

March 26, 2020

Dear Friends,

So much has happened in the last week, we scarcely know where to begin. First, please know that we are praying for the congregation, the city, and our world.

Here are the latest updates:

Our sanctuary and campus remain closed until further notice.

We are working to change the way we offer worship opportunities from the audio recordings of recent weeks to remote, livestream services. We won't be able to do so from the sanctuary, but we will at least be able to see one another's faces. Please stay tuned to *First Matters* for an update there. Our first such service was yesterday's mid-week evening Lenten service. It went fairly well, and we thank you for your understanding as we iron out glitches in formatting.

The Session continues to meet regularly, as do other boards, committees and action groups.

St. Joe's Soup Kitchen remains operational. Last Saturday, they switched to a modified feeding program, distributing bags of food – allowing a restricted number of guests upstairs to receive the take-out bags, and keeping guests spaced appropriately in the line outside.

Our social media channels are being updated almost daily with information, music, and worship services as they are available. Please visit us on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube by clicking the icons here on the website homepage on the right.

We are continuing to publish *First Matters* and encourage you to sign up on the link next to the picture of Bob at the foot of our homepage, if you are not already receiving these updates. As an aside, for anyone subscribed, we encourage you to include fpcnyc@fpcnyc.org to your safe senders list to prevent some spam filters from rejecting the newsletter.

We've also been expanding our pastoral outreach during this time. This week, Hannah Faye Allred rolled out the rest of the membership list for officers and a few volunteers to call. Hannah Faye and Barbara Davis have been receiving reports from Elders about those they have called and concerns expressed.

Finally, though our staff is currently spread out over a wider part of the country (Bob and Marla Dunham are in North Carolina for now; Michael Shake is in Texas with Laura as they prepare to move out of their Dallas home into temporary quarters; and Mark Hostetter and his family are staying north of the city in Holmes), we continue to meet every morning by video teleconference, which is great comfort, no matter how many miles there are between us.

These are challenging days. We all pray for your health and well being as we navigate these uncharted waters. Hold fast to the One who always holds fast to you.