



## Valley Presbyterian Church

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*The Reverend John Wahl, Pastor*

March 13, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of Valley,

I write this letter to you today to let you know where we – as a church – stand in light of current information regarding COVID-19 and steps that are being taken now to help foster health and safety in the midst of an anxious and rapidly-changing situation.

These decisions are not easy and certainly will be disruptive to our lives, even in ways that we cannot yet imagine. Still, we are attempting to follow the guidance of health professionals and government leaders; hoping and praying for the best possible outcomes. Helpful resources can be found at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/> or <https://www.cdc.gov/>.

Therefore, as of this time:

Worship will take place as scheduled this Sunday, March 15 at 10:30 a.m. with the following precautions and changes:

- Handwashing and social distancing (not sitting in close proximity) are encouraged.
- If you are not feeling well or at higher risk for getting sick, we ask you to consider not attending worship.
- If you are in a vulnerable category: over the age of 70 or with an underlying health condition (such as heart disease, compromised immune system) we ask that you consider staying home.
- We will not be shaking hands during passing of the peace or for the benediction; we will not pass plates during the offering; there will be no receiving line following the service.
- Food and beverages will not be served during fellowship time, although you are still welcome to practice good Christian fellowship.

In addition, we will be cancelling or postponing other week-end activities including Pass-It-On, the 30-Hour Famine planning meeting, and the Family Paint Night.

Session will be meeting as scheduled at noon in order to discuss ongoing plans.

In addition, the governor has mandated that all schools be closed from Tuesday, March 17 and reopen (at the earliest) on Monday, April 6. Heart of Valley Preschool will comply with these

directions. Bright Night, the HOV annual fundraiser scheduled for Saturday, April 4, will also be postponed.

While we appreciate the importance of social distancing, we still want to practice emotional nearness. Jesus calls us to love one another, even when doing so will require some extra effort or imagination on our parts. Thus, pastoral care will continue to be available in as safe a manner as possible. Please contact Pastor John or the church office; if you have any needs or concerns.

We, also, want to pay attention to needs that will arise among our friends and neighbors – whether child care, access to food and medicine or simply the need for social interaction. If there is any way that the church and its members can be of assistance, please let us know.

During this time of uncertainty, we continue to pray for those who have special needs and for the health of our community and world. As we continue on our Lenten journey, let us practice the disciplines of care and compassion with and for one another.

In Peace,

Pastor John