

3-12-20

Family Bible Church Family,

We, as Elders and Pastors, have been consulting medical personnel, Island County Health Board, Washington Department of Health, and the National Center for Disease Control to give due diligence to COVID 19 and its potential impact on our church and community.

After reviewing all the recommendations, we have agreed that it is in the best interest of the Family Bible Church family and the community we touch to cancel all church ministries and worship services beginning immediately (3-12-20). How long the cancelation is in effect is indeterminate. We will be monitoring the status and keeping you informed and will resume regular ministries as soon as it is prudent.

One of the first lessons my Pastor taught me after I had committed to vocational ministry was that it is the job of Pastors to protect the people. Little did I realize then or for these successive 46 years that protecting the flock would one day include responding to a pandemic.

The specific recommendations from the agencies mentioned above that impact our thinking are as follows:

- It is recommended that groups over 250 not meet and that smaller groups only meet if they can maintain safe practices.
- It is recommended that “social distancing” be practiced. Coughs and sneezes project tiny particles in the air for a few feet. Six feet is considered a safe distance (social distance) to avoid these droplets.
- High-risk people should avoid potential exposure. Those considered high risk are those over 60, those with underlying health conditions, and pregnant women.
- Regularly washing your hands and using hand disinfectants is recommended. Regularly disinfecting surfaces that are frequently touched is recommended.
- Avoid touching your face, especially your nose, mouth, and eyes.

By following these recommendations, we either eliminate or reduce our exposure to the virus.

Since I began writing this notice Island County Health Department has notified us of two more cases of the virus confirmed on the island. All three of the confirmed cases are being cared for off the island. These limitations of exposure measures will significantly reduce the spread of the virus. Tests are starting to come in, and with these avoidance measures, we will get a more accurate handle on the spread of the virus.

Our response, as Christians, to these conditions should be characterized by grace, mercy, generosity, and compassion. Throughout the history of Christianity, the church has risen to the challenge of difficult times by profound confidence in the grace and mercy of God as well as a marked care for others!

We will be providing musical worship and the worship of God by the study of His word by video online. (<http://OakHarborFamilyBible.org>)

In the days to come:

- Check on one another, at least by phone.
- The church office will remain open.
- We will regularly update you all via the website, Facebook, email, and other social media
- Be in prayer for God's blessing on the researchers as they attack this virus.
- Those who are regular financial supporters of Family Bible Church are encouraged to continue your support. Offerings can be dropped off at the church or given via the church website or by your bank's bill payer option.

On behalf of the Elders and Pastors,
Pastor Ron