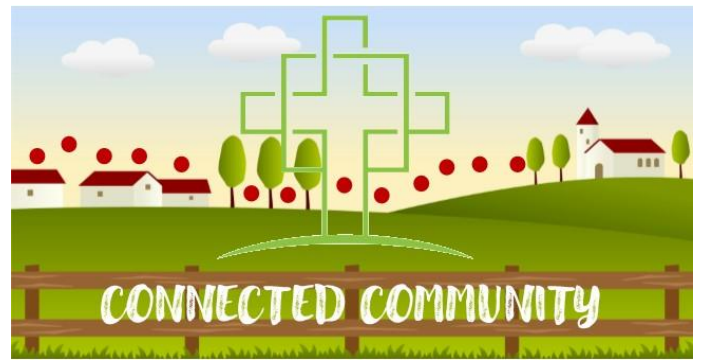


WHAT MATTERS

Connected Community

Special Edition . . . April 3, 2020



News from Your Synod and Ministry Partners

South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, ELCA/6401 Odana Rd./Suite 20/Madison, WI 53719/(608)270-0201/www.scsw-elca.org

If you have the resources to make a donation to continue God's good work through synod ministries, individual donations may be made through the synod's Tithe.ly app.

Text GIVE to: (608) 571-1576 - Thank you for your prayerful consideration. Every offering helps!

Your synod staff has been paying close attention to your questions and not surprisingly they are questions that congregations are asking throughout the ELCA. You are not alone! Our staff provides here the best resources that are being provided by the ELCA General Counsel and ministry and full communion partners.

Considerations for Remote Council and Congregation Meetings during the Covid-19 Pandemic

"Remote Meeting Frequently Asked Questions for Congregations" published by the ELCA

LINK:

<https://bit.ly/RemoteMeetingFAQ>

Included here is the **Wisconsin State Statute** which the document from the ELCA indicates you should check as this does vary by the state of incorporation. We have one congregation in Illinois so that is provided below as well and we have SAWCs (Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities) that are incorporated in the state of Minnesota.

Wisconsin: <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/181/VIII/0820>

Church Councils can meet remotely, but you must make a provision for on-line voting outside of emailing responses. You need to take care that people can participate and have an ability to interact in real time. The chat area can be used to vote for example if using the Zoom platform. Congregational meetings would be permitted under the same stipulations of real time interaction and voting. Care should be given both to qualification of voting members and meeting quorum requirements.

Illinois: <https://law.justia.com/codes/illinois/2019/chapter-805/act-805-ilcs-105/article-8/>

Synodically Authorized Worshipping Communities are Incorporated in the State of Minnesota.

Please check MN state laws here: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/13D.015>



FAMILIES FIRST CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE ACT

Bishop Rogness participated in this webinar led by United Church of Christ General Counsel and recommends it as a source of information. A recording can be viewed and found here:

<https://www.insuranceboard.org/online-learning/>

Next Webinar:

The CARES Act and Your Ministry

April 7 at 1:00 pm CT.

The link to register for the next webcast: <https://www.insuranceboard.org/cares-act-webcast/>

Following is a summary provided post webinar by Heather Kimmel, General Counsel UCC of the information that is of most interest to our congregations.

I am receiving numerous questions on the CARES Act, especially as it relates to forgivable small business loans and unemployment compensation for church employees. No regulations have been issued on these new laws yet, and thus interpretations are subject to change. The following summarizes provisions that will be of most interest to our churches.

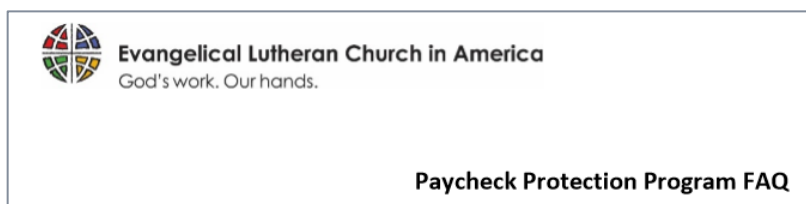
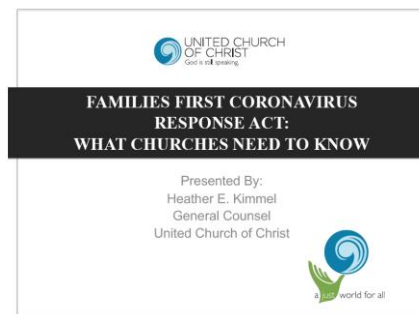
The CARES Act includes the Paycheck Protection Loan Program, providing funding to small businesses and nonprofit organizations (under 500 employees) to cover up to 8 weeks of payroll and related costs, with such loan to be entirely forgiven if an employer maintains all of its employees and salaries during the period of time commencing February 15, 2020 through June 30, 2020. Loan proceeds may be used for payroll costs, employee salaries (with some exceptions for salaries in excess of 100k/year), commissions, costs related to group health care benefits (including sick, medical or family leave and insurance premiums), interest payments on mortgage obligations or other debt obligations incurred prior to February 15, 2020, rent and utilities. Under the language of the Act, churches and religious organizations are not excluded, and according to at least one Senator, churches may participate in this program. To qualify for forgiveness, employers must retain employees through a specified period of time and a few options are provided to the borrower as to how to calculate employees during that time period. There are also provisions relating to payroll tax delay and payroll tax credits for retaining employees if the business has closed due to COVID-19, but the credit will not apply to wages paid to clergy in exercise of their ministerial duties. Other loan programs are available to larger businesses (over 500 employees). This program is administered by the Small Business Administration (SBA) and more information can be found at sba.gov.

