

November 13, 2020 Covid-19 Ministry Update

The Bible: Psalm 86:11-12

*Teach me to follow you, and I will obey your truth
Always keep me faithful. With all my heart I thank you.*

An epidemiologist I heard on the radio:

"We may be sick and tired of COVID-19, but it is NOT sick and tired of us."

I used to read Psalm 86 and imagine that this was a contented, faithful person asking God to continue their growth in faith. In the midst of COVID-19, I read these words differently today: "I'm so sick and tired of the limitations COVID-19 has brought to my life: *God, show me/us the way through this. I'm lost and need you. Help me act in ways that honor your truth, help me to be faithful, and to live with gratitude for the many blessings I continue to enjoy each day...in spite of COVID-19!!*

Covid cases are rising at an alarming rate, both in our state, and across our nation. The time has come for our church to again dial back our programming that allowed many of us to enjoy some fellowship and occasional worship in our building. Our governor has issued new rules and suggestions that our leadership has reviewed.

HERE ARE AREAS OF MINISTRY AND CHANGES THAT ARE BEING MADE FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL CONCERNED:

PASTORAL ACTS (Worship, Baptisms, Funerals & Weddings)



Sunday Worship will continue online, with a weekly worship mailer sent to the homes of members without access to internet. For Christmas Eve, we are recording a service that will be available online, and by DVD.

Wednesday Worship at church has been cancelled effective Nov. 11. This service was intended for people without internet access, and is also a vulnerable group. We need to minimize their risk. As an alternative, we will begin a Wednesday morning devotional via Zoom by the end of November, and encourage members without internet access to listen to the devotion by telephone.

Baptisms - except for one pending family baptism, we will postpone other baptisms until the coronavirus situation improves.

Funerals & Memorial Services; Weddings - Limited to 25 people effective immediately. We will work with families to share the service on Zoom with those who are unable to attend because of limitation or vulnerability. Families may also decide to hold a service at a later date.

MEALS, SMALL GROUPS, CONNECTIONS



Sunday Community Meals will continue. As the weather gets colder, we could use some more hearty volunteers to help direct traffic in the parking lot.

After School program – as of Nov. 10, we are returning to home delivery of two hot meals each week; staff will take extra time at homes on Tuesdays to check in with kids and their families. Craft kits are being assembled to hand out as well.

Small Groups - Mission Workshop will move from six to four workers at a time for projects they can't do at home, 55+ Singles will meet by Zoom; Circles and Book Club are taking breaks until at least January. The Sunday morning Bible study continues by Zoom.

Christian Education & Fellowship - The Family Fun Day event was cancelled for November, but we hope to offer a drive-thru Advent wreath kit pickup in December. FLY has returned to online gatherings. Our Christian education for preschool through confirmation continues online.

Music Ministry - We will continue to record for worship in the Sanctuary with small groups of singers, and a small bell ensemble. Jeffrey's new music class (3 participants) will be postponed or moved online.

Staff will work from home as possible to reduce exposure to one another and those in the building.

Re-Start the CCGs
(Caring Community Groups, this time referring to it as Christmas Care Groups).



We will ask companionate members to take a page from the directory and do two check-ins between Thanksgiving and Christmas, whether by email, cards, or phone calls, plus holding people in prayer. If you would like to reach out to 12-16 households, please contact Faith Community Nurse Jane Bugbee, janebugbee@msn.com.

LIVIN'
ON A
prayer

Me: Okay, God, here's the thing. I'm scared. I'm trying not to be, but I am.

God: I know. Want to talk about it?

Me: Do we need to? I mean, you already know.

God: Let's talk about it anyway... We've done this before.

Me: I know; I just feel like I should be bigger or stronger or something by now.

God: *waiting patiently, unhurried, undistracted, never annoyed.

Me: Okay. So, I'm afraid I'll do everything I can to protect my family and it won't be enough. I'm afraid of someone I love dying. I'm afraid the world won't go back to what it was before. I'm afraid my life is always going to feel this unsettled.

God: Anything else?

Me: EVERYTHING ELSE.

God: Remember how your daughter woke up the other night and came running down the hall to your bedroom?

Me: Yes.



Nov. 20 Red Cross Blood Drive, six hours, with donors spaced 15 minutes apart inside our building. This is happening on a day when we normally don't have the office open. Since we don't have to supply volunteers to help, we think that this is vital to the community and will continue as planned



Reminder: Sunday, Nov. 22

Please turn in your 2021 Commitment cards at a station in the parking lot between 11 AM and Noon.

PLUS, we're collecting donations to purchase gift cards for teens in need through SACA. Each household making a donation receives a whole pumpkin or apple pie! THANK YOU!

In the peace and hope of Christ,

Pastor Bonnie Wilcox

God: You were still awake, so when you heard her running, you started calling out to her before she even got to you... remember? Do you remember what you called out to her?

Me: I said, "You're okay! You're okay! You're okay! I'm here."

God: Why did you call out to her? Why didn't you just wait for her to get to your room?

Me: Because I wanted her to know that I was awake, and I heard her, and she didn't have to be afraid until she reached the end of the dark hallway.

God: Exactly. I hear you, my child. I hear your thoughts racing like feet down the dark hallway. There's another side to all of this. I'm there already. I've seen the end of it. And I want you to know right here as you walk through it all, you're okay. I haven't gone to sleep, and I won't.

Me: *crying. Can we sit together awhile? Can we just sit here a minute before I go back to facing it all?

God: There's nothing I'd love more.

by: *Becky Thompson*