

3-18-2020

Good Morning Church:

Following is an update and important information concerning the COVID-19 Virus Pandemic as it relates to our Church and Community.

As you are aware, we take our need for and freedom to worship as being a very important and sacred right as both Christians and Americans. This past week, we worshipped as usual with a normal schedule being followed. As we stated on Sunday, if the conditions worsened, then we would need to reassess our response. We now need to determine our action and reaction to the recommendations being made by the Centers of Disease Control and those of our State and Local medical authorities.

I have examined the recommendations of “social distancing” and avoiding groups or crowds that is an executive order by the state and at present a recommendation from The Duplin County Board of Health, and our President. ***This does not single out churches but is applied to every event where crowds may gather. As such, I do not believe this is an effort to curtail either our rights or freedom to worship. Therefore, submitting to these recommendations are in line with scripture”***
Romans 13:1-2 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

After having prayed and reflected upon my role as your pastor, I realize the importance of the shepherd aspect of that responsibility. The shepherd is to “protect” the flock. Yes, corporate worship is essential, and we will resume that as quickly as we can. In the interim, I am making efforts to make sermons available for online streaming thru our face-book page and other means. We should each maintain our own private devotion and study times, and during what would have been our congregational meeting and worship times—share with our family the lesson for that day. More time is needed in prayer, so let us pray more.

Beginning immediately, **ALL GROUP ACTIVITIES TO INCLUDE: WORSHIP SERVICES, PRAYER MEETINGS, BIBLE STUDIES, MINISTRY GROUPS OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, SENIOR ADULTS, and SPORT’S TEAMS WILL BE SUSPENDED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE.**

These are difficult and unusual times. However, we are now presented with an extraordinary opportunity to be the church—not in name only, but to be the church. We can be the hands and feet of Jesus to a lost a dying world. We also want to minister to our own that are most vulnerable to this virus. I am asking Brother Bo Jones to inform our deacon board and every ministry team to be ready to assist our elderly and all at risk among us. This will include wellness

check phone calls, volunteering to deliver medicines and supplies, etc. If you do not know who your family deacon is then please call the church office.

As you know, my wife is severely immune suppressed and highly susceptible to any virus or infection. As such, I have to take extra precautions. While I may not be able to meet in person, I am still available by phone or text. Please feel free to call me with any needs or concerns that you may have. If you have an immediate need, please contact the office or your deacon. **Brother Joe Noel is also available for helping with pastoral duties as needed. His number is 910-459-0882**

2 Timothy 1:7--For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Therefore, let us not react from fear—however let us be cautious, Let us exercise our greatest power by praying—yet put feet to our prayers, and let us love not in word only, but by meeting the needs of others. And finally, let us have a soundness of mind: “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

We will strive to keep you updated as to plans as the events unfold.

May God Bless and Keep Each of You in His Care,
Philip Eakins, Pastor