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Dear Friends in Christ at Peace,

*I know that my Redeemer lives; What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead; He lives exalted there on high.*

I encourage you to keep the message of this hymn in your minds and in your hearts as we travel through this Lent and Easter. Things may not be unfolding according to our hopes or plans, but we know that there is a sweet Easter message in all this: God is in control; Jesus is victorious!

Before we go any further, let's pray together:

Heavenly Father, You have commanded us to pray and have promised to hear our prayers. When our prayers are answered as we hope, accept our joyful praise and thanks. When, according to Your gracious will, You answer in ways we did not seek, lead us by Your Holy Spirit to conform our hearts and minds to the life of our Savior so that our praise takes the shape of humble trust. For Jesus's sake, forgive our sins and fulfill Your purpose in our lives. Your steadfast love endures forever. Amen.

As I have shared in each letter, we continue to receive guidance from the state and local governments. We also continue in our attempt to make the best decisions to keep our congregation and greater communities safe. While these are difficult decisions, be reminded that we are not making them under compulsion from the government. We continue to pray for God's guidance. And we ask for your prayers as well!

Here are some new changes that we will be implementing for the coming weeks:

- 1. We are cancelling our worship gatherings for the weekend of April 12 (Easter Sunday).**
- 2. We are also cancelling our worship gatherings for April 19 (the weekend after Easter).**

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 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.

While it is troubling that we won't be meeting in person on Easter morning, please remember that as Christians each Sunday is a "little Easter." When the Lord allows, we will gather and celebrate Easter together then!

Don't be troubled about an empty sanctuary on Easter morning, the tomb was also empty that day! Use this as an opportunity to invite other to virtually worship with you!

Many have asked about online tithing and offerings. We are working to get this available, but the paperwork is taking a while. We will let you know when that is available, if you would like to participate. In the meantime, if you have an offering you may mail it to the church.

We will continue reaching out to the congregation with information and support. We are implementing an electronic version of our newsletter through email. If you did not receive a copy of it, we either do not have an email address for you, or the one we have is not working. Simply email us with your current address and we will include you in those electronic newsletters.

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 the fifth and seventh verses of our hymn:

*He lives to silence all my fears; He lives to wipe away my tears;
He lives to calm my troubled heart; He lives all blessings to impart.*

*He lives and grants me daily breath; He lives, and I shall conquer death;
He lives my mansion to prepare; He lives to bring me safely there!*

And finally the words of Christ Himself from John 16:33:

Jesus said, "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart! I have overcome the world!"

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

Pastor Jeffrey Teeple