



March 13, 2020

To our friends and family of the Chicago Church of Christ –

We hope this note finds you faithful and filled with the peace Paul speaks of in Philippians chapter 3; a peace that “transcends understanding.” This is our second letter regarding the developments with the COVID-19 virus.

It has been a week of unprecedented events as the coronavirus COVID-19 has affected cities and communities the world over. In unbelievable acts of solidarity businesses, governments and community entities everywhere are attempting to halt the spread of this virus. The way they are doing this is to ask employees, fans and members of their organizations to stay home for a predetermined period of time in order to limit the amount of contact with people who are infected and may not yet even know it.

After much advice, discussion and prayer, the leadership of the Chicago Church of Christ has decided to move in step with what so many of these organizations are doing. Therefore, we will NOT meet together for Sunday services until Palm Sunday, April 5. We hope that by doing this our fellowship can do its part to protect our community. In addition, we will be cancelling all events on our church calendar for the same duration of time. This includes all campus and youth & family devotionals, midweeks, and the like.

We, the elders, evangelists, women’s ministry leaders and staff, are praying daily for the Holy Spirit to guide us in wisdom, faithfulness, peace and love during this time (Matthew 5:14-16). It is our great desire that God will help our light to shine brightly in this hour of concern in our world. We are also praying that each of us, as disciples of Jesus, would draw near to God and to one another in a demonstration of faithfulness and love (John 13:34-35).

As most of us are aware, there are COVID-19 developments and updates coming in hour by hour. We, as spiritual leaders, are working very hard in communication and prayer to make decisions to keep us connected, spiritually focused, and safe.

Here is our plan for the next few weeks:

- 1. We are suspending all congregational worship services, gatherings in our Ministry Centers, and all calendar events.**
 - For the Sundays of March 15, March 22, and March 29, we will not be meeting in our regional locations. Instead, we will meet in our own homes, remotely, or in smaller gatherings within our small groups.

2. Please connect in your house churches for a time of “virtual” worship as we share communion on these next 3 Sundays.

- The evangelists and elders in each of our ministries will be creating pre-recorded communion messages that we can all access online over the next 3 Sundays.
- Your regional ministry leader will send more detailed information as to how to access these video messages and updates.
- For at least the next 3 weeks we are encouraging each of you to use spiritual wisdom and discretion if you choose to gather together. We would encourage you to use technology as much as possible, such as remote video conferencing within each small group to connect for a time of “virtual” worship and prayer together.
- We are very blessed to have an amazing small group structure across the Chicago Church. Though some house churches will not be able to physically meet, it is through these groups that we envision all of us staying in communication and connection as we encourage each other, meet needs and participate in times of prayer and worship.

3. Please use wisdom in discerning whether you should meet in any size group.

- It is our request that no one in a compromised health situation or demonstrating any signs of illness meet in any gathering.
- Those 60 years old and above should consider staying away from group gatherings as well, in accordance with public health officials’ advice.

4. In order to protect the financial viability and function of the Chicago Church we want to encourage [online giving](#). (Please follow this link for instructions on how to give on the Chicago Church website.)

5. Please stay healthy and continue to follow [CDC guidelines](#) to prevent the spread of germs, such as:

- Wash your hands regularly for at least 20 seconds with soap and water and/or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Try to refrain from touching your eyes, nose, and mouth as these are the entry points for contagions. And cover all coughs and sneezes.

We, as a church leadership, are staying informed and ask that you do the same. The [CDC website](#) is your best place for accurate and up-to-date information. They have a full list of precautions and explanations. Also, the [HOPE worldwide website](#) has a page devoted to COVID-19 updates.

We will do our very best to keep you informed as updates are available and if there are changes and/or developments that warrant further precautions. In the meantime, let us find ways to stay connected, to encourage one another and to truly be a light to the world at this hour. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to reach out to your ministry staff.

“May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 15:5-6)

All of our prayers and love –

Evangelists, Elders and Women’s Ministers
Chicago Church of Christ