



Being the church is more than Sunday morning worship. Unlike eating out or going to a movie theater, being the church isn't something we can afford to opt out of for a few weeks, especially during times of heightened anxiety. So while we are preparing for extended disruptions to our Sunday morning gathering due to the coronavirus, we aren't canceling "church" and our commitment to one another. On the contrary, these days ahead will provide opportunities for us to be present to one another in creative and sustaining ways. Read on for more information about how to keep being the church.

## Worship & Bible Study

You can join 10am Worship and Wednesday Night Bible Study by tuning into Facebook Live and YouTube. If you "Like" the *Emerywood Baptist Church* page on Facebook it will automatically update you when live videos are available. In the same fashion, you can "Subscribe" to our YouTube page to be notified of live and new videos. You can do this by clicking the links below:



## Support & Safety

We don't yet know how widespread the disruptions to normal life will be, but we are committed to providing whatever support we can as different needs unfold. Schools have closed, forcing parents to find alternative childcare and learning opportunities. Stores are already running low on supplies due to disrupted supply chains and hoarding behaviors. The healthcare system will be strained by an influx of critically ill persons.

Global crises often hit people in disproportionate ways based on class and status. We recognize that some of us will be able to absorb the unforeseen disruption costs, while others will find the financial stress one more terrifying prospect. Let us know if you need practical support in the coming weeks. This might mean asking for things like extra prayer, childcare, or help with medical bills. We want to stand together in the joys and the struggle.

It is kind and compassionate to keep people as safe and informed as possible. Thus, as this pandemic becomes more widespread, it is imperative for individuals and institutions like churches to take coordinated actions with regard to safety. The most critical practices at the individual level are simple but crucial: frequent and thorough hand washing, not touching one's face, and practicing physical distancing as much as possible. If infection rates continue to escalate, we should anticipate community-wide isolation practices to intensify. As a congregation organized around face-to-face gatherings, we are suspending services and gatherings as part of a wider effort to slow the growth curve of infections.

## Connection

We are taking our role as Christians seriously as we consider how to serve in a way that invokes a spirit of power, love, and self-control, rather than one of fear. Please, take time to reach out to one another, checking in and building relationship. This is the time for us to truly be church beyond the walls and amidst the uncertainty. We ask that you continue to prayerfully consider what this means for you and for us as a congregation, navigating the unknown together.

**"Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don't be afraid."**

**— Frederick Buechner**