

Saint Mark's Episcopal Church

513 Nassau Street South ♦ Venice, Florida 34285 ♦ 941.488.7714

The Rev. Bob Cowperthwaite
Interim Rector

The Rev. Maggie Sullivan
Associate Rector

March 13, 2020

Dear Parish Family,

Circumstances are changing hour by hour with regard to the COVID-19 situation. Several dioceses have suspended all services in all their Churches, and more and more congregations around the country and here in Florida are doing the same. The reason: to do everything possible to protect the health and well-being of parishioners and staff, and to be responsible members of the wider community. Among other things, it responds to requests from public health officials to suspend group activities in order to flatten the curve of potential new cases so to not overwhelm our health-care system.

After much prayer and consideration, it seems clear (though difficult) that St. Mark's should suspend worship services and all other activities for the next two weeks (Saturday, March 14- Friday, March 27). There will be no weekday activities and the church campus will be closed (for example, Bible Study, any meetings, rehearsals, dinners, youth group, Stations of the Cross, etc.). While the church office is closed, we will be checking and responding to email and voicemail messages.

As you stay home, please know that you are in our prayers, and that we look forward to the time when we can reunite as a community. The Sunday service bulletin is now available on our website, and it has the readings, prayers and announcements for the day. As you read and pray from home, I hope you will feel a sense of connectedness with all of us at St. Mark's, as well with the wider community.

Please let us know how you are doing, and keep in touch with us and one another as you can. We will continue to evaluate the situation, and will keep you updated on next steps or other changes.

So look out for your neighbors, look out for each other. Look out for yourselves. Listen to those who have knowledge that can help to guide us medically and help to guide us socially. Do everything that we can to do this together, to respond to each other's needs and to respond to our own needs." ~ Bishop Michael Curry

Peace,

The Rev. Robert, Cowperthwaite
Interim Rector

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