

Greetings Church,

CEC leadership continues to prayerfully consider appropriate responses to current health issues and gathering to worship as the church.

After prayer and a time of conversation and discernment with our staff team and church leadership, **we've decided to not meet corporately this Sunday March 15th for worship at our church building and to modify the way we serve our Let's Eat community on Wednesday, March 18th.**

This was not an easy decision to make and was not a response out of fear, but out of love and care for our church and the wider community. This is the 'why' that drives our decision. We want to do our part as members of the community to reduce the number of people infected and protect those who are at higher risk.

We also want to remind ourselves of our vision to "Love God. Love People. Serve Both."

We can **"Love God"** in this situation by continuing to worship Him and put our trust in Him even in this time where fear and anxiety are trying to run our lives and our discernment. Even though our church will not be gathering this week in the ways it normally does, the Church is still called to worship, love and trust God as we gather in smaller groups and go about our lives this week.

We'd invite you to consider what it might look like for you, your family or your community group to set aside time Sunday morning to worship and pray together.

By this Sunday you will find the following resources on the home page at <http://www.evch.org>

- A short devotional video by Pastor Ryan on Mark 4:25-41 (Jesus calms the storm)
- Discussion questions based on the devotional video content
- Weekly engagement guide to continue engaging in our journey through the Gospel of Mark

Obviously this is not a mandate from leadership but a suggestion to find ways to continue worshipping, serving, and encouraging our community in the midst of current events.

Secondly, we are called to "**Love People.**" Jeremiah 29:7 calls us to "seek the welfare of the city" We can't think of a better way right now to love people and seek the welfare of our community, city, and world than to choose a public health decision that centers on caring for the most vulnerable by proactively working to stop the spreading of this virus. This is how we love people well. We know that shutting down our gatherings is a big deal and we definitely did not take this decision lightly. As we press forward, our decisions will be guided by the Holy Spirit, prayer and information from public health services.

Also, as you navigate social responses to current events we want to empower you to see your community group as a form of first response. This could be the perfect opportunity to check in with your neighbor, family or friends and see how we can be the hands and feet of Jesus to those in need in our community. Please reach out to CEC leadership if you need help meeting those needs.

Our "**Let's Eat**" Team is already planning ways to meet the tangible needs of our Let's Eat community without hosting a large group gathering this Wednesday.

CEC Leadership will evaluate the situation and our response next week and communicate that decision to our church family.

Many of our fellow churches in Corvallis and in the state of Oregon and Washington are responding in the same way this weekend. The sense amongst pastoral leadership in the city is that this is the prudent and gracious response at this time.

We believe that God is Sovereign and not surprised by these events.

We also believe that He is always at "work for the good of those who love Him." May He gave us eyes to see how we can **BE THE CHURCH** in our community during this season.

Peace be with you,

CEC Leadership Team