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Dear Friends in Christ at Peace,

*I leave all things to God's direction; He loves me both in joy and woe.
His will is good, sure His affection; His tender love is true, I know.
My fortress and my rock is He: What pleases God, that pleases me.*

It takes true faith to sing, pray, and believe the words to that hymn! To be honest, I have found that hymn, in particular, to be one of the most challenging of all our hymns. Can I really leave *all things* to God's direction and say "What pleases God, that pleases me?"

Clearly this is possible only because we know His will is good, and His love is true! This is our faith: "*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging!*" (Psalm 46:1)

This pandemic is having a unique effect on our lives, challenging us and forcing us to problem solve in amazing ways. And while this has not played out the way that any of us could have anticipated, it has given us an opportunity to reflect on our core belief: God is in control; Jesus is victorious!

This exercise of faith – the discipline of prayerfully and patiently waiting for God's timing – is an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to strengthen us and mature us in our faith toward Him and in fervent love for one another.

And so we continue to attempt to make the best decisions possible, keeping an eye on the federal, state, and local guidelines. More importantly, we are also making decisions that we hope will keep our congregation and its members healthy and safe. As before, then, here are some new decisions that we will hold to for the coming weeks:

- 1. We are again cancelling our worship gatherings for the weekends of April 26 and May 3.**
- 2. We are also cancelling our in-person Sunday School, Confirmation, and Bible classes for the month of May.**
- 3. Confirmation Sunday for our youth confirmands will take place on November 1, 2020.**

As before, we want to remind you of the following:

1. We will continue to use the Internet for worship broadcasts, using our website (plcms.org) and Facebook ([facebook.com/plcms](https://www.facebook.com/plcms)) for links to services, resources, devotional materials, and

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additional announcements.

2. All other activities in the building remain cancelled until further notice.
3. Our staff continues to work from home as much as possible. As a result, we will not be available for “drop-ins;” and we ask you to avoid doing so as much as possible in honor of the stay-at-home order. We will attempt to return phone calls and respond to electronic communications in a timely fashion.

We are fervently praying that our in-person worship gatherings may resume in the month of May. Please know that we are putting plans into place for when that becomes possible. Most likely, we will need to have a limited number of people per service, and we definitely will be practicing safe, social distancing. I will send along more information as that time arrives. In the meantime, we are *hoping* for the second weekend in May. But, as we have all found out, this is in God’s Hand: what pleases God, that pleases us!

I want to commend you all for continuing in your offerings, tithes, and gifts to the Lord! What an amazing congregation God has assembled here at Peace! Thank you for mailing those in to the church! As I mentioned before, we are working on getting online giving set up – both for automatic withdrawals and credit card payments. As you can imagine, there has been an increased demand for these financial services, and we are patiently waiting to get it implemented.

Our weekly e-newsletter has been sent out a handful of times! If you have not received it, please double check your SPAM folders, as the newsletters might have been delivered there. Otherwise, please email me and I will get you on our contact list (PastorT@plcms.org).

Finally, as I have mentioned before, if you or someone you know is in need of help, please let me know. We have people ready, willing, and able to offer assistance with anything from grocery shopping to meals. We are in this together!

I would like to conclude with encouragement from 1 Peter 1:3-7:

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

“According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

“In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith – more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire – may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

Pastor Jeffrey Teeple