



Pittsburgh Lutheran United Ministries

405 Kennedy Avenue, Duquesne, PA 15110

www.plumofpa.com

Living Christ's Light of Hope in Our Communities

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January 5, 2022

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

Proverbs 3:5-6

Dear PLUM Congregations:

Here we are again. The COVID numbers within our communities are on the rise. The impact of not only the Delta variant, but also of the OMICRON variant, has resulted in the fastest infection rates that we have seen thus far in this pandemic. On January 4th the news reported over one million new cases across our nation. While the vaccines may minimize the severity of the symptoms, all individuals are contracting the disease irrespective of vaccination status. Some of the current patterns within our communities include:

- Schools are resuming remote learning
- Increased COVID cases reported on Jan 4th *
 - Allegheny County: 2,187 newly reported cases, and 12 newly reported deaths*
 - Washington County: 259 newly reported cases, and 5 newly reported deaths
 - Westmoreland County: 366 newly reported cases, and 2 newly reported deaths
- Reports of the strain on hospitals, the impact on first responders and on essential workers

Being mindful of our witness to care for our congregations and our communities, and in consultation with the PLUM board, the pastoral team has suspended in-person worship and meetings effective immediately through the end of January. We will revisit this decision at our January board meeting.

We fully understand the importance in our spiritual journey to be replenished from our gathering. We are grateful for the many opportunities we gathered in-person not only for Sunday worship but the joy of being together for Christmas Eve. Knowing

The Pittsburgh Lutheran United Ministries Pastoral Team

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January 5, 2022

we have just gotten the rhythm of in-person worship even with COVID protocols, makes this decision difficult even though it is necessary.

Please know that your pastoral team is available to you. Over the next 4 weeks we will provide:

- Two Zoom worship opportunities with communion at 10:30am and 3pm
- Facilitation of Zoom council and congregational meetings
- Ongoing emergency in-person pastoral care following COVID protocols: funerals, hospital visits
- Regular pastoral care via phone

We thank you for the many ways that you have cared for each other in this rapidly changing environment. Do not hesitate to contact us to share concerns and celebrations. Let us continue to rely on the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to guide us in the days ahead. May the Love of God be your comfort and peace.

In service together,

The PLUM Pastoral Team