



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
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09 July 2020

My Beloved Family,

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

I pray that this letter finds you well and safe from the perils that seem to surround us on all sides.

Things are well with Norma and me. She continues to care for and protect me from the world of germs. After a recent visit to a doctor in GR I suggested we stop for a late lunch at the Olive Garden in Muskegon. She very quickly replied, "I don't think so." When I continued to make my case about all the precautions that have been put in place, she said, "Give it up James, it is not going to happen, and I'm driving." I am so thankful for her love and protection.

Today, I completed my fourth and final round of chemo in Ludington. I am thankful that it has gone off without a hitch. The infused drug has helped beyond everyone's expectation. Last week a new oral drug was introduced into the mixture. Unfortunately, my body responded negatively to the drug and I was forced to stop its use. With that decision, my blood counts once again, began to increase. Without any reservation, I give God thanks for that recovery in my body. As I approach the transplant day, I need as much of the cancer out of my blood as humanly possible. Just prior to the transplant, I will receive another round of a different chemo to rid my blood system of all cancerous cells. This chemo will be experienced in the hospital and as I am told, "will be no picnic." May your prayers continue. I know that I know . . . God will be faithful.

Just a few days ago, I spoke with the assistant to the bishop, Pr. David Wendel. In that conversation he articulated some profound wisdom. He said, "Jim, we thought the difficult part was going to be closing the churches in the midst of COVID 19; we never imagined that the more difficult thing would be how we would reopen them." Please know that our church council and pastor have struggled with this very thing for several weeks now.

In the beginning, we had hoped that we would be able to reopen this weekend July 11/12. However, with the resurgence of the virus following the Memorial day weekend and the anticipated surge that is expected to follow the July 4th holiday, we (the pastor and council) have decided that if we err, we need to do so on the side of caution. Therefore, Good Shepherd will remain closed until the projected weekend of August 22 & 23. Communion will still be offered each Saturday between 11 AM and 12 noon. All precautions used in the past will continue to be followed. Additionally, our online services will be available each weekend with a bit of a change for a couple of weeks.

This past Monday, Pr. Jody was notified by the Board of Health that she had come into contact with someone who tested positive for COVID 19. She is currently in self-quarantine at her home. Pr. Jody will write the sermons for the next couple of weeks, but someone else will deliver them during the online service. Please pray for Pr. Jody and Tom during this very difficult time. Jody has been such a blessing to us, and I pray with all that I am, that she and Tom will be well.

And finally, the longer we are apart, the more I miss each and every one of you. I know it is difficult to navigate these uncharted waters but with faith in God and faith in each other we continue this journey. In times past, the church, the body of Christ, was often referred to as the 'Ship of Zion.' While God never promised smooth sailing for the 'Ship of Zion,' God always promised His presence. We belong to Him and absolutely nothing can separate us from His Love. In Christ Jesus we have been redeemed the Children of God. Hold fast as we journey through these rocky waters and do not lose hope. Our port is just ahead.

Love, Joy and Peace,

Pr. Jim
231-468-9155

My treatment schedule:

DAY	DATE	TREATMENT	LOCATION
TBD	By 7/22/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Infectious Disease and Cardiology Oncology consults have been sent over. They will contact you to schedule those appointments. 	TBD
TBD	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allo Education Class link was sent via e-mail by Darcie on 7/1. Please complete as soon as you can. 	@ Home, Online
Mon-Wed	7/6-7/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment/Vidaza 	Ludington Cancer Center
Monday	7/13/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10-11am Nutrition Appt 11-11:30am Consenting for Labs 11:30am Labs/ COVID swab for PFT 12pm Chest X-ray WALK IN, Times vary 	LHCP Suite 5200 Consult 4 LHCP Suite 5200 Consult 4 LHCP Suite 5200 LHCP 2nd Floor Radiology
Wednesday	7/15/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12-1pm Physical Therapy Appt 1-1:30pm Financial Meeting 1:30-2:30pm Medical Social Worker 2:30-3pm BREAK 3pm Pulmonary Function Test 	LHCP Suite 5200 Consult 5 LHCP Suite 5200 Consult 5 LHCP Suite 5200 Consult 5 Butterworth Hospital 2 West
Thursday	7/16/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11:15am arrival ECHO/EKG 	2900 Bradford St. NE
Thursday	7/23/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2pm Dr. Brake Follow up 2:30pm Darcie/Consenting 	LHCP Suite 5200 LHCP Suite 5200 Consult 5
Week of 7/26		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admission 	BWH 5 Center