

# Finding Wisdom during a Pandemic

## *Adapting at St. Michael's to the Reality of Covid-19*

### UPDATE 2 – Friday, March 20

Hello my friends,

I have several things to share with you.

*First*, as many of you may already have heard, Bishop Cathleen has wisely instructed that Holy Week and Easter services will not be held in person throughout the diocese ([click here to read her communication](#)). This instruction is in keeping with the remarks made by our Presiding Bishop, Michael Curry, just days ago. This course of action furthers our collective effort to stop the spread of this coronavirus as quickly and as thoroughly as we can. In-person worship and other gatherings are suspended until May 17<sup>th</sup>. As I think we know at this point, we will have to reassess where we are as we approach that date.

As you can read in the bishop's most recent communication, the diocese is planning a diocesan-wide Easter vigil to be streamed online. The service will involve people throughout the diocese as we faithfully observe the most important feast of the Christian year. The service will also be recorded so that it can be watched on Easter morning or anytime thereafter. A worship service booklet will be sent to every household in the diocese whose address is on file. We will do our best to make sure that no one is left out.

*Second*, I want you to know about some of the changes happening in the life of St. Michael's.

- As you know, we will be having regular Morning Prayer, Rite II, on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. Each week, the link for tuning in to the livestream will be posted on the church's website ([www.stmaa.com](http://www.stmaa.com)) Saturday. During the service, you may follow along in the prayer book if you feel familiar enough with Morning Prayer and its options. Otherwise, you may download the worship bulletin that was included in this week's "Week by Week" and will also be available on the church's website with the link for streaming. You may print out the bulletin, read it on a different device as we worship, or read it on the same device while simply listening to the livestream rather than watching. (On a related note, I am creating a new Youtube channel for St. Michael's, which we can use more and more through this ordeal. In addition to smaller, more frequent opportunities for prayer and bible study, I intend to stream services for Maundy Thursday and Good Friday; they're too important to miss altogether if we don't have to.)
- In keeping with the Bishop's instructions, no gatherings of more than 10 people will be taking place at St. Michael's. And those gatherings will follow all CDC recommended guidelines for social distancing, etc. Groups or individuals who need access to the building will need to communicate with staff (email is best) to set up specific times. There will not be times when one can just drop by. For small group gatherings, we encourage and are willing to assist any of our groups who would like to set up online gatherings via Skype or Zoom.
- As for the church office, all staff are encouraged to work from home. The office will essentially be closed, but we will be checking phone messages daily and returning messages

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promptly. We are working on a forwarding number for emergencies. I'll communicate about that early next week.

- If the need for a burial service arises, I will officiate a graveside service for immediate family. If the family of the deceased wishes, we will gladly plan a memorial service for their loved one to be scheduled after the situation improves.

*Third*, I want to make sure that you know about [Episcopal News Service](#). This service can keep you in touch with what is happening the Episcopal Church around the country and the world, including the pastoral and creative responses to this pandemic that are going on all over the country.

And *finally*, I provide a couple links to opinion pieces I found helpful:

[“What Americans are Doing Now is Beautiful”](#) by Garrett M. Goff, *The Atlantic*

[“You are not a Teetering Contraption,”](#) by Goerge F.Will, *The Washington Post*

God's peace,  
Fr. David