Church bells have always been an important symbol of the Christian community. These bells have called people to worship, marked the hours of the day, helped the community to remember the dead, added to the celebration of weddings, and have served as a unifying instrument of the community during times of jubilation and crisis.

European churches have been using their church bells during the COVID-19 Pandemic to unite people during a time of great uncertainty and social distancing. Each night at 8:00 p.m., churches in European nations have been ringing their bells for one minute to help the community unite around their care for the victims of the COVID-19 virus as well as the healthcare workers and first responders who are at the front line of the pandemic.

More recently, American cities like Seattle, Atlanta, and Chicago have been exhibiting ways to demonstrate unity amid separation. Folks throughout these communities have come together in spirited cheering, banging on pots, and clapping together as a demonstration of unity against the forces that would work to divide all of us.

**Beginning Sunday, March 29, at 3:00 p.m.**
(to coincide with 8:00 p.m. in Europe) Park Ridge congregations, St. Paul of the Cross, St. Luke’s Lutheran Church and Park Ridge Community Church, will ring their bells each day for one minute to express our unity for those in our country and throughout the world who have been victimized or who are battling this virus. When you hear the bells ring, please take a moment to cheer, make noise, or just quietly remember and pray for the unity of the world at this time of crisis!

**May we remember 2020 as a time that the “World Came together as the People Stayed Apart”!**