



# The Episcopal Diocese of Dallas

1630 N. Garrett Avenue • Dallas, Texas 75206-7702

Telephone 214/826-8310 • Facsimile 214/826-5968

---

The Right Reverend Dr. George R. Sumner, Bishop

Easter Tuesday 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Greetings in our risen Lord. I am grateful for your patience, faithfulness, and creativity in the past difficult weeks. I have lost count which pastoral letter this one is- the 5<sup>th</sup> I think!

1. Gathering at Church will continue to be suspended through Easter 5, May 10. This is in keeping with the best advice of the HHS, the CDC, and of Public Health in North Texas, where it looks as if the peak in number of cases in our area is only coming into view now. I want us to continue to move together as one on this.
2. I advise that you keep doubling down on the protocols we have for taping services: only people necessary for the taping- socially distanced- singers further apart and few insofar as they project more- where possible you might use a couple (who are already a 'biome')- offices closed with the exception of visits for necessary functions...
3. Because our present situation of common prayer at a distance is due at its core to concern to protect the elderly, we will dedicate roughly \$300,000 from the Farmer Fund to help missions in financial distress. Contact Bishop Michael Smith of the Relief Review Board at [msmith@edod.org](mailto:msmith@edod.org). (The other members are Rebecca Wellborn, Greg and Alison Fox, Andrew Van Kirk, and I).
4. I am also happy to announce an emergency fund for parishes in trouble (thanks to the Episcopal Foundation of Dallas, who have donated \$200,000 along with a substantial contribution from the St. Paul Fund.) We will begin taking parish requests next week- be in touch with Bishop Smith on this too.
5. Bishop Michael Smith will also be acting as Canon to the Ordinary throughout May. Dean Rob Price (with the Cathedral's blessing) has agreed to take on the work of congregational development, budget, and searches as Canon for Congregations for a year (in addition to a very full time job he already has!). We will recompense the Cathedral for his time. We will be bringing him into the loop on various questions right away. There will be also some specific tasks taken on by others (to whom I am very grateful): Title IV intake (Michael Gilton), remarriages (Victor Austin), church planting (Jun Il Kwun), and liturgical requests (Bob Corley). The diocesan savings from this reorganization will go to supporting congregations.

6. I have phoned all of you (if I missed you let me know), and remain available by email or text (I will call back) should you need anything. I ask that at the end of the month all rectors and vicars send me a concise ‘dashboard’ report (to Virginia at vwilder@edod.org) including how you’re doing in both attendance and finances.
7. I am grateful for Father Austin’s online clergy continuing education sessions, with themes of apocalypse and seclusion included! Check these out on the website.
8. When we are in a crisis as a diocese, we need to be clear about our core function. At this time and circumstance, we need most of all to preserve our clergy and our congregations. Our priority is to have the resources to accomplish this throughout the whole of the period of crisis. This sounds simple, but involves hard decisions.
  - A) The Camp All Saints board and I are working hard to find a path forward financially, especially through a CARES Act grant, and bookings for JOLT in the Fall. (And a big thank you to Mike McGrew’s labors as interim director!) We will need to see how many contracts for the Fall will be fulfilled. Obviously we want to retain the permanent staff as long as we can. We are also determined to hold camp for kids in 2021! (If it is possible for youth groups to use the camp in the fall on a more ad hoc basis, we will strive to make this possible, if feasible health-wise).
  - B) All courses of the Stanton Center are being completed via the Internet. I am most grateful for the faithful and creative ministry of Janet Page on behalf of the Center. We will thank her more adequately after the outbreak has abated. She will release information about a streamlined program for the Fall. Canon Hylden will be in charge of designing and running the program in its next chapter (in addition to his overseeing ordinands and curates, being a resource with the national church and Communion, and supporting teaching ministries).
9. I have embedded the prayers from the BCP . . . . . for the sick and in the time of death which I approve, in this time of extremity and emergency, for lay people to say where no priest has access to someone mortally ill (by analogy with a lay person in an emergency being permitted to anoint, pg. 456). Again, please let Deacon Jennifer Smith know of such instances.

*Prayers for the Sick* – pp. 456-457 (without anointing)

*Prayers at the time of Death* – pp. 464-465

10. In the week of April 19<sup>th</sup>, we will have Zoom conversations with you all by Convocation about what start-up, reemergence, call it what you will, should look like in May and beyond. There are a number of components to this- please take part and offer your thoughts.

11. The Covid-19 crisis will affect a number of our fellow dioceses severely. We need to be in solidarity with them. We have been working gradually to increase our giving to the General Convention, but the crisis has moved up our timeline. While we find ways to help the ministries we aimed to support through alternative giving, the Executive Council has agreed to direct all our support to the General Convention for 2020. It is our intention to move to full payment of our mandated amount as of the new year.
12. With so many pressing needs of our own, who can think about outreach? The Church, because in such moments she recalls powerfully who and whose she is. I want to remind everyone of the call for help in ministries of immediate need in south Dallas, and along the way of our fellow Christians there taking on this work. Carrie's call may be found by going to <https://edod.org/resources/articles/mission-moment-with-canon-carrie/>
13. It is traditional to take Low Sunday (the 19<sup>th</sup>) off! Therefore, I will be sending a pre-recorded service and sermon this week to all priests who are laboring solo in their congregations, if you should wish to use it (you could if you wish add some things before and after, for example a greetings and some Easter hymns to sing along with). I will do something similar in Spanish for our Iglesias Latinas before Sunday May 10<sup>th</sup>.
14. It is still possible for congregations to apply to the Payroll Protection Program of the CARES act, but you need to hurry. Our treasurers Greg and Alison Fox stand ready to help with your application.
15. Brothers and sisters, amidst all this hard news, it is Easter! Somos companeros del Resucitado! Let us keep going, in this the part of this strange journey that may feel hardest because of how long it has continued, with this in mind.

Peace,

✠ 

The Rt. Rev. Dr. George R. Sumner  
Bishop, Diocese of Dallas

+GRS/vrw