



Friday, March 13, 2020

Dear sisters and brothers of Richfield United Church of Christ,

The response to the coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic is causing disruptions to our daily lives. Many places and events that are important to us have closed or put other protective measures in place. Church is no exception. I am writing to tell you of immediate changes to our church that you need to know about.

- The **8:00 a.m. Sunday services are cancelled** for an unknown period of time.
- The **10:15 a.m. Sunday services:**
 - Will be live-streamed online. That means you can see and hear the service in real time on your computer or smart phone.
 - Visit www.RichfieldUCC.com for a link to the video stream.
 - Consider staying away from church. I can't believe I just wrote that. This is based on recommendations of government and health officials.
 - I will be in the church on Sunday and our doors will be open. You may choose to attend 10:15 worship if you like.
 - However, I expect that most of you will choose to follow health guidelines. Avoid church and other gatherings. I expect attendance to be small. Especially if your health is compromised or you are up in years, it may be best to participate from home.
 - If you do choose to attend church, refrain from shaking hands or touching surfaces like doors or pews with your hands. Keep "social distancing."
- **Donations:** If we are not careful, we could see a dangerous drop in contributions. Because of this, your support is needed more than ever. Please help fill the gap; consider an extra donation to help make up for the loss. Here is how you can donate:
 - Traditional – You may drop off your envelope at church.
 - Mail –but avoid licking envelopes, use a wet paper towel instead.

- ONLINE DONATIONS – Will be accepted on our church website as of March 20. Please visit www.RichfieldUCC.com for more details.
- **All classes are cancelled.** This includes Sunday School for all ages, Lenten Study Group, Book Club, Confirmation Class, and the Children’s Lenten Program “Jerusalem Marketplace.”
- **Coffee hour** is cancelled.
- **Soup Sale** is cancelled.

I know these are drastic measures. We do not make any of these decisions lightly. I did not make these decisions alone. These measures were voted on during an emergency meeting of RUCC Church Council last night, March 12.

How long will these changes be in effect? What about Easter and Holy Week? I wish I could answer that. We’ll keep watching the situation. Things are changing quickly. Over the past two days, we learned all schools in Ohio are closing. Many other events, from the NBA to Disneyland to courts all shut down. Life as we know it is changing. We’ll follow the recommendations of our government and health officials. The goal is containment and mitigation of the virus – that means it will continue to spread, but we are trying to avoid a spike in cases that would overwhelm hospitals beyond capacity.

Please check back with our church website and tune into our live stream services for the most up-to-date information. We’ll notify you when things get back to normal.

And do all the things you’ve heard before: wash your hands, don’t touch your face, etc.

I will continue in my ministry through this. Especially in times of hardship and crisis, the Good News of Jesus is needed more than ever. I will continue preaching, ministering and serving to the best of my ability. I will stay in communication and visit parishioners in the hospital as needed. Please feel free to call me any time or send me an email.

These are unusual and difficult times. But, in the words of the old hymn, “Leaning on the everlasting arms...” we will stay safe and secure. Now, more than ever, let’s hold fast to our faith, rely on God’s Word, and support one another.



Rev. John D. King