

Grace Kernersville Coronavirus (COVID-19) Response

Dear Friends,

The leadership is taking the COVID-19 response seriously and is listening carefully to the counsel of state and world health officials. We are grateful for the counsel of our the GPC Safety Team and the health professionals in our congregation who have offered reasoned counsel.

As we understand the the threat. Coronavirus (COVID-19) is highly contagious. It seems likely that most will contract some form of it. Though there are varying degrees of severity, we are concerned for our members and neighbors who are in at-risk categories. The strategic concern seems to be the stemming the flood of hospitalizations which may occur that could overwhelm our current medical facilities.

Grace Kenersville's leadership will continue for the time being, to offer corporate worship on Sunday at 10:30am and Adult Sunday School at 9:30am provided we fall within the constraints requested by local and state government. As this is an evolving situation, this decision will be made on a week by week basis. As long as we are able, something will be offered at 10:30am on Sunday, even if it is only a video feed. In addition, the leadership is continuing to explore other ways by which we may stay connected. However, we want to let all know, that though worship is offered, we recognize that many may be uncomfortable gathering. We respect your decision and trust that you will make the best decision for you and your family. If you have questions or would like to talk with one of the leaders, please do not hesitate to reach out.

In responding to the pandemic we want to encourage our members to be conscious of the ways the virus is transmitted and to be proactive in reducing likelihood of transmission. As you're probably already doing, we want to continue to encourage regular hand washing and hand sanitizing. We ask that people refrain from hand shaking, and while at church we ask that you not sit clumped together. In addition, after we reset from the Consignment Sale today, we will set out more chairs than necessary and return to four sections in order to allow you to spread out. If you are in an at-risk category, we invite and encourage you to visit with us remotely by making use Grace Kernersville's YouTube Channel live stream which may be accessed through the church website, www.gracekenersville.org. Lastly, if you are sick, please stay home.

For those non-symptomatic people attending church, we will do our best to supply soap, hand sanitizer, and tissues at entries and in public places. As you have likely heard, these resources are slim, but we will do our best to have them available

As for our Sunday services, we will implement some changes which you will notice tomorrow.

- We will be directing and asking that people enter and exit through the front doors only.

- Upon entering the building, you may want to immediately go to wash your hands. Greeters will be offering bulletins to those entering, but understand if you would rather pick one up yourself from the table foyer.
- Upon entering the sanctuary, please spread out (as noted above).
- We ask that unless you need to be in the kitchen, that you not enter (especially children seeking ice). Coffee will be made and offered, but a lot of traffic in the kitchen is not ideal.
- Because young children may be asymptomatic, Lori has adjusted the nursery schedule so that those who are 65 and older are not scheduled. If you have concerns, please speak with her.
- During the worship service, we will not pass pew pads. As we receive prayer requests, we will invite you to share verbally during the prayer time or via text or email.
- We will also refrain from passing the offering baskets. Baskets will be available at the back of the sanctuary into which you may place your offering.
- Pastor Randy may continue his Children's Message, but he will ask that children stay with their families until dismissed.
- We will not be offering the Lord's Supper in March. As events unfold we will make decisions about Maundy Thursday and April.
- Should circumstances escalate, the Leadership is prepared to suspend gathered worship for other venues and means which we will inform the congregation about as the that time arises.

Lastly, the Leadership has two additional concerns. Firstly, we are concerned about our local economy. Our friends and neighbors who do business, especially in service industries, are already bearing the brunt of an economy dialed down. Please be praying for them, and let us consider how we may support one another through this season. Secondly, though we may need to self-isolate to inhibit the transmission of the disease, we are very concerned for the impact of that isolation. The leadership is discussing and taking steps to be proactive in reaching out and providing ways in which we might connect and share the burden of this trial. I've spoken many times about the issues of patience. The long suffering of patience is hard enough. To bear long suffering alone is quite another trial. If you are available and would like to assist in this ministry, please let Pastor Randy know.

We will continue to communicate about opportunities and specifics in the next coming days. Our prayers and love are with you.

Grace,

Pastor Randy Edwards