



Monday, March 16th, Update

Thank you for all of you who tuned in to worship with us yesterday via the live stream. Thank you for extending us grace as we try to work out all the technical bugs. We are grateful for the extra time this week to prepare for the live stream. We hope to make substantial improvements to the live stream this week so that you might worship together without distraction.

Many of you expressed how much you appreciated meeting together in a small group for the worship service. We would like to see as many as are able, join together in these smaller groups for worship each week. This is a way for us to heed the Word of God – “not neglecting to meet together” (Heb. 10:25) – while also submitting to the leadership of our local and federal authorities and showing love toward our neighbor. I was encouraged to hear that some homes actually had new visitors who gathered during this uncertain time to hear the Word of God proclaimed!

While meeting in small groups for worship is our ideal, we also ask you to be smart and loving toward others. If you, or anyone in your family, are experiencing *any* symptoms of COVID-19 please stay home. If anyone in your family has any underlying respiratory problems or diabetes, we recommend that you avoid exposure. If you are one of our senior saints, please exercise extreme caution. You are the most at risk among us. We love you, and the last thing we want to do is cause you harm.

When you do meet together in small groups, please “Do the Five to Help Stop Coronavirus:” 1) Hands – wash them often, 2) Elbow – cough into it, 3) Face – don’t touch it, 4) Feet – stay more than 3 feet apart, and 5) Feel – sick? Stay home! While this is uncomfortable for us, we must take these steps out of our love for one another and the good of our community.

We want to make sure everyone does have a place to worship if they desire to do so. If you are willing to host a small group in your home on Sunday mornings for worship, would you let us know? You can do so on our website (just click the Coronavirus link at the top of the homepage) or by emailing Pastor Greg Gifford at ggifford@faithcommunitychurch.com. You may also reach out to Pastor Greg if you are looking for a place to meet. We will be doing our best to get everyone connected during this season of change.

On Sunday, March 15, the CDC updated their guidance (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/mass-gatherings-ready-for-covid-19.html>). They are now recommending that any gatherings of 50 or more be suspended for the next 8 weeks. As a response, we are cancelling all ministries that would normally meet at the church facility this

week (March 16-22). That includes AWANA, Youth Group, and Side by Side. The women's retreat has also been postponed. We will take this week to pray and plan for how to continue to minister to your family's needs under the current guidelines. Watch for updates, or check our website, for details about ministries in the weeks to come.

**** UPDATE As of 1:00 PM today, a recommendation was made by the President to limit social gatherings of 10 or more. We will keep you updated if this recommendation becomes an executive order, and will also provide you with recommendations for how still prioritize small group gatherings.*

Many of you are going to have a lot more time with your family in the weeks to come. I believe this is a gift from God. Don't waste the time. If you are not already in a regular pattern of family worship, there is no better time than now to begin. Attached is a list of resources that you might find helpful for leading family devotions. They can all be ordered on Amazon and delivered to your door. We are also considering ways that we can help minister to your family in this unique window of time.

This is also a time for us to put into practice the mind of Christ – “Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others”- Philippians 2:3-4. Human nature calls us to hoard; Jesus calls us to generously give. Human nature calls us to retreat for our own safety; Jesus calls us to advance in His love. The needs will only increase in the days to come. May we be ready and mobilized to serve when the time comes.

Finally, listen to the words of Psalm 112:7 – “He (the righteous one) is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD.” May these words be true of us today, and the days to come.

The Lord Bless You and Keep You,

Pastor Steve Jackson on Behalf of the Elder Team