

WFMC COVID-19 Response Plan – UPDATE MARCH 17, 2020

Dear Weyburn FM Church Family;

As many of you know, the situation regarding the COVID-19 virus is changing rapidly, with new guidance being published daily from the federal and provincial governments. This morning the FMCiC Bishop (Rev Cliff Fletcher) sent out a letter to all the churches in our denomination, urging us to cancel all church gatherings for at least the next 3 weeks. In light of these recommendations and in consultation with our Board Chair (Alex Fitzpatrick), we have chosen to take the following next steps in our response to COVID-19:

- 1. In person Sunday morning services have been canceled for March 22, March 29, and April 5 and all non-essential gatherings have been canceled until April 5.** This means that there will not be any in-person youth group events, small group meetings, or other church meetings/events at the church until after April 5th. All facility rentals have been canceled as well.
- 2. We plan on providing a live internet video-stream and live radio audio stream inspirational service on Sunday morning at 11am.** Community members can tune in both via live video-stream and live radio broadcast on AM 1190 to receive the service. Details on how to access the video stream will be on our website, and we will send out an email with a link before the service starts. This service will be shorter than normal (30-40 minutes) and will include:
 - a. A time of worship (a single person will lead worship for us, not a full team)
 - b. A time of announcements/updates
 - c. An inspirational message given by either Pastor Ian or Pastor Jody
 - d. A time of reflection at the end that will encourage you to share with your family
- 3. We want to encourage people to use digital giving options (e-transfer, pre-authorized debit) if possible, but we recognize that not everyone in our church family has access to them. We will install a locked drop box on the outside of the church where people can still come and drop off cheques – NO CASH PLEASE.** We want to continue to make it as easy as possible for our church family to give to the church, and we feel this provides a low-risk compromise. Our bookkeeper will continue to implement ‘multi-person’ counting practices (that more than one-person count donations) and will coordinate this with our volunteers.
- 4. The church office will remain open for business and will continue to be staffed during our normal business hours; HOWEVER the main doors will remain locked and entrance into the church will be granted by appointment only.** The goal is to protect our pastors and staff and to provide screening that would prevent potentially transmitting interactions from taking place. We want to help people and we want to be available, while also minimizing the risk of potential exposure from those who have traveled abroad or are exhibiting symptoms.

We would like to also encourage our church family to help one another connect using the technology available to us. There are many free services out there (Skype, Facetime, Facebook Messenger, regular phone call) that can be used to gather online as a small group or as a prayer group. We would encourage those in our church family who are tech savvy to help and assist those of us who are not. For example, providing help/advice to seniors so they can watch and participate in our Sunday morning live-stream service could be one way we can all promote social connection via the internet. Remember, we can use these tools to connect individually too! Maybe it would be a good time to become reacquainted with the art of the good ol’ phone call just to ask, “How you doing?”

We want to thank everyone for their understanding and cooperation during these difficult times. Many of you have sent encouraging words, offered assistance, and been willing to provide advice. Thank you for your encouragement, thank you for standing with us in the face of fear and panic, and thank you for helping us shine the light of Jesus into the broken world around us. – Pastor Jody and Pastor Ian