

March 12, 2020

Dear Grosse Pointe Memorial Church family:

All worship services, Sunday school gatherings, Middle Hour program, and the Choir Concert for March 15 have been cancelled. This decision is based on the public health need to limit the spread of the coronavirus in our communities and state, and in response to Governor Whitmer's recommendation limiting gatherings of 100 persons or more.

The coronavirus infection and the resulting COVID-19 disease is a health crisis that demands careful attention by governments, communities, and individuals. The issue is not one of faith or fear, but of taking responsible action to protect the most vulnerable members of our society, of our community, and of our families. Because testing has been limited thus far, a public health assessment of the virus's spread is unknown at this time. Without accurate information, and given the proven community spread of the disease within our country and state, we are taking prudent steps to contribute to the containment and mitigation of the infection.

This Sunday's bulletin, with liturgy and prayers and information, will be posted on our website. GPMC is working to stream the sermon if possible, or at least record and post it later. If we have the capacity, we can include other liturgy and prayers in addition to scripture readings and sermon.

At this time, committee meetings and other small events have not been cancelled. Those cancellations will be publicized as we receive them. No decisions have been made about events beyond Sunday, but we should expect an increasing need to exercise caution and take precautionary steps as this crisis unfolds. Do not be surprised if more events are cancelled.

Any church members or friends of the church or staff who need care or assistance because of self-quarantine or illness or any other concern are encouraged to call the church or staff. Staff exhibiting signs of health challenges are encouraged to work from home.

We encourage you to follow recommended precautions and guidelines for hygiene and health (as published here at church and through the CDC and other health agencies) as ways to care for all.

Hear these words from the Apostle Paul: "Rejoice in the Lord always! Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you."
(Philippians 4:4-9)

Grace and peace,

Mark Diehl, Interim Pastor, Head of Staff, Grosse Pointe Memorial Church