

March 13, 2020

Dear BCC Family,

What a week this has been. Amidst the communication we've sent addressing Bedford Community Church's programming and BCC's facility use, we wanted to write a letter addressing what is unquestionably most important to us -- you! - BCC's people.

First, we want you to know our planning and decision making has been conducted with you in mind. Of course, we thought about your safety, but besides this we've tried to think through what will best serve your needs as a church family. This is actually why we cancelled our mid-week activities, so that we could prepare for and therefore preserve our Sunday worship gathering. As we write this communication, we are still planning to hold our worship gatherings this Sunday, March 15. We pray it will be encouraging and uplifting for you.

Still, we understand it will be wise for some of you to consider staying home - especially if you are in a high-risk category; specifically, if you are above age 65 or have a health condition that makes you vulnerable. And of course, if you feel at all unwell, or if you have any reason to suspect that you have had contact with someone known to be infected, please be considerate and stay home. Please also inform us because as your pastoral team we will be praying for you.

We want everyone to know we will post Sunday's sermon online as soon as possible. Know too we are taking steps to expand BCC's online presence and ministry. It will take us a little time to get these enhancements "teed up", but you can look for this in the days to come.

Part of our efforts to expand our online presence and ministry will be to redistribute information about our existing online resources. We will be sending out the instructions and video tutorials for accessing the website, downloading and using the church app, giving online, and following our posts on our social media (including Facebook, and Spotify). We will also send to you attachments to the forms that will allow you to make requests of the deacons and to request access to RightNow Media.

Our heart during this time is to serve you, and I know you will want to serve one another. Allow me to offer some suggestions about how to do this.

- Beginning Saturday, March 14, we are identifying 7:00PM (aka 19:00 – see what we did there?) to be a time for unified prayer throughout our church family. Let's focus on praying for God's protection and provision in the face of the COVID-19 virus, and let's pray globally as well as locally. Parents, this is a great opportunity for you to involve your kids and explain to them what we are doing and why we do it. Conclude your prayer time as your own rhythm and situations dictate, but let's start together nightly at 7:00 and let's focus our prayer specifically on this situation.

- We anticipate that in this time there will be additional demands on our deacon's fund resources. May I take this opportunity to ask you to prayerfully consider making a gift contribution to this fund? Giving to this fund is one way to become involved in how God may choose to answer our prayers for those affected by this outbreak. Again, parents, this is a wonderful opportunity for you to teach generosity and compassion to your children. Talk with them about what you are doing and why.
- Finally, just as a virus spreads by contact between people, so do hope, encouragement and love. Fear can tempt us to run away and hide. Faith will draw us to step in and serve. So, let's be viral in the most redemptive way possible! As your pastor, may I challenge you to think through the network of people you know - at BCC or outside of BCC - and consider who God would have you focus on at this time? Pray for them, certainly... and beyond that, check in on them. Ask if there is anything they need. Let us know if the church needs to become involved. But remember – YOU ARE THE CHURCH! This whole situation is an opportunity for us to actively love and care for others. Even little acts of kindness and care can go a long way these days. BCC family- let's be viral!

Of course, like everyone else we are “monitoring the situation.” It's true, but I'm getting tired of writing that, both here and in my work at Nyack College. What's more important is that we are praying and brainstorming about how we can serve you and our communities well in these days. I will provide periodic updates.

Let me close this letter by sharing a powerful promise passed along by Isaiah to the people of God when they faced a difficult situation: *“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).*

Remembering He is and He will give me confidence and hope.

Blessings,

Jeff Quinn
Interim Lead Pastor

PS – It would be remiss of me not to thank Pastor Sarah for the exceptional amount of good work she did for us this past week. She stayed informed and on top of a rapidly escalating situation and either made or contributed to countless decisions that needed to be made quickly and well. Many of the choices she faced were not easy and some of the decisions she made were not popular. Still, as the week unfolded it became increasingly obvious to me that she acted wisely on our behalf. Thank you, Sarah, for your work on all our behalf.