



ALL SAINTS CHURCH

Dear Families,

By now, many of you have probably heard and read Mike's message. It was sent last night at 8 p.m. If you haven't received it, [click here](#).

Earlier this week, two threats were made against All Saints Church. While we realize in the vast majority of cases where violence such as this happens it is not announced beforehand, we take any threat to the safety of our community extremely seriously, particularly to those who are most vulnerable. Because we are especially concerned about protecting our children and youth, the Children, Youth and Families department at All Saints has taken these additional measures:

- Wednesday, May 3rd: We made the difficult decision to cancel our beloved Youth Dinner and move Youth Group ONLINE. While we are aware of the impact and disruption this causes to youth, parents and everyone involved, we find it important to gather all information first and prioritize safety above all else. The Children, Youth and Families department will reconvene on Monday, and in consultation with clergy and all professionals involved, we will be better informed and able to determine how to proceed. We will communicate with you every step along the way, thank you for your patience.
- We cancelled the Legend of the 5 Rings Role Playing Game scheduled for this weekend and will postpone to a later date.
- There will be no Family Hour this Sunday.
- Children will not be invited to gather around the altar. And please know, your table at home and the communion table in church are as connected by the Spirit as ever.
- CHILDREN'S CHAPEL will be ONLINE this Sunday. Children's Chapel will be from 10:15-10:45 am on zoom, in a private and vetted room. Here is the link to join: <https://allsaints-pas.zoom.us/j/82669412921?pwd=RVNtSEtvZDFTc2Q0Z09Vak9iRDNuUT09>
- We will NOT be having acolytes this Sunday! (Team 5, take a break, and to all other teams, more to come soon).
- The children's choir Unidad will not sing in church this Sunday but will sing on May 21st for our WE ARE FAMILY Sunday.
- For choirs Chamber Choir and Vox, you will receive separate information via email.
- YOUTH ZOOM ROOM: On Sunday at 1:30pm, we will invite ALL YOUTH to gather. These threats are scary and rattling and we want to offer space to process together, to ask questions, and hold each other tight. Here is the link to join: <https://allsaints-pas.zoom.us/j/83461153289>

Many of us parents are wondering how to talk to our children and youth about threats like these. While there is not one right way to talk to our loved ones, hopefully the following steps can be helpful to your family:

- Making yourself available for conversation is an important step to ease anxiety.
- Be gentle to yourself. Every person, no matter the age, processes differently and that is ok. So take your time and try not to rush conversation.
- Let your children and youth help lead the conversation with their thoughts and feelings.

- If you need wording for a conversation starter you could use this one: "I wanted to talk to you about something important. A person was threatening our church this week. Sometimes people who are hurt try to hurt other people. Some things might look a little different around campus at All Saints in the next couple days, but that's ok, it means that many adults are working hard to make sure everyone is safe. Can you tell me how this feels to you or do you have any questions for me?"
- If children and youth ask questions that you aren't sure how to answer, it is ok (and even good) to say that you don't know the answer or that you need a minute to think about it.
- Validate feelings.
- Be brief and honest and try not to dwell on frightening details.
- Safety measures are put in place out of an abundance of caution, not out of fear, and not to scare us.
- Give reassurance.
- Follow up. It is better to follow up and ask how kids are doing rather than waiting for them to bring it up. Listen and respect them if they don't want to talk about it more, but it is better to ask.
- Be alert for signs of distress. Watch for signs of withdrawal, acting out, lack of interest, or fear.
- Talk about something you can do to take action with them. For example reach out to a friend, write letters, create art, send someone something, take political action, etc.

The All Saints community stands steadfast and strong AGAINST fear and violence. We choose LOVE over HATE, no matter what.

All of this information is a lot to take in. We are holding you close. Please know that we are here for you, don't hesitate to reach out.

Love and peace,
Nina

Nina Scherer, Director of Engagement and Integration: Children, Youth and Families
nscherer@allsaints-pas.org, 626.583.2743

Ahren Martinez, Associate Director of Children, Youth and Family Programming
amartinez@allsaints-pas.org, 626.583.2764

Jenny Tisi, Director of Children's and Youth Choirs
jtisi@allsaints-pas.org, 626.583.2719