

March 17, 2020

Dear Gloria Dei Family and Friends,

We live in a very different world than we did a week ago, and I trust and pray that you are all feeling God's presence and Spirit as our community, state, nation, and world work together to address the present corona virus crisis. Although there are currently very few cases of COV-19 being reported in Santa Barbara County, their number is sure to rise in the days and weeks ahead, and our biggest goal should be to look out for the most vulnerable and health compromised among us. There is no way to know how long the crisis will continue, but I want to assure you that we will be here for you in whatever capacity makes sense until this crisis passes.

The advice of our Bishop and of health professionals across the country is that all worship gatherings and weekly activities at churches should be suspended until it is safe to meet together again. Instead, churches are encouraged to meet virtually or on line so that people are not unwittingly spreading the virus to one another.

So what does this mean for Gloria Dei? **We will not be holding any worship services on Sunday mornings for the time being**, but we are looking for ways to share an abbreviated worship service with you online. We will be experimenting to see if we can put my message and a few other elements of our worship in a format which you can access. While we work on getting that video feed up and running, Bishop Guy Erwin and his assistant Pastor Brenda Bos will be posting the Bishop's weekly chapel service on YouTube Saturday evenings. Many of my colleagues on the central coast will be doing what we are attempting as well, so you might check their face book pages for potential worship services.

All weekly activities have been cancelled as well for the next few weeks and we encourage you to think creatively how you might keep in touch with one another and maybe even do online studies together and group chats until it is safe to meet together in person.

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Please be sure to reach out to friends and neighbors and see if there is anything they need. If you are not in an at risk group and are feeling healthy you could offer to run an errand or take care of a chore so that everyone's needs are being addressed. If you have a specific need, or you would like to volunteer to run errands, please call the church office and leave a message.

Also, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. I would love to hear from you and learn how you are coping and dealing with the current situation. This could last a couple of weeks or a couple of months or even longer. We have no way as yet to see what the future holds. But we do have one another and the resources God has entrusted us with to walk with confidence into whatever this crisis throws our way.

Finally, remember you are not alone. God is with you, with us all. I urge you to watch Presiding Bishop Eaton's video message on the current situation. I also promise to keep you informed as the situation changes, and as I receive more information from Bishop Guy and from any colleagues on the central coast. Again; be not afraid, for even in our anxiety and uncertainty, God is with us and will bring us through this crisis into fuller and more abundant life.

Your Fellow Pilgrim on the Journey,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg Kintzi". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pastor Greg Kintzi