

March 12, 2020

Dear Fairmount Family,

The Session met last night and made decisions in response to current information regarding COVID-19 and preventative steps we could take as a church to slow the spread of the virus. At the time, Session's decision was to hold Sunday worship and cancel everything else. However, today's address by the Governor made it clear that social distancing is the only way we can hope to fight the spread of this virus. The Governor signed executive orders forbidding gatherings of 100 people or more. **Though he cannot order the closing of churches, we feel it is important to abide by the intent of his ruling. We will therefore cancel worship and all other activities through April 4. The staff is working to plan a (staff only) livestream worship service on Sunday morning at 10:00 am. More information to follow.**

At this point we plan to resume worship and activities on April 5, but we will keep you updated.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advises anyone with a higher risk of serious illness from COVID-19 to stay home or avoid large public gatherings in this time. Please look at this list of vulnerable categories: 70 years old or older OR if you have any of the following health conditions: heart disease, diabetes, lung disease or a chronic lung condition, recent chemotherapy, a compromised immune system, or are in regular contact with somebody in these categories.

We are canceling all weekday events and other activities until Holy Week, including:

Crescendo Choir, Adult Choir and Handbell Choir rehearsals
Tuesday dinners and Lenten study on March 17, 24 and 31
Walks with Pastor Lindsay on Mondays and Thursdays.
Faithful Lives Film Series on March 13 and April 3
Thursday morning Bible Study March 12, 19, 26 and April 2
Thursday Book Group on March 19 and April 2
Men's Breakfast Forum on March 18 and April 1
Parents' Night Out and Club 4/5 on April 3
Prayer Shawl Ministry on March 19

Meals on Wheels continues to use our building in order to serve the vulnerable in our community.

Session, staff and Councils will hold virtual meetings during this time. Pastoral care by staff and deacons will be extended primarily by phone. If in person care is necessary, steps for proper hygiene will be taken seriously. Session has also directed staff to cancel any work-based travel out of state and participation in regional gatherings until after Easter.

While this is certainly an upheaval, the well-being of our Fairmount family and the community at large is the primary concern of the Session and staff. It's so jarring to change routines suddenly, and stressful to cope with uncertainty as this unfolds. We are discussing ways to keep people feeling connected to the FPC community. Please be in touch as needed. Updated information will be available on our website www.fpccle.org, Facebook and via email.

We continue to pray for all those with special needs and for the health of our world. As we continue walking with Jesus on our Lenten journey, let us join hearts and minds in prayer for our faith community, our country, and our global neighbors.

Peace,

Pastor Jessie



Pastor Lindsay

