

Wonderful Friends and Family of ECOB,

Grace and peace to you in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. We, as the Leadership Team and Pastor Brian, have been closely monitoring the most recent situation concerning the COVID-19 virus. We are in close contact with those who are “on the ground” with the virus in order to get the most realistic understanding of what is happening locally and nationally. We recognize this is an evolving situation and more information will be shared with the congregation as we move forward; however, for now, please take time to read this letter carefully.

Today, Governor Tom Wolf shut down all school districts in the Commonwealth for two weeks. We wanted to wait until a specific and formal direction from local, state, and federal authorities was given until we made our final decision about our congregation’s next steps. We profess Jesus as Lord, and we know God is on the throne; however, we are aware that this virus strain will affect many in our congregation and community. In our hope and desire to honor our leaders and authorities, as the Bible encourages us to do, please read the following:

All items below are in effect starting March 14 and will be re-evaluated each week. Decisions moving forward will be on a week by week basis and communicated by Thursday evening the week prior.

1. WHAT ECOB IS DOING

- a. We will be holding **LIVE WORSHIP ONLINE** this **Sunday March 15 at 10AM**. This LIVE WORSHIP will happen through our FB page. While there will be a few people who are in the gym to help with the worship and provide encouragement to those serving, we encourage everyone else to participate in worship online.
- b. The office will also be closed from March 16-20
- c. All congregational activities are cancelled; however, all support groups, outside groups, and outside ministries that use ECOB, please contact your coordinator or leader for any changes in schedule or location.
- d. We will not be visiting hospital, nursing homes, or those who are homebound. We will call, text, and email those who need care. This is in response to those organizations and their needs.
- e. Staff will receive a separate email concerning their ministries and responsibilities.
- f. ECOB-Children Center will remain open for those parents who have a dire need of childcare during the day. While this is not an ideal situation, we also recognize there is a need due to these events for parents to continue work – especially those in the health care field.
- g. We encourage you to read through some helpful information that Brethren Disaster Ministries has published - <http://www.brethren.org/bdm/covid-19.html>

2. WHAT YOU CAN DO

- a. God is holy and mighty and in full control. We are aware of the intensity the press is giving this virus (both helpful and not helpful) and we are also aware that this intensity can cause us to act, say, and do things that heighten those levels of anxiety within us. We urge all to remain calm, respectful, and safe.
- b. Wash your hands. Practice good hygiene.
- c. Serve those around you. We believe that Jesus came to the neighborhood – and that Jesus can use you to serve those around you. Be aware of the needs in your community. If you discover a need, share it, do something about it, be Jesus to those around you. Put your name and phone number on a card and drop it off in your neighbors mailbox

encouraging them to call if they need anything. Take this opportunity to love those around you – bringing them to the table!

3. WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

- a. The Leadership Team will be meeting this week to discuss our contingency plans and emergency plans moving forward. In addition, we will be discussing ways in which we can serve our community the best. There will be more information concerning this in the days/weeks to come.

Friends, thank you for your patience and willingness to walk with us during this time. We know that worship is vital to our congregation and that Sundays may be the only community some of our people get during the week. While doing that in person may not be helpful or advisable for most, we do pray that you will participate online. Friends, no one should feel alone or discouraged during this time.

Finally, the church is not a building, it is the people. We are the church, the body of Christ and our love and care for one another will radiate through. We do not need to be in a building to demonstrate the love and power of Jesus. We truly pray that you will be the church out there and may you continue to CONNECT.GROW.LIVE.RADIATE the transformative power of Jesus in the world.

With the Love of Christ,

Trish Schlegel
LT Chair

Sarah Young
ECOB-CC Director

Rich Bealer
Treasurer

Pastor Brian Messler
Lead Pastor

PS – Remember, God is on the throne, we are His children and His church!