

Being Church in the Time of COVID-19 – Online Discussion on Staying Connected and Caring for One Another and Our Neighbors

- Welcome!
- Housekeeping details:
- Remember to mute
- Use the chat function to ask questions – we will be sharing them and answering as many as possible
- We will capture these and share responses.
- If you add your email in the chat you can be added to a group email with follow-up information from this call.

Today's conversation really hits at the heart of one of the biggest challenges COVID-19 presents – how we can stay connected and love and care for one another and our neighbors in this time of physical distancing.

We gather today bringing our hopes, fears and questions.

We also gather remembering WHOSE WE ARE and WHO WE ARE: the people of God – trusting in Immanuel – God with us - loving us, providing for us, and inviting us be God's hands and feet - reflecting God's healing love & the Resurrection power of Jesus – especially in this time of chaos and fear.

There are a couple foundational truths I want to name as we begin.

First – this discussion is not meant to be seen as the place that has all of the magic answers..... HOWEVER,

– this gathering IS meant to **be a safe and brave space** where we can bring the truth of our situation, our fears – and our hopes – as we figure out the next most faithful step we can take!

Before we begin, I invite you to a time of centering our hearts on Christ through 2 readings:

First, a reading from Philippians Chapter 2 - the apostle Paul writes...

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ²then make my joy

complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”

And in John Chapter 13, we hear this encouragement from Jesus: ““A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so **you** must love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

With these words as our backdrop, I want to introduce our 2 speakers for today:

Pastor Gene Talley from Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in New Glarus, WI

and Pastor Johan Bergh from St. Philip Lutheran Church in Mount Dora, FL.

Debrief following break-out sessions:

Start w/ Larry Clark

Wrap-up, blessing and prayer with Pastor Janice Hawley.