The CARES Act also includes Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. This extends coverage to workers who are self-employed, seeking part-time employment (if permitted under state law), do not have sufficient work history, **or otherwise would not qualify for regular unemployment under state or federal law** and become unemployed or cannot find work due to COVID-19. This includes workers laid off from churches and religious institutions who may not be eligible under the state's program. Please see the attached CARES Act Unemployment Insurance Explainer, stating this. Churches which may normally be exempt from state unemployment requirements are covered under the CARES Act, but we do not know how States will administer this for those unemployed church workers. It is not clear how ministers will be treated under this program. Workers will only be eligible for PUA if they are unemployed for specified reasons relating to COVID-19. Unemployment will be administered by each state.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PAYROLL PROTECTION PROGRAM FROM TOM CUNNIFF, ELCA GENERAL COUNSEL

LINK: <http://bit.ly/PPPFAQs>



Reliable Sources for Churches Explaining the CARES Act, Families First Act & Helpful Stewardship Resources for Use During Pandemic

ELCA Summary of Cares Act Provisions

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/CARES_Act_summary_033020v2.pdf

Update and Resources on COVID-19-related Benefits for ELCA Congregations, Synods, Other Ministries and their Employees

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/COVID-19_Relief_Summary_033020.pdf

UCC Summary of Families First Coronavirus Response Act as of March 23, 2020

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Families_First_Coronavirus_Response_Act-UCC_Update.pdf



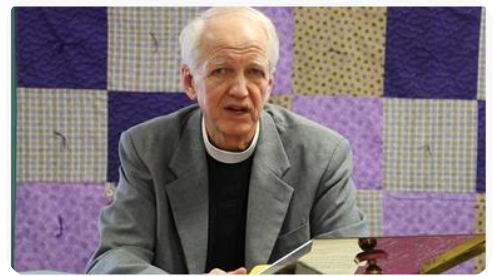
Horizons **Stewardship** Plethora of Available Resources for Stewardship and Expert Counsel on the SBA Loan Application Process - See them now!

<https://us20.campaign-archive.com/home/?u=001faf6dc36451e1202183ef7&id=54bc902e31>

Horizons Social Distancing Resources Daily Updates - <https://bit.ly/3aia0h0>

Worship Moments in A Time of Disruption – Video #3 Is posted Messages With Scripture Reading, Message and Prayers to Use in Your Settings from Bishop Rogness for your meditations and worship.

As we have had to stop our weekly Thursday worship in the Synod office, Bishop Rogness has recorded videos for the last two Sundays and next Sunday that follow the lectionary. These will be made available through the synod website on the **"CONNECTED COMMUNITY"** page that we have created. You might use these as your message for your on-line worship. You might also share them with your communities and invite people to stop in their day for a scripture reading, message and prayers. We're posting the first for this Sunday now and in the succeeding weeks, we will post them on Mondays. Whatever way you use them, may God bless your worship ministry and our walk together.



<https://scsw-elca.org/community/>



Facebook

Follow us on Facebook to receive notices when we go Live! South-Central Synod of Wisconsin

Please send us your links to your weekend services and especially your Holy week services. We are seeing great interest in these as evidenced by activity on our website. Clearly, it's a way for people to stay connected to the larger church!

Here is a link to an online form that should take you no longer than 30 seconds to fill out so that we can get your services posted to the synod website!

<https://scsw-elca.org/submit/>

Links to Congregation Streamed Services and More: <https://scsw-elca.org/healthresources/worship/>

Growing list of synod congregations who are live streaming worship services both on Sundays and Lent Midweek on Wednesdays. Links to these are provided. Recordings of worship can also be found here.

