

RE: COVID-19 (Very Important Update from Faith Elders)  
Date: March 13, 2020

Dear Faith Family

As COVID-19 (aka. coronavirus) continues to dominate the news and is a cause of concern and uncertainty within our community and the world, **we wanted to take a moment to update everyone**, how the elders will be planning for the weeks ahead.

First, we know that **God is sovereign, yet we also want to make every effort to pray, think, and plan** practically through this challenge. Our desire for our faith family is to not over-react or under-react. There is a wonderful sweet spot where we can, as Christ followers, not be anxious, but also be vigilant. We want to **“redirect social energy from anxiety and panic to love and preparation.”** Please continue to pray for wisdom.

Having said that, the elders have made some decisions. Much of the reasoning behind it was wrestling with the following question. **“In light of this challenge, how do we continue to love God, responsibly love and care for God’s people, and prepare to love God’s world?”**

These decisions made would have been unthinkable even a few weeks ago, however, now they are essential if we are to protect those vulnerable to COVID-19 and the public health system that will need to care for them<sup>1</sup>.

**A. DECISIONS MADE.** At this time ...

- 1. Sunday worship will continue as usual<sup>2</sup>**
- 2. “Communion” will stop (until further notice)**
- 3. Food and/or drink (after worship) will stop (until further notice)**
- 4. Baptism is postponed (future date TBD)**
- 5. Handshakes and Hugs (limit close contact with others as much as possible)**
- 6. FaithKids (Mini class will stop until further notice)<sup>3</sup>**

And, as we move forward, ...

**B. DECISIONS TO BE MADE.** Once per week (or more if necessary), the elders will meet (conference call) to consider the following.

- 1. Sunday worship (should we continue as usual?)<sup>4</sup>**
- 2. FaithKids (Junior and Senior, should the classes continue)**

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<sup>1</sup> Read this article about flattening the curve. [https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/flatten-the-curve-coronavirus\\_n\\_5e67d697c5b68d61645bef02?ri18n=true](https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/flatten-the-curve-coronavirus_n_5e67d697c5b68d61645bef02?ri18n=true)

<sup>2</sup> We will continue to monitor developments and listen to the Public Health officials.

<sup>3</sup> A separate email to you will be sent out very soon, detailing how this Sunday's gathering will look.

<sup>4</sup> If we decide to stop in person worship service, we are prepared to go online.

And now, ...

**C. DECISIONS YOU NEED TO MAKE.** Elders have been praying, learning, and talking, and we ask you to consider the following.

- If you are a high-risk individual or have concerns about potential exposure, please use your own judgment about attending services or events.
- If you want to adjust your or your children's participation, please know that we will respect and understand your decision.
- If you have travelled to China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Japan, Singapore, Iran, or Italy, or have had close contact with a person ill with COVID-19 and develop symptoms of 2019 novel coronavirus infection, avoid contact with others and call your health care professional prior to visiting.<sup>5</sup>
- **If you or someone in your home is diagnosed with COVID-19, please let one of the elders or deacons know so we can support and care for you.**
- If you feel anxious or just want to talk, please reach out to a faith family member. If you want to speak with pastor Sean (for pastoral counselling), he would be very glad to speak with you. Please call him.

**D. ACTIONS WE ALL NEED TO TAKE.** To help prevent the spread of germs, please:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue if you sneeze, or cough into your elbow.
- Wash your hands frequently for 20 seconds, and encourage everyone in your home (especially teach your kids!) to do the same.
- Get in the habit of not touching your face.
- Practice social distancing (physically, but not in any other way).

**E. OTHER THINGS.** The following are few other things elders (with deacons) are looking into.

- 1. Reached out to WBC.** Spoke with WBC to discuss coordination. We are waiting for a meeting to be held in the near future.
- 2. Create fellowship opportunities.** In smaller groups and/on online.
- 3. Elders reaching out to faith family.** Especially, if we decide to go online for Sunday worship.
- 4. Creating a committee.** To support faith family and friends who may get sick.
- 5. Making available pastoral counselling.** For those who would like to receive pastoral counselling, Very likely online

**F. FINAL THOUGHT.** These are unprecedented times. Year 2020, so far, has been very challenging for many of us (if not, for all of us).

However, it can also be a great opportunity for God's glory to shine brighter than ever in our lifetime. As we, God's people, like a wake up call, open our eyes and see how much everyone needs the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

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<sup>5</sup> This is from Toronto Public Health (TPH), <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/health-wellness-care/diseases-medications-vaccines/coronavirus/>.

I am reminded of what Mordecai said to Esther. **“And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?”** (Esther 4:14b ESV)

Who knows whether you and I are in Canada, in our church, in our work place, in our family, in our friendships, in our neighbourhoods, in Willowdale, for such a time as this.

Faith family, may we continue to hold each other as family, especially in prayer, as we meet this trial. I am also reminded of one of my favourite passages in the Bible when going through a challenge. Today, the following Psalm seem even more applicable.

1 God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.  
2 Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way,  
though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea,  
3 though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble at its swelling. Selah  
4 There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.  
5 God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved;  
God will help her when morning dawns.  
6 The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;  
he utters his voice, the earth melts.  
7 The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah  
8 Come, behold the works of the Lord,  
how he has brought desolations on the earth.  
9 He makes wars cease to the end of the earth;  
he breaks the bow and shatters the spear;  
he burns the chariots with fire.  
10 “Be still, and know that I am God.  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth!”  
11 The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our fortress. Selah  
(Psalm 46:1-11 ESV)

There will be other updates, likely once a week, or as needed.

We love you very much and God bless you, your family, and our faith family.

Elders of Faith Church

Sean Huh  
Will Shin  
Wayne Shin