

March 13, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of First Presbyterian Church,

Grace and Peace to you in the name of Christ Jesus. I'm writing to update you on FPCP's plans for responding to the onset of COVID 19 (Coronavirus).

After considering recommendations from our state, local and denominational leaders, the Session and staff believe the most responsible course of action at this time is to exercise an abundance of caution and **cancel our worship service for this Sunday, March 15.**

Preventing the further spread of the coronavirus is one of the best possible ways for us to love and care for one another and for our communities. When Jesus said, "Love your neighbor," he asked us to consider how altering our actions might benefit others, particularly the most vulnerable in our midst.

I know that gathering for worship and fellowship is a great joy and time of encouragement, but I am also reminded that gathering Sunday morning is not the only thing that makes us the church. Our connection to God and one another is not limited to physical meeting. We are the body of Christ, the church, joined together by love and faith (as well as phone calls, emails, texts, Instagram posts and video calls) wherever we are in the world. Perhaps Sunday morning you will reach out to someone you know and ask, "How are you doing? Is there anything you need? And how can I pray for you?"

Besides canceling our worship service for this Sunday, smaller gatherings (Bible studies, small groups, Young At Heart, commission meetings, Session, Deacons, etc.) will be held at the group's discretion. Some may choose to meet virtually through video platforms such as Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, etc., or at the very least provide call-in options.

We will keep you informed about future Sundays and other events that may be impacted. When in doubt, check the church website, Facebook page, the Exchange eLetter, or give us a call.

The church office will continue to stay open, and we are here for you. **Don't hesitate to call** for prayer, conversation, or any kind of assistance you may require. You can reach the church office at (707) 762-8269 or call me directly at (206) 604-0942.

Finally, **I encourage you to pray** for healing for those who are ill throughout the world, and for those medical professionals and caregivers who are working so tirelessly on the front lines. And let us pray for one another, that we would encounter Jesus in this strange and unexpected Lenten wilderness in which we now find ourselves.

Praying God's peace, health, and very best for you all.

Pastor John