

A NOTE FROM KEVIN



Dear Church Family,

In the past week we've seen the first cases of Coronavirus in our county. And I'm sure you're hearing about the steps various organizations throughout the area are taking to try to contain the disease. Though Coronavirus isn't currently being transmitted within our community, we want to be prepared as a church - both practically and spiritually. So I'm writing to update you on how we can prepare as a church with care and faith. Please take a few minutes to read this email carefully.

Here are a few of the ways the staff is preparing centrally.

- We are regularly monitoring and following the [CDC's specialized guidelines](#) for faith organizations. At this time, the CDC is recommending basic preparedness measures. We will continue to track and follow these guidelines as they are updated.
- [Dave Wilcox](#), Director of Operations, is coordinating with local community response organizations to stay informed and networked with local government. He is also coordinating with other church leaders, locally and nationally, as the broader church prepares and responds to the situation as it develops.
- The Discovery Land team will continue to follow their protocols for disinfecting all classrooms and equipment before and after each Sunday service.
- Our cleaning service is following protocols for cleaning and disinfection throughout the building. We are prepared to make adjustments as necessary according to the CDC's guidelines and best practices as the situation unfolds.

- This Sunday we will take the Lord's Supper together. But we are using individual cups wrapped with pre-packaged wafers instead of the usual bowls of bread.
- We are reviewing ministry events and making adjustments as necessary. For example, we've canceled this week's Senior Saints luncheon.

As we prepare to gather on Sunday, here are a few ways we can serve one another and the neighbors who join us.

- Let's give each other some space. Ecclesiastes 3:5b says there is "...a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing." I don't know that the author had Coronavirus in mind, but if there was ever a time to refrain from embracing, this is probably it. I'm so glad we are a warm, affectionate bunch. But there are times when love for neighbor means we rein it in a bit. Let's swap hugs for big smiles and handshakes for fist pumps.
- If you are sick, stay home. Unless and until there is a change in the government's guidance, we will continue to gather weekly for worship. But if you are sick, you can serve others by staying home.
- If your kids are sick, keep them home. Discovery Land volunteers will be vigilant about maintaining our standard [health procedures](#).

We will continue to monitor the situation regularly and communicate updates as necessary. On Sunday, we will take some time to reflect on [Psalm 91](#) and pray together as we process these events.

Over the last several days, I've noticed a tendency to respond in two extremes. Some can be dismissive. Others tend to panic. As followers of Christ, we have a couple of bedrock truths that can steady us in the midst of it all.

First, we belong to Christ. Because we are His, we know that "no evil shall be allowed to befall you" (Psalm 91:10) apart from his good and sovereign will. We can rest in his care for us and our families.

And, secondly, he has called us to love our neighbor. We have a wonderful opportunity to let the peace of the gospel shine brightly from our lives in this season. No matter what happens, our future is secure. So we are freed to respond in love to our neighbors and friends. Is there someone in your life - an elderly

neighbor, a sick coworker - that you could move *toward* in this time? Could you offer to run errands if they fear leaving their home? Could you bring them a prepackaged meal or send them an email to let them know you're praying for them? Even if we must maintain a certain distance physically from others in the days ahead, let's not stop being salt and light in whatever ways the Lord allows. Let's be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit as we walk by the Spirit in the days to come.

Kevin