



March 26, 2020

Beloved of God,

During this uncertain and fearful time, St. Mark's is doing all that we can to continue to be the Body of Christ in this place; reaching out to one another with support, loving care, groceries, meals, phone calls and more. We are a community turned toward the love of God in Christ and desire to show that love to one another.

As a faith community we are committed to maintaining continuity of worship, see our online daily offerings here <https://www.mothersylvia.com/stmarksonline.html> . We are working hard to ensure our operational integrity and of course continuing to pay our dedicated and hardworking staff.

We know that the COVID-19 crisis is affecting our parishioners in various ways and we want to be able to help in the ways that we can as a congregation. It is important that we talk about our church's financial stability during this time.

Please continue to give generously to St. Mark's throughout this time as you are able. Pledges and offerings can be mailed to the church office, sent electronically through your financial institution or given online through our website: <https://www.stmarksabq.org/give/> . The church continues to operate and is grateful for your ongoing support. St. Mark's life and ministry is entirely supported by the generous giving of our membership and friends.

There are also families within our faith community that are being adversely impacted by the loss of jobs and income during the government orders to shelter in place. We have a *Congregational Relief Fund* for receiving designated gifts to help households through this crisis. These gifts can be given in the same ways and should be marked for the purpose they are intended – "Congregational Relief Fund."

I am grateful to be a priest to this amazing faith community and to serve with such a talented staff and core of volunteers to be the hands and feet of Jesus to one another and to those beyond our community. Please know that I am holding our whole community in my prayers as we make our way through this time of uncertainty, especially those who are first responders and healthcare professionals. This crisis will not last forever and we will once again gather for worship in-person with joy and tears.

We are only at the beginning of this strange time and I already miss seeing your faces and singing hymns with you and sharing Eucharist in our prayer-soaked place of worship. I ask that as a community we honor the decisions of our governor to healthcare leaders that we might limit the spread of the virus and protect the most vulnerable among us.

We are in this time together and we will emerge from it as a stronger community of faith full of gratitude for the gift of community and the deep privilege to gather together for worship, learning, service and fun. Together we are building something beautiful for God in our neighborhood,

through the blessings of your loving care for our community and those God has placed in your care and near to you.

In God's Mysterious Love,

*Fr. Christopher +*