

Whenever people love each other and are true to each other and take risks for each other, God is with them and for them and they are doing God's will.

- Frederick Buechner

Greetings!

Due to the Coronavirus (COVID 19) Disease, our Church Board met last Sunday to determine how we will respond as a church family. I'm writing to update you on our situation.

Aiding our national attempt to lessen the effects of the virus, Pfafftown Christian Church has joined with other churches and organizations to limit our exposure and bring this outbreak to a quicker end by not meeting in large groups. This means we have canceled all group activities in our building. This includes Connect Groups, worship, music practices, ministry team meetings, scout and community gatherings.

Our facilities will remain unavailable for group gatherings **through April 5**. On April 5, the board will meet again at 2 p.m. to re-evaluate. The earliest we plan to meet for Sunday worship is on Easter, April 12. We will clarify this possibility following the April 5 board meeting.

The good news is, many of our ministries continue to function:

Pastoral Care. During this season, you can expect to hear from Tim, Traci, and myself as we call our parishioners. You can also expect to hear from your family's Elder. If you should have a need (such as someone to pick up medications or food and drop them at your door) or would simply like to talk during this time, do not hesitate to contact me or one of the persons listed below.

Gerald Thomas: 336 504-8206
Traci Canter: 336 407-1277

Timothy Shoaf: 336 692-5214
Elders: See your Yearbook

Office. At this time, we will maintain the office on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Food Ministries. Besides pastoral care, our church is still reaching out to provide food for those in great difficulty. Through your financial giving, we will continue to contribute to the Crisis Control Center food ministry. Our Community Garden is to be planted on schedule. It was great to see community folks working in their individual plots last week.

Hospital Visitations. Hospitals are currently allowing pastors with proper badges to make visits.

The Visitor Newsletter. The newsletter will be mailed each month and posted on our website.

Worship. The church is working on electronic ways to distribute a sermon or short service each Sunday. If you would like a manuscript of the sermon mailed, please call the church office. If you would like to be included in email updates, and we do not have your address, please call me and submit your email address.

Newborns in Need. We continue to receive items on behalf of this ministry to infants and families. It is good to report that in these difficult times, Newborns in Need is actually expanding into West Virginia. We celebrate and remain supportive of these efforts.

Connect Groups. We are currently in a Lenten study. We will halt this study at this time and pick it up when we begin to meet again.

Giving. With the awareness of so many who depend on our church ministries, we hope you will be mindful of the need to continue to support these listed above. Your prayers, presence (by email, social media and telephone—and in spirit) coupled with your financial support are vital and needed to sustain and strengthen our ongoing life together. Please mail your contributions to our church office: P.O. Box 130, Pfafftown NC 27040.

For **up-to-date information** on the Coronavirus Disease, you may look to:

North Carolina:

www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-response-north-carolina

Nationally:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html

Internationally:

www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public

In this season, I am reminded of what J.R.R. Tolkien wrote in the Lord of the Rings trilogy:

Frodo said, “I wish none of this had happened.”

Gandalf replied “So do all who live to see such times, but that is not for them to decide.

All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given to us.”

As we live in this “time given to us,” **together** (albeit at least 6-feet-apart together), let us continue to trust in the courage and the goodness that is the gospel. Jesus said, “The kingdom of God is within you.” Jesus taught, “You are the light of the world.” Jesus encouraged, “They will know you are my disciples if you have love, one for the other.”

May our care for each other cause people to know: We are Disciples, indeed.

Grace and Peace,
Gerald Thomas,
Pastor

