

March 19, 2020

To our brothers and sisters in Peoria CRC,

Due to the Coronavirus and new state and federal guidelines limiting public gatherings, the Council has decided to cancel worship services at Peoria CRC at least through April 5, along with other group gatherings such as youth ministries, weekly Bible studies, etc. We will continue to monitor the situation, provide updates, and look forward to sharing when worship services and other functions will resume.

We understand that this is a time of uncertainty for many people, not only because of the virus, but also because we are entering a time of economic instability. Even though these are uncertain times, the life and purpose of Peoria CRC continue. We will still seek to glorify God in and through worship, discipleship, fellowship, and witness. This will look a little different over the next weeks but we can indeed continue to do this. Please ponder this and how this will be true for you and how it can be true for us as church family.

For fellowship, we are committed to providing support. If you need something – a visit, prayer, a phone call, or someone to run to the store for you, please reach out to anyone on the Council. We encourage you to increase the number of phone calls you make to each other and to your neighbors as well.

For worship and discipleship, we encourage members this Sunday, March 22, to do as Pastor George suggested and utilize Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 26-28 and the associated scripture references as the basis of family or individual worship, perhaps complemented by prayer, meditating on or talking about what was read, and a song or two. After this Sunday, the Council is working to provide portions of worship online, along with our current audio and DVD formats.

At times like these we are reminded again how little control we have over this world and our lives. Certainly, we will face some challenges over the next weeks and even months. But as Christians, we know that God holds all things in his hands. In past centuries, when plagues and sickness would strike, the church was a place of comfort and hope for all. Perhaps God is giving us this difficult time in order that we can demonstrate our love for Him and our neighbor. So let us love as Christ first loved us. Let this be our testimony.

In as much as possible, avoid social media forms of information and seek to go directly to trusted sources such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) <https://www.cdc.gov/> or Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) <https://idph.iowa.gov/>. Continue to be generous with your time and possessions – after all, everything we have is a gift from God. Share the gospel and the story of Jesus, and his death, and his resurrection, and his promise to come again. Let this be our witness. We are people marked not by fear but by hope!

Grace and peace to you,

Peoria CRC Council