



Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Warrenton VA
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

April 9, 2020

Dear OSLC Congregation,

On Monday March 23, Gov. Ralph Northam extended his order that all public and private K-12 schools in Virginia close for the remainder of the school year in response to the continued spread of COVID-19. Recognizing the significant impact of this school closure on families throughout the Commonwealth, the Governor simultaneously called on communities to provide emergency child care to young and school-aged children of essential personnel during this unprecedented pandemic.

Fauquier Community Child Care (FCCC) is a non-profit childcare program committed to providing care in the community for essential personnel that are in urgent need of child care. FCCC reached out to various schools, community centers, rental properties, other churches, etc. in hopes of finding a location in which to operate but were turned down. However, their setbacks have turned into an opportunity for our church. Our Saviour has been asked to partner with FCCC in providing the community service of day care for children of essential personnel. This critical need created by COVID-19 presents our church with the opportunity to demonstrate *God's Work, Our Hands!*

Council approved the use of our facility by FCCC for this critical community child care service, which will begin on **Monday April 13**. The use of our facility by FCCC will be reimbursed at market rates covering utilities and other associated costs of daily operations. In addition, this will provide much needed funds for the continued operation of the church during this period of social distancing.

Here are examples of essential personnel:

- Providers of healthcare including, but not limited to, workers at clinics, hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), nursing homes, long-term care and post-acute care facilities, respite houses, designated agencies and emergency medical services;
- Essential government employees including public health employees and employees who oversee or support all the other functions included in this list;
- Criminal justice personnel including those in law enforcement, courts, and correctional services;
- Police, firefighters, and military;
- Employees who operate shelters or other essential services for adults, children and families;
- Employees who ensure continuity of basic services such as electricity/gas, water, internet, plumbing, sanitation and garbage removal;
- Employees who ensure essential transportation including public transportation, trucking and health care-related transportation;
- Employees who ensure essential food, pharmaceutical and supplies access (e.g., grocery, food bank, feeding programs, drug store, hardware store); and
- Staff and providers of child care and education services (including custodial and kitchen staff and other support staff) for children of other essential personnel.

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What does this mean for the operation of the Church?

In short, it means that the areas from the double wood doors off the Narthex (approaching the bathrooms) and back will be sealed off for FCCC-only use. FCCC will maintain and clean these areas while operating as a child care facility in accordance with CDC protocols.

What has been done in preparation for start of FCCC's operation?

Volunteers and staff have removed from the FCCC designated areas of operation church items – such as quilting supplies, food, coffee pot (Pastors request), Sunday school materials, dishes, kitchen supplies, and other items. These items have either been moved to the front portion of the church (narthex, library, nursery, etc.), taken off site by the different ministries, or locked in a few classrooms that are off limits to FCCC. These include the Daughters of God, Youth and handbells/media rooms. These rooms have carpet which isn't easily cleaned daily and as such will not be utilized.

What happens during the time FCCC operates this day care?

FCCC will maintain and clean all their leased areas according to CDC and State protocols. The kitchen will be utilized but they will be using self-supplied disposable utensils, napkins, plates, and cups. Children will be separated in groups of eight (or as the CDC advises) to maintain social distancing. Again, cleaning by FCCC will occur regularly according to CDC guidance.

The church will continue to operate — in our current online worship service and remote meetings mode — from the front portion of the church. FCCC will utilize exterior doors in their area and OSLC will use the front doors. For OSLC staff, a basic eating area has been set up in the library, and they will utilize the bathroom in the nursery. These modifications will allow OSLC to continue to operate during this stage.

What happens after the operation concludes?

FCCC will contract professional cleaners to thoroughly clean and sanitize all FCCC areas using the CDC's most current protocols at that time. OSLC will follow any guidance on bringing the facility back online for normal use. The area will be restocked with the items that were removed and the areas will once again return to OSLC's use.

What is the timeframe for all of this?

We don't have a complete idea of the timeline at present, but we have set in place that FCCC will renew on a month-by-month basis.

In summary, OSLC has always been an active member of the community and is proud to be a part of the solution. In helping our essential personnel keep our community healthy, fed and cared for, we are not only assisting them but ourselves as we depend on these services for our daily needs. What an opportunity to actively demonstrate **God's Work, Our Hands!** It is a win-win for the community and the church.

Sincerely,

Troy Stansell
Council President