for St Demetrios meet the criteria for events over or under 250, and we must comply with the state and county orders issued by the Governor and the Seattle King County Public Health Officer. Additionally, Metropolitan Gerasimos has directed Seattle and all Washington Clergy to continue Lenten services, therefore, Saint Demetrios will remain open while imposing stricter guidelines for attendance. Please see attached guidelines.**

We understand these actions will have a tremendous impact on all members of our community. These efforts are meant to slow the spread of novel COVID-19 and reduce the number of people infected.

Our Orthodox faith is a source of comfort in times of confusion and suffering; a fundamental source of spiritual healing and hope; a remedy against despair, providing emotional support that is an integral part of our well-being. Yet, many churches are suspending services. Deciding whether you go to church during this period should not be a test of faith. The Lord gives us wisdom and discernment to protect each other, and we should consider doing just that. **In this difficult time, please stay home if you have any risk factors or simply want to avoid being exposed to COVID-19.** While at home you can read your Bible, read prayers including Great Compline, Akathists, and Paraklisis services for the well-being of you and your family, our community, and the whole world. There are also many resources to watch services online in places that are not as heavily affected. <https://www.goarch.org/live-broadcasts>

Please also contact the church office if you are staying home and would like Fr. Photios or Fr. Daniel to bring you Holy Communion.

The COVID-19 epidemic is a time of difficulty for all of us. However, by working together and with God's help, we will all get through this and be ever so grateful when everything turns back to normal!

In Christ's Love and Service,

Fr. Photios Dumont

Fr. Daniel Triant

Barbara Trehearne