



March 16, 2020
COVID-19 Update #3

Dear People of the Grove,

This past Sunday was our first experiment with live-streaming worship as a result of suspending in-person worship. This step was taken to ensure that we protect the most vulnerable within our community. We are working to help prevent the spread of the disease and keep everyone healthy and safe during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We received many positive comments about our live stream and will continue to live stream over these next weeks. (The CDC is recommending that we are off for at least 8 weeks at this point.) The stream will happen only at 9:00 am. The stream will show up on our website. Services will be recorded and put on the website for those who want to view it later.
www.thegrove.church/listen-watch-read/sermons.

In addition to suspending in-person worship, the United Methodist Minnesota Conference has directed us to cancel all in-person, nonessential small groups, even if they are under 10 people. This is different from the decision announced in worship yesterday. **We are suspending all in-person small groups, team meetings, and ministry events for at least the next two weeks.** As such, no ministries shall meet in person. A staff member will reach out to small group and team leads soon about online options.

In addition, **the outside community groups who meet in our building are being notified about cancellation.**

At this point, our preschool is following the state's guidelines.

Most church staff are working from home, but **the church office will be open from 10:00am – 2:00pm at this point.**

In times like these, one can start to feel hopeless. But as a Christian community, we can continue to bring hope to the world by letting our lights shine. Below are safe measures you can take to support and care for others being impacted:

- Care for yourself. Heed the rules. Wash your hands. Physically distance yourself. Stay home if you are sick or believe you have been exposed to the virus. Consider taking breaks from viewing media in order to manage anxiety.
- We are collecting notes and cards at the church office that can be sent to someone who is homebound or living in a care center facility. Carolyn Winslow, Director of Caring Ministries, will ensure that notes are delivered to someone who has been isolated with the virus. You can drop them off in the Commons from 10-2 or send them digitally (pictures or notes) to caring@beingthehope.org. We have researched transmission through the mail and are within guidelines.
- If you have extra income and desire an opportunity to support those whose wages are impacted, donating to Silent Friends allows The Grove to support those in need. **If your wages are impacted, please reach out to Pastor Kelly for support** klamon@beingthehope.org.
- Perhaps a quote from epidemiologist Dr. Larry Brilliant can center us on what God is calling us to do during times of trouble. “Don’t hoard. Instead of stockpiling for yourself, go buy and stock up your local food shelf. Poor people who may not be able to afford much needed supplies and are the ones who may be most impacted and need our support. There can be love in time of COVID.” March is Foodshare month.
- You can pray. Pray for those with the virus who have become sick, family and friends supporting the medically compromised or sick, medical professionals treating and researching, community members who can’t pay their rent, leaders who are making difficult decisions around cancellations, and government officials making large scale decisions. To submit an online prayer request, go to our website: <https://thegrovemn.church/ages-and-stages/caring-ministries>

Please know that your pastors, Core Team, Care Ministers, leaders and staff are here as we walk through these challenging times together. Also remember that turning to God in prayer is one of the most powerful ways to quiet the heart and calm our fears.

With hope,

Kelly Lamon, Jeremy Peters, Betsy Stites, and Carolyn Winslow