

Sunday worship and congregational meeting cancelled

Dear friends,

After much discussion in the pastoral team, with medical professionals in the congregation, and with other pastors in Goshen, we have decided to cancel gathering together for worship this Sunday (March 15) as well as the evening congregational meeting. Also Lunch Bunch scheduled for Friday, March 13 is also cancelled. Additional information about future plans and how we can be community together in these times will be sent to you by Saturday.

One of our considerations in making this call to cancel worship has been to think in terms of the collective and not just in terms of individuals - a thing that we in the church are hopefully especially equipped to do. The decision to cancel worship altogether removes the burden from individuals within our congregation to have to choose to exclude themselves from the embodied community that carries on without them, and instead spreads the burden, loss, and grief to all of us. Indeed, WE will all share the sorrow of missing the embodied community experience, instead of that sorrow being unduly borne by only our at-riskier members.

In these times, we are reminded how interconnected our global world can be and how important it is to approach one another with an ethic of compassion and care. The need for urgency can be fertile ground for fearful reactions. We desire a faithful response that is informed by medical and mental health professionals and reflective of our theological identity that we care for all. To this end I have attached a 2 page handout with information about the virus from the Centers for Disease Control and suggestions for how we as a congregation can respond to those around us.

For more information about COVID-19, [click here](#).

May the love of God and the prayers of God's people sustain us all,
Lora Nafziger (for the Pastoral Team, in conversation with medical professionals of Assembly)