



**415 N Mill Street, Stanton, MI 48888 989.831.5728 mytrinitychurch.com**

March 16, 2020

Dear Friends and Church Family,

As you know, we're in a situation none of us have been in before and things are changing day by day. We are certainly living in some unique and uncertain times, yet we continue to trust the Lord at all times!

First, we want to thank you for your patience and flexibility over the weekend as we cancelled our Sunday activities. The elders and I sure weren't very excited to cancel them, but we felt we needed to. Our decisions are not made out of fear in any way; rather, they are motivated by how we can best love our church and our neighbors by preventing the spread of the virus unnecessarily.

As the spread of COVID-19 hits Michigan, the counsel from our health officials and government leaders continues to change daily, becoming more restrictive in trying to lessen the spread of the virus. The Bible tells us to submit to our government leaders (see 1 Peter 2:13-14) unless they are asking us to sin. As of today, Monday, March 16, 2020, our governor has asked that we limit public gatherings to groups under 50 people for the next 8-weeks or around May 9.

These decisions will change the way we do things in the weeks to follow.

So, the question arises, "What are we going to do?" The elders are meeting this week to discuss our next steps. But in the meantime, I want to give us some words of encouragement.

Even though these decisions change the way we meet as a church family, I believe this gives us the opportunity to spread the message of hope in Jesus Christ with our neighbors and those who are closest to us.

As I mentioned, these are difficult times and unlike anything I have been through. So, I need you to help me (and the elders) think out of the box on this. I don't want to wallow in this so this is how I'm thinking and praying right now as we face this.

There are 168 hours in a week that God has called each of us to use to INVEST IN HIS KINGDOM. How can we be the hands and feet of Jesus to this community? Instead of sitting around binge watching TV, how can we use these hours to be THE Church? Another way to look at this situation might be instead of being fearful or selfish in our use of our time, how can we look at this situation as an opportunity to do things we haven't done before. How can we invest this time and use it for His kingdom?

Even though the church isn't meeting physically, in a building, we are still the church, we aren't limited to a space, and we can have an even greater impact. For once, our friends around us aren't distracted by their schedules, aren't running around to ballgames and appointments, but they are probably fearful of what is next. We can be a source of stability and peace.



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I'll say it again, don't see the temporary cancelling of our worship time on Sunday as a roadblock to the Gospel. It may actually be a way that the Gospel is advanced in our community. Remember how the Gospel was spread in the book of Acts as the Church was scattered? Yes, we will do things differently but maybe that is exactly what God wants us to do for this season. The church may look a little bit different, but I'm convinced God is going to open new avenues for the Gospel. So, don't be upset or depressed, but look at this as an opportunity for you to grow and to be a light for the Gospel.

Here are some ideas:

First of all, would you pray for the Coronavirus to be eradicated in Jesus' name.

**Pray for our country**, our friends in the medical field that walk into sickness every day. Pray for governing authorities as they make difficult decisions. Pray for those small business owners that are getting hit very hard. Pray for someone in a senior center who has been cut off from family.

Our aim at Trinity is to make missionary disciples. Use this time to develop into a missionary disciple. Think about how the Bible describes the characteristics of a missionary disciple.

- **A disciple is a seeker of God.** Maybe God has given you a gift and taken away some distractions in your life right now so you can seek Him more. How can you seek Him more with less distractions in your life? How can you use this time to find sweet fellowship with the Lord? I'm spending more time quietly with the Lord in prayer. I'm reflecting on Him through my journaling. I'm listening to Him more in the silence.
- **A disciple is a learner of truth.** How can you take this extra time you have to learn about the character of God? What can you learn that will help gain confidence in difficult times? Maybe you have wanted to read that one book. I just picked up a book that I have wanted to re-read, *Resilient Ministry*. I'm also investing this time to listen to some great theological podcasts on my walks.
- **A disciple is an Influencer of community.** This is a time to shine in this community. Call a neighbor to see if they need assistance. Call a friend and pray. Call some friends to join you for dessert and coffee at your house. Love people well during this time. And maybe you can plant a seed at this time when they are in crisis. This is a great time to **love and to help our neighbors**. Throughout history, the church has stood out in times of crisis. Invite some in your church family to your home to worship with you. Help the elderly and the vulnerable. Give them a call, or a text. Ask if they need groceries or supplies and help them in any way you can.
- **A disciple is an Investor in God's Kingdom.** This is an opportunity to serve, help, and to pray for others around you. Make a phone call to a neighbor, use your car, or drop off a care package. Ask the Lord how He wants you to invest your gifts and talents to help others.



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Trinity Church exists to glorify and magnify God to help others follow Christ. So, rather than complaining and being frightened, let's look at this as an opportunity. Maybe God is moving us out of the Sunday morning service for a time to shake us up and open our eyes to the harvest that is around us. Thank God in all circumstances and for giving us these opportunities. Let's make known how great God is to our community.

So, I need your prayers and ideas to help us be the hands and feet of Jesus in our community. How can we help others follow Christ?

Pastor Bob