

## A Message from Bishop Kevin: Suspension of Gatherings Until May 3



*Assist us mercifully with your help, O Lord God of our salvation, that we may enter with joy upon the contemplation of those mighty acts, whereby you have given us life and immortality; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

As we continue to learn more about the current pandemic, we are discovering that more drastic measures must be taken in order to protect, not just the vulnerable, but all people in our communities. In light of recommendations from medical experts, our Governor, and our President, I once again call upon all congregations of the Diocese of Bethlehem to suspend in-person gatherings, including worship, until May 3, 2020.

Last Sunday, I joined you in worship around the diocese. I watched pre-recorded services and attended as many livestream worship gatherings as I was able. Through these virtual gatherings, I heard a resounding reminder that the Church must not be entombed! I heard strong voices demanding that we shout down fear and death once and for all. I heard a clarion call to remember who we are as followers of Jesus. As Christians, we must recover our sense of purpose. We must reach out and remind the communities we are called to serve why we are here-to proclaim a risen Christ to a broken and frightened world. This crisis, this pandemic, this moment is like no other. And it calls us to stay strong together.

As we prepare for the holiest of seasons, I implore you to take heart. Though our buildings will be empty, we will continue to be the Church in the world. We will worship together, even while physically distant, on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, at the Easter Vigil, and especially on Easter Sunday-when we will celebrate and remember that Christ has conquered death and will raise us up to new life! Though this pandemic may keep us from gathering in person, we remain the Church, we continue to be the people of God, and we *are* the body of Christ!

In God's love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a cross symbol followed by the name "Kevin".

[Read this message on the diocesan website.](#)