

Greetings Members and Friends of Desert Hills Lutheran Church,

Good morning on this Thursday, March 26. This afternoon I'll record my sermon for this weekend. It is on John 4, the conversation between Jesus and the unnamed woman at the well. What are the odds that I'll find three things to highlight?

Yesterday the Green Valley News printed an ad for our church that said, "CHURCH CLOSED Until Further Notice." I'm glad I did not have a mouth full of food or beverage, because I probably would have sprayed the room yelling, "What?!?" It was a mistake and will be corrected, but it sure got me thinking. The only thing that is closed is our building for live worship services and meetings. For now, the building will be closed Saturday, Sunday, and Monday as per our plan to reduce costs. The staff is working in the building Tuesday through Friday, but the building is closed to all other traffic. This seems the safest thing to do to help with containment. It is good to be reminded that the building is not the church. It never was and it never will be. The church has always been you and me, the body of Christ. We as a group, even though quarantined and apart, are still the body of Christ, and we are not closed. We still can make calls and help each other out. We can still celebrate grace, behave like disciples of Jesus, and make a difference. We will come through this. Remember what Jesus said to Peter? Matthew 16:18, "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this Rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it." Today we could say, "on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Coronavirus will not prevail against it." There have always been hellish forces in history to contend with, but we have a great God. The church is open forever!

If you watch the streamed worship services this weekend, please watch to the end. DHLC Council President John Martin has made a very short video message for our congregation. You don't have to do anything, just keep watching.

On our website, [dhlc.org](http://dhlc.org), we have provided some links for health and wellness. Be sure to check them out.

That's all for today. Please keep in touch with your friends by phone and online. If you go out, be sure to keep washing your hands. Be safe. Be faithful. And fear not, God is with us, always.

Pastor Martin