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On-going Covid-19 Response

Dear Clergy and Faithful Members of the APCK:

The Council of Bishops met last Thursday to discuss and consider our next response to the pandemic caused by Covid-19. It is one thing to suspend worship services in the Province in an effort to keep our parishioners safe, but another thing entirely to begin to allow worship services to be held once more across the Province when different states are experiencing different conditions and situations where the Coronavirus is concerned. Some states have experienced a flattening of the curve, while others are posting increasing numbers of positive cases and deaths, daily. We cannot and will not reopen the Province completely unless we are reasonably sure that the worst is behind us and our people are going to be safe.

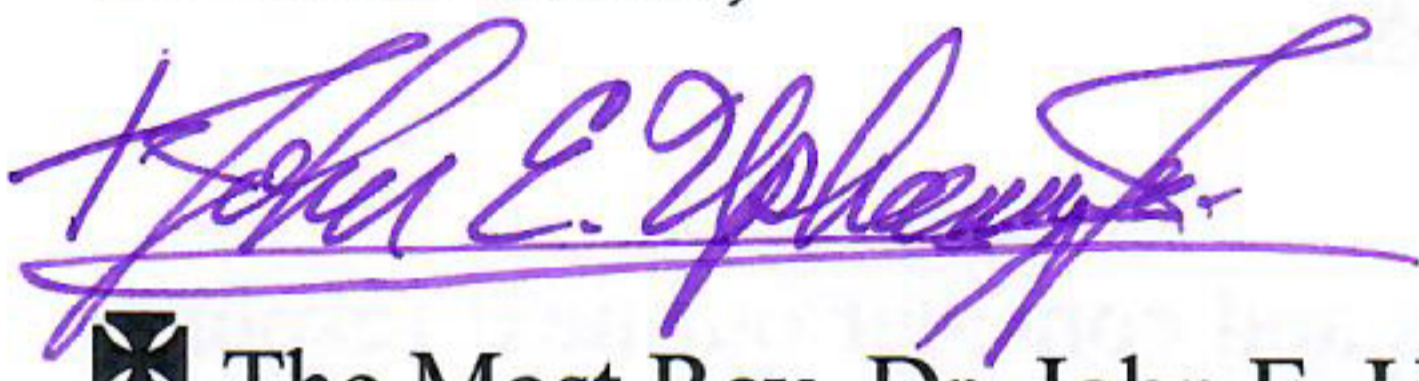
Given that reality, it is the Council's decision to:

1. Keep all services suspended through April 30th, as originally planned and stated.
2. Beginning May 1st to have all parishes follow their State guidelines as their states *begin* to reopen. Several State Governors are implementing steps to reopen their states in phases according to the data they are receiving from state medical personnel regarding the virus. Please follow your state's guidelines. If your state is not reopening, then your services are suspended until your state begins to ease some of the restrictions due to Covid-19.
3. If your state is beginning to reopen, and, clergy, if you feel comfortable in doing so, services may recommence. However, if you do so, please follow your state's guidelines regarding social distancing, number of worshippers, etc. It is also the decision of the Council that the Eucharist should be administered to the faithful *in one kind only* for the present and in the safest way possible. The Council also encourages the use of on-line methods for broadcasting services to the faithful who may not feel comfortable coming to church. Technology is an aspect of life our churches should continue to use even when this pandemic is over. We also continue to discourage coffee hours and any educational or fellowship gatherings at the church as both state guidelines and reason dictates. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, call your Bishop.

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Finally, most of us have never experienced anything like this before. I pray we never have to again, but for the moment, this is the new normal; this is our new reality. We all face the unknown about our economy, our safety, when we can get back into our church buildings for worship, and a number of other things. Rely on one another, yes, and bolster one another's faith by reaching out and calling each other on the phone or communicate by computer, or however you can, but also remember ultimately to trust in Him who was, and is, and is to come; Our Risen Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He will continue to see us through this situation. He is ours and we are His. He will never abandon nor forsake us. Go with God!

For the Love of God and the Sake of the Gospel,
I remain,
Yours in Christ,



✠ The Most Rev. Dr. John E. Upham, Jr.
Archbishop
For the Council of Bishops