

Faith Presbyterian Church

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May 19, 2020

To the Congregation of Faith Presbyterian Church,

This is the first of what the Session anticipates will be a regular series of updates to you regarding our operations during the current COVID-19 pandemic. As you have heard, the Session and Diaconate have formed a committee of the pastors, the church administrator Mr. Whaley, two elders (Drs. Darby and Gross) and two deacons (Mr. Lawty and Mr. Skrivan) to supply recommendations and plans to the officers as we move through this public health emergency. That committee met on May 12, reported to the Session on May 14, and will continually reassess the evolving situation and our response to it.

We want you to be aware that our primary concerns remain fidelity to God's Word, a firm commitment to our communal worship and sacraments and prayer, and the demonstration of love to God, to our neighbors, and to one another. The Session must seek balance between our Lord's command to worship together with His command to care for the most vulnerable among us. We wish to restore in-person worship and the Lord's Supper as soon as it is medically advisable and wise to do so.

At this moment, we think it is prudent to continue our current approach, with online worship on the Lord's Day and online prayer meetings each Wednesday evening. We expect this will be our approach for several more weeks at the least. Church services, gathering as they do large numbers of people in enclosed spaces speaking and singing together, serve as efficient vectors of respiratory virus transmission. We judge that the risk of community spread of this deadly infection remains quite high at this time.

Much remains unknown about the nature of the pandemic virus (SARS-COV-2) and the disease it causes. There are yet many active cases of COVID-19 in Pierce County, and particularly in Tacoma. Worse still, the known cases probably represent only 10% or less of the actual infections in the community. 17% of the known cases in Pierce County are in health care workers. Pray on for those most vulnerable among us.

We are establishing a dedicated email address for questions and insights from members and adherents of the congregation. (Note: We sent this out to the congregation by email. If you did not receive it, [please contact the church office](#).) We will gather those together intermittently and attempt to periodically address relevant questions and helpful advice with these updates over time. Also, we will establish a dedicated page on our church website for the publication of these updates.

We recognize that any decisions we reach will invariably come as welcome news and relief to some, and significant frustration to others among us. In the face of this calamity, and the reality of human uncertainty and ignorance, we call the congregation to prayerful humility both in public and in private. We will all, together as the Body of Christ, seek His wisdom for us.

Pray on for God's continued great mercy to us in this time of trouble.

For the Session,

Ryan Gross M.D.
Elder, FPC