

March 16, 2020

Dear First Reformed Church Congregational Member,

As the church administrative team, we had a conversation about the coming weeks and what lies ahead. We are reminded of God's faithfulness and provision. We are surrounded by God's loving arms and immersed in His unconditional love. In the book of Joshua He reminds Joshua as He reminds us to, "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.

We have come to a decision that we will do all we can to assure the health and welfare of each of our congregational members. We don't want to be reckless, instead we want to be responsible. With that in mind we have made the decision that **we will suspend all church gatherings until April 9, Maundy Thursday**. As we get closer to that date we will reevaluate our next steps.

**The activities would include all Bible Study Groups, Educational activities including Sunday School, Wednesday night classes and all youth group activities. It will also include our Sunday morning worship services.**

**So as for now, here is how we are planning on doing things.**

We will be looking for some opportunities for possibly some online Bible Studies. Maybe even through zoom meetings. This would allow several people to join us online which would include discussion.

We want to encourage you to take advantage of our Right Now Media resources. As a family or in home small groups you could meet weekly and use one of these resources for teaching and discussion. Take advantage of this with your families and kids, it will be a great opportunity to grow together during this time. There are also hundreds of videos for children to be able to watch. Our church website has the link for RightNow Media.

Play games, talk and spend time together. Make devotions a part of your family meals. This is maybe one of those, once in a lifetime opportunities, to again be a family without the busy schedules each family member has. You might have to relearn what that looks like but there can be incredible blessing that will come out of this.

With youth group activities, Josh will keep you informed. He is planning to go online on Wednesday evenings with his talks for any student who wants to listen. He will also be sharing information about the fundraisers planned and any other information you might need.

For Sunday morning worship we will go online with everything as well. You will be able to go to our Facebook page and watch live. We will do our live service at 10:00 am on Sundays and it will include hymns, worship songs, announcements, a prayer time and the message. Just as if you were sitting in the church pews. Feel free to host family watch parties and join in the singing of the hymns and songs as well as listening to God's Word. The service will be available at any time after the live viewing for you to watch.

We also want to remind you that because we are not physically coming to church we do need your tithes and offerings. There are several ways in which you can give.

1. If you have a PayPal account you can give to the church through our email address. It's simple and safe. You will have to establish a PayPal account if you don't have one. Once your account is established you can send money through the church's email address: ([sibleyfrcoffice@gmail.com](mailto:sibleyfrcoffice@gmail.com)) You put in the amount you want to send and then send it. It will be entered in the churches PayPal account.
2. You can give through direct pay into our church account. Here is what you need to do to make that happen. Go to your online banking services and then set First reformed Church as a payee to make a payment. You will need to put in the church's routing number and then account number. Routing: 073905116 Account: 234818. Following that you would put in the amount you want to send and then make the payment.
3. You can do things the old fashioned way and send your contribution by mail.
4. You can swing by the office and slip it under either Pastor Luke's or Jamie's door. Just have it in a sealed envelope marked offering and if it is to be designated to a certain account (general, benevolent, etc)

All these ways will help us continue to meet our budget and get our bills paid.

We are praying that God will bring about amazing stories of how He has worked through this crisis. We are praying for everyone's health, and that as we move forward we will be stronger. If you need any spiritual care or for that matter any help, please contact the church office or Pastor Luke.

Personally as your pastor, I am confident in what God will do and I encourage you to not fear but put your faith and hope in Jesus Christ. One of my favorite passages of scriptures comes from Matthew 6:25-34:

*<sup>25</sup> "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? <sup>27</sup> Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life<sup>[a]</sup>?"*

*<sup>28</sup> "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. <sup>29</sup> Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. <sup>30</sup> If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? <sup>31</sup> So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' <sup>32</sup> For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. <sup>33</sup> **But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.** <sup>34</sup> Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

Prayers and Love,

*Pastor Luke*

Pastor Luke and our Church Leadership