



Messiah Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

The Twelfth Day of Christmas, Tuesday, January 5th, 2021

Dear siblings in faith:

It's perhaps especially fitting on this final day of Christmas, right as we approach the Feast of the Epiphany, the day where we celebrate Christ's light breaking forth for ALL people, that I can write you with "good news and great joy" in our now tenth month of navigating the darkness of COVID-19.

I just got off the phone with our wonderful Manager of the Schenectady County Department of Senior and Long Term Care Services who is advising all local faith communities to organize around helping their seniors at long last get vaccinated against COVID-19! In short, Phase 1B of the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution, which includes residents of seventy-five years or older in Schenectady County, will begin as early as next week.

The difficulty however is that there no one "big list" of everyone in our county who is over seventy-five... and that's where you come in!

In conversation with our Care & Concern Committee Chair, Barb Hallett, we are putting together a team of volunteers to call everyone in our congregation who we either know is over age seventy-five or we think is (sorry if we guess wrong!), and will ask for your permission to share the following basic information with the County:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone Number
- Date of Birth
- Email address (either your own, a relative or mine if necessary)

While most of this information is available in our directory, we are unfortunately missing the date of birth of many of our members. Outside of forwarding this information to Schenectady County, it is important for a wide variety of reasons for us to keep this information in our Parish Register but your birth year will ALWAYS be kept private from everyone except our Care & Concern Chair and pastoral staff.

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www.messiahschenectady.org

An email address is required, as signing up to be vaccinated needs to take place online. **If you do not have access to either your own or a loved one's email address, I am happy to use mine and have one of our volunteers help you sign up to be vaccinated as soon as possible.**

To summarize, dear friends, here's what I'm encouraging you to do:

- **If you are over 75 and receive a phone call from a member of our Care & Concern Committee, please give them the information above. This will help you get vaccinated sooner, stay safe and eventually put an end to this pandemic once and for all!**
- **If you are not over 75, but would like to help make phone calls, please let me know ASAP at pastor@messiahschenectady.org.**

Just today I myself was asked to be vaccinated as someone with visiting chaplain rights at Ellis Hospital and I decided doing so was my civic duty. I encourage you to do the same! While things won't be "going back to normal" for any of us right away, getting vaccinated against COVID-19 is a HUGE step in that direction!

Thanks be to God for your partnership!

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dustin G. Wright". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the "In Christ," text.

Rev. Dustin G. Wright
Pastor, Messiah Lutheran Church