

## **Unity Lutheran Church Funeral Policy During the Time of COVID-19**

For Christians, gathering to mourn the dead, celebrate their life and proclaim the hope of Resurrection are essential practices of our faith. During the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 outbreak, our usual mourning rituals have been interrupted. We think of those women on that first Easter, who went to follow their familiar mourning ritual to anoint Jesus's body, to find it disrupted. We remember their initial shock and confusion and feel it too. We're waiting to feel the hope of resurrection.

In times of trial like the death of a loved one, we turn to the familiar practices and rituals of our faith and ancestors. And so we know that this disruption for a grieving community is doubly hard. We grieve this disruption with you.

On Friday, March 20, 2020, Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker signed a "Shelter in Place" executive order to slow the spread of COVID-19 throughout the state. On page 7 of the order, "Funeral services" are considered an essential business and operation, and funeral homes are able to remain open during this time: "Funeral services. Funeral, mortuary, cremation, burial, cemetery, and related services." Along with the CDC and IDPH, IFDA interprets this to mean that funeral services ARE permitted, but still urges you to adhere to the CDC's recommendation of a maximum of 10 people present until we move to a different phase.

Until the Shelter in Place is lifted for Illinois, Unity Lutheran Church will be limited in our funeral practices in the following ways:

### **Viewing/Wake:**

We are not able to accommodate a wake at this time.

### **Funeral/Memorial:**

We are not able to host a funeral or memorial service at the church at this time.

### **Graveside:**

We can discuss the possibilities for a graveside service outdoors using the practice of social distancing, face masks, and the recommended maximum of 10 people present.

### **Repast/Luncheon:**

We are not able to host a meal at the church at this time.

While we are limited in what we are able to host at this time, we are able to plan for memorials after the pandemic has passed. We would welcome the opportunity to host a memorial service for your loved one at a later date when we can all safely gather and celebrate their life.