

“Covid 19 and the Church”¹

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown announced Monday she is banning gatherings of more than 25 people, in the latest set of drastic actions meant to slow the spread of the coronavirus. The ban started Tuesday and is scheduled to last at least four weeks. The governor’s order comes after she faced increasing calls in recent days from health care professionals.

She added: “There’s no vaccine. There’s no medicine for coronavirus. And we know the virus is in our communities. The only thing we know to do is slow the transmission through social distancing and expand and support hospital capacity to support the sick. Guidelines on social distancing is a matter of life and death.”

How should the church respond? Three items come to mind. The first being submission to those in the know; health care professionals and government leaders. In Romans 13:1-2 we are reminded; “Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished.”

Additionally, the church should respond in prayer. “Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7). Pray that the virus spread rate would drop below the R1 they are concerned about. Pray for our health care workers, and that this does not get to a point where they will be working months without time off.

Thirdly, the church should respond with compassion, grace and mercy. For 2,000 years, the church has been caring for the poor, sick and hurting, often at risk to their own lives. Jesus expressed it well, “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:34-35).

What are some practical ways we can help one another?

- Look for ways to share what you have with others.
- Call and chat with those who are shut in. Everyone loves to know someone else cares about them.
- Keep your hands clean, and do what you can to protect those in greatest need.
- Respect others—Be alert. Pray—Don’t be anxious. Show compassion—Be active in mercy.

Our plan for Salt Creek Church services moving forward

- Our worship services will be online only for four weeks. You can watch the services live at www.facebook.com/saltcreekchurch. Consider inviting another family over to watch together if you can. We recommend you don’t gather in groups of more than 10 per Governor Brown’s recommendation.
- Small groups and Sunday School classes are encouraged to find alternative ways to gather. You can invite a few over for fellowship or a meal. Remember the early church met in homes.
- Youth Groups are meeting with an online format. Pastor Vince has sent that information out to students and families. We are exploring how to use this for our adult small groups and Bible Studies as well.

Your church staff is here and able to help in this time. May we continue on in love and unity as we sacrifice our desires to serve and show God’s love to others.

Blessings,

Pastor David

¹ The Following is adapted from an original Facebook post by Pastor Mike Fast of Faith Baptist Church of Harney County. Used with permission.