

Dear Fellow Church Member,

There are many conflicting reports about the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) virus. The escalations of cancelations, however, from governmental agency meetings to many loved sporting events and traditions, indicate just how severe this pandemic is considered by health professionals. It is no longer only in China but in the United States. It is no longer just in the United States, but South Carolina as well. Logic tells me it is not just in South Carolina but in Georgetown and Horry Counties as well.

We have an older congregation, and this virus can be deadly for those 60 and above and especially for those with preconditions. It seems the higher the age, the greater the mortality rate. Those younger will suffer flu-like symptoms but should recover nicely. Also, those younger may be carriers while showing no indications of infection at all.

I have spoken with the Reverend Tim Rogers (*District Superintendent*), Alan Walters (*Chair of Church Counsel*), Garvin Gilly (*Lay Leader*) and several church members about the Coronavirus. **We have concluded the prudent and safe response to this virus, (especially given our church demographic) is to cancel worship and all related church meetings for the next two weeks.** Thus, the plan is to suspend all church activities (*including in-home and hospital visits*) beginning on the 15. We will resume activities and assemblies when health professionals believe it is safe and reasonable to do so. Regardless, each of us is responsible for our own safety and should always use our best judgment in assembly and travel.

We are in an uncertain time. It will be decades before we get enough distance from this to assess it correctly. What I am sure of is that God is with us. As faithful children of God let us be in prayer for others and ourselves as we navigate through this adversity.

To quote the late Dr. Billy Graham, ***“We are to pray in times of adversity, lest we become faithless and unbelieving. We are to pray in times of prosperity, lest we become boastful and proud. We are to pray in times of danger, lest we become fearful and doubting. We are to pray in times of security, lest we become self-sufficient.”***

Let us pray that when we come through this, we will be not only wiser and discerning, but also hold a deepened and more enriched faith. I am

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Dr. Wm. H. Phillips