



March 16, 2020

Dear Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church Family and Friends,

I know that many of you have already heard about the order that was issued today, March 16, 2020 – that all persons should shelter in place beginning at 12:01 AM on March 17. This order will be in effect for 3 weeks, and requires people to stay in their homes except for essential business.

In consultation with my staff colleagues and our congregational leadership, I have made the decision to close down our campus and to do everything we can to enable staff members to continue their work from home. This will mean that **our campus will not be open to the community – at all – at least through April 11.** We will continue to update you through our website, Facebook posts, and through emails when they are necessary.

I know that this seems like a drastic decision – but I believe it to be in line with the aims of the plan now laid out by local authorities. We have, as a church community, the faith imperative to work for the good of all around us. We can best protect the health of our wider community by doing our part to prevent the spread of illness.

I know that Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church is a caring community, that seeks to live out its faith in tangible and meaningful ways. In this case, this means making sure that we all understand the seriousness of the present crisis and also do everything we can to work together to bring safety and wholeness to our community.

In the meantime, here are some additional things for you to know:

We will continue to worship together online. Even if it means that I solo-stream a service from my own home to you through Facebook. Right now, this looks like a very real possibility – and I ask your understanding and forgiveness in advance!

We are going to continue to pay all of our employees – this includes the dedicated staff and teachers who are at the heart of our outreach to our neighborhood through the Music School and the PELC. It also means paying our musicians who add such beauty and vibrance to our worship, even though we won't be able to share those things for the present time.

I know that this means sharing our resources during a time when all of us are feeling worry about our security, and feeling a strain on our finances as well. However, for the time being, I believe that this is another way of living out our shared values to care for one another. I also believe that we can, as a church, step out in faith in this way because I trust in the ongoing generosity of you, our congregation and wider community. Please know that I am constantly grateful for the way you entrust the stewardship of your many resources to our church community.

Rooted in Christ, Reaching out in Love

I ask for your continued support and your prayers – for me and my staff colleagues, for our whole congregation and the wider community, and especially for all the public service and health care workers around the world who are working mightily to address this global crisis.

Now, let me close by sharing with you a prayer, from the Liturgy of St. Mark – one that has been with the Church since the 4th century, but that speaks to our present day:

*Almighty and everlasting God,
the comfort of the sad,
the strength of those who suffer,
let the prayers of your children who cry out of any tribulation come to you.
To every soul that is distressed,
grant mercy, grant relief, grant refreshment;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

Praying God might continue to comfort and bless you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hardy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.