

Dear People of Zion:

The coronavirus pandemic is expanding our Diocesan responses to ensure the public health. Our diocesan Bishop issued a REVISED Pastoral Directive on March 24, 2020.

Again, all “in person worship and gatherings” in all parishes within the Episcopal Diocese of Central New York are SUSPENDED until further notice. So, again, please DO NOT come to church on Sunday mornings until further notice. Doors will be locked.

Now...effective Friday, March 27, 2020...the Parish office will be CLOSED, with the only exceptions being staff participation in "essential" ministries, deemed by the Bishop, to be limited to food pantries and meal services. The local AA and NA meetings at Zion are now closed for in-person gatherings as well - continuing on via social media or telephone.

As a result, Zion will remain **open for the Monday and Tuesday noon luncheon program**, until and unless restricted further by the Bishop's office, the Rescue Mission (which provides the food), or governmental authorities.

ALL TELEPHONE CALLS to the parish office will be automatically forwarded to the personal telephone of Annette, our parish secretary. She and I will remain in constant contact to address all matters.

ALL MAIL....including YOUR MAILED-IN CHECKS FOR PLEDGES...will be processed timely and/or forwarded as needed. Please continue to mail to the church at 140 W. Liberty Street, Rome 13440, unless otherwise notified.

ALL WEB-SITE MATERIAL...including the continuing posting of sermons, will continue to be posted as usual through the helpful and generous work of Tina Rescigno.

More adjustments necessary for the continuing smooth administration of the parish's matters will be addressed as they arise, and notice will be provided to you as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, **again**, your church is NOT closed FOR WORSHIP IN OTHER WAYS. We are still reaching out, seeking to continue worshiping in community in different, exciting ways, even from our homes....until we can gather back, safely, in our sanctuary again!

(1) For those with computers at home with internet service, or persons with “smart” phones able to access the internet...we will **continue to “live stream” the Eucharist on-line at 9:00 a.m. We had our first live stream worship last Sunday and, since then, have tested and improved the quality video and audio of the broadcast.**

(2) For those who DO NOT HAVE internet access, we will telephone you personally during the week to pray, to visit, to check in.

This is how the on-line, live streaming will work.

- (A) On Google or other internet browser, insert: <https://www.facebook.com/ZionChurchRome>
- (B) On Google, click on: Zion Church (Rome, New York) - Facebook
- (C) On the parish Facebook site, you'll find the video on the front page below.

In last week's letter, we stated that a personal Facebook account is not necessary to view the live stream...and that was based upon information received through diocesan provided on-line resources (specifically, instructions from the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego). Unfortunately, it appears NOW that may not be factual...so we are seeking other on-line ways or methods to broadcast "live stream" worship service outside of Facebook so as to be available for all who can access the internet.

As the parish office is now closing, we will not have access to the parish's large commercial-quality photocopier. As a result, it is **CRITICAL** that, upon receipt of this letter, you call Annette...at

315-231-1807 - Annette's personal cell phone -

and inform her that you **DO WANT TO CONTINUE** to receive the bulletin and/or consecrated wafers every week. Please....because we have limited copying ability going forward, we will necessarily limit further mailings to those who specifically request them.

Also please call her, or call **my personal cell phone (315-243-3726)** for any help/prayers.

Also, it is **CRITICAL** that we all continue to forward our pledges or financial contributions to the parish in this time of physical absence. Please mail your contributions, inside of your pledge envelope, and mail in a larger envelope to the parish..OR...you can pay your pledge or contribution **ONLINE**. Our parish Treasurer, Michael Rescigno, has included details in the bulletin.

Again, and perhaps most **CRITICAL**, that we find a way to receive your regular communications and request for **PRAYERS**. Call Annette or myself at the numbers listed above, and leave a message if you need to, in order to share the need for our "Common Prayer".

May God continue to keep each of us safe, and in his Peace, as we continue to love each other and the life and world that God has blessed us with.

In the Love of Christ,

The Rev. James K. "Jim" Heidt
Rector - Zion Episcopal Church