

Dear congregation of Christ Church,

It seems that daily we are overrun with changes to our lives by the developing coronavirus (COVID-19) situation. The Session of Christ Church met on Friday, March 13, to adopt parameters for worship and the ministry of Christ Church. By just Tuesday, March 17, the situation had changed significantly, and the Session met with our deacons to determine a new plan going forward. I want to give you the details of the changes to church life, which you may find on our website (both now and in the future) on our [Coronavirus Information](#) webpage.

We continue to be focused on the safety and well-being of our congregation, especially those who fall into [higher-risk categories](#). We also want to do our part to help the leaders that the Lord has appointed over us to suppress the spread of COVID-19. In doing so, we are not abandoning worship or each other. But that does mean that we will need to find new ways of staying connected, keeping each other accountable, and helping in our community. This has always been the way of the Church. In the 2nd, 3rd, and 6th centuries, significant plagues rocked the world. People gave into their fallen nature and abandoned the sick and the dying. Chaos reigned. But into this gap stepped the Church. Christians, despite the danger to themselves, ministered to the ill and dying. The subsequent witness to the world brought about exponential growth to the Church.

We have a similar opportunity now. We should not panic and be heard and seen as suggesting everyone will die of COVID-19. We should not be heard and seen as suggesting that this is a manufactured and illusory crisis. The danger is real. We must be prepared. And we must trust the Lord to carry us through these times, just as He carries us day by day. After all, everyone *will* die. That is the fruit of Adam's sin (Romans 5:12). Indeed, all the talk of disease and death in the news gives us the opportunity to tell others about the *real* solution to death – the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Hebrews 2:9; Revelation 20:6). I would encourage you to stay in communication with your family members, friends, neighbors. Use social media, email, text, phone calls, and video chats. Be [salt and light](#) (Matthew 5:13-15). Bring [hope to a world desperate](#) for hope (Ephesians 2:12).

What Now?

The President has issued Guidelines for “[15 Days to Slow the Spread](#)” and the CDC has urged communities to adopt them. The most significant for our public ministry is to avoid gatherings in groups of more than ten people. Fort Bend County has [adopted that guideline](#). That means that we are unable to have public worship services in our building for the next two Sundays (March 22 and 29). But that does not mean that we will not worship. A group of ten of us will lead in worship that will be live streamed at 10:00 AM on our [website](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Vimeo](#). Our typical order of service will be followed, complete with singing. In addition to piano accompaniment, we will have a group of singers to lead you at home in singing. Our bulletin will include the pages from the hymnal that are applicable. I encourage you to gather as a family and worship the Lord with us in song, prayer, and the hearing of God's word read and preached. **So for March 22 and 29, we will only have one**

morning service at 10:00 AM that is live streamed. The Session will reassess this as the expiration of the 15-day Guidelines approaches. We also hope to modify the format of our evening service to make it more conducive to an online format in the weeks to come. We hope to resume in-person worship soon, and I will update you (and update our [Coronavirus Information](#) webpage) as changes are adopted.

What about other aspects of Church life?

Because the previous restriction of gatherings of no more than 50 people will be in place until May 10, 2020, the following safety measures are in place through May 10:

- there will be no nursery provided for worship services
- there will be no coffee or fellowship time
- all Sunday school classes (children, youth, and adults) are suspended
- all non-worship activities are suspended. That includes Christ's Kids, Youth Group, ESL, Ladies' and Men's Bible Studies, Group luncheons/gatherings, and Community Groups
- all non-Christ Church activities are suspended, and no future building use requests will be approved at this time

How will we stay connected during this time?

One of the great challenges of the current circumstances is maintaining contact with others while we are practicing "social distancing." We won't have Sunday school, but we are sending out the children's class materials to parents to work on with their kids at home. Our adult teachers are working on various ways of bringing their classes to you (audio, video, or videoconferencing). I will be recording my Bible Study for our ladies and posting the videos on our website. Pastor Wegener is looking at tools for our Community Groups to stay connected. David King is calling on congregants instead of doing hospital and home visits. Curt and Leci Mire have set up a Facebook Group for our youth, and our entire youth team is working on ways to connect with our youth. Our elders and deacons will be checking in with all of you to make sure that mercy and shepherding needs are met.

I want to encourage you to also take the initiative to stay in touch with each other. Whether it is a text message, a call, or FaceTime, it is important for us to find ways to connect with each other. I hope that you will be able to join our live stream this Sunday at 10:00 AM, when I preach on Psalm 46, "The Lord is Our Strength." May the Lord be your strength and shield.

In Christ,



Pastor Greco