

Dear Valley Church Friends and Family,

Like you, I'm working from home instead of going into the office and it seems strange. While it's hard to believe we're living out a unique moment of world history, day to day living goes on. We're all trying to figure out work and school and play and the rest of life... including CHURCH!

Thank you for your enthusiastic support for our 9:00 am traditional and 10:45 am contemporary services on our website at <http://valleychurch.org/v/sunday-worship-services/>. We're looking forward to worshipping "together" again this Sunday!

I believe God is preparing us for a time of amazing harvest for the Kingdom. Many are fasting and praying for God to break through to the hearts of family, friends, and foes during this crisis. We're doing all we can to help "flatten the curve" of infections and praying for the many people who are being seriously impacted by this illness.

News stories abound about people hoarding everything from TP to hand sanitizer. It's natural to be selfish and to protect ourselves. But by God's grace Valley Church can be part of releasing an amazing amount of compassion, kindness, and generosity into our community. Paul said, "*...to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share.*"- 1 Tim. 6:18.

Moving our services online have made it more challenging to give. Usually we have about 20% of our offering given online, so this is new to many of you. If you need assistance in navigating this, let us know. You can give on our website at <https://valleychurch.ccbchurch.com/goto/giving>, or mail your check in to Valley Church. We want to stay strong and be prepared to be used by God during this time.

Let me share a couple of thoughts about how to do that.

Be courageous

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." Matt. 5:14-16

Giving up our rights in order to shine the light of Christ is not a new concept. Christians have cared for sick people for 2000 years of epidemics. During this crisis God's people can shine through their courageous generosity. I like what one person said, "Yes, wash your hands, but also be ready to put a serving towel over your arm."

[Here is an article](#) posted yesterday on practical ways Christians can be a blessing in this dark time. We're also in communication with the City of Cupertino on how we can serve our community. Tim Gildersleeve is heading up efforts to work with West Valley Community Services and Santa Clara County to find ways we can help. Stay tuned or contact me for more info.

Be smart and be safe

"The governing authorities are God's ministers for your own good." Romans 13:4

We encourage you to visit the websites for the [CDC](#) and the [Santa Clara County Public Health Department](#) to keep updated with the latest and most reliable information for our area. In compliance with the "shelter-in-place" regulations, we've closed the church office and have moved all of our regular on and off campus ministries to online venues. (But see below on staying connected.)

The latest information says that we'll be doing this at least until April 7. We're monitoring this daily and will reopen on campus ministry again as soon as possible with a goal of Good Friday and Easter on April 10 and 12 as our next public gatherings!

Be connected to each other

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near." -- Hebrews 10:23-25

The Bible commands that we are to gather together because God knows we all need support and encouragement. Thankfully we've got LOTS of ways to do that here in Silicon Valley. I had one humorous member suggest we could call our online services "Praise in Pajamas" or "Waffles and the Word"! We want to make it clear that these digital compromises are a temporary solution rather than an ongoing convenience. While we're happy we can still connect virtually, nothing beats face to face fellowship.

Children, Youth, Women, Men, and Small group ministry leaders are doing their best to let everyone know about these virtual gatherings. Go to our website or see the last page of this email to find the right name and contact if you need more information on how to connect. Don't know who to call? Call Marcia and she'll direct you to the right person. We're not in the office, but we're all picking up voicemail and emails from home.

Be connected to God

“He says, ‘Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.’” Psalm 46:10

Regardless of how you are handling the Corona Virus situation, you need to be connected to God. One of the benefits of our technology age is that there are a great number of wonderful online sites that can help guide you (individually, family, group, etc.) into study and reflection on God’s word. Here are some of our Valley Church staff favorites:

- www.bible.com where you can find terrific free reading plans and devotionals for “parents”, “families”, “kids”, “groups”, “men”, “women”, and for “kids”. These Bible Plans help you engage with God’s Word every day, a little at a time.
- www.bibleproject.com has animated videos that explore the books and themes of the Bible in a way that ministers deeply to adults, teens, and children. You can explore all of their free videos and resources by book, theme, or series.
- <https://www.bibleinoneyear.org/> Alpha Bible in one year is a daily Bible plan with audio commentary from Nikki and Pippa Gumble, the Alpha speaker and his wife.
- Our Daily Bread. Their daily devotionals are available at odb.org (and via app).
- 2 Hours Non-Stop Worship Songs 2019 With Lyrics - www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6W2k-bsgEo&t=31s. A great resource for powerful sing-along contemporary worship songs that includes lyrics.

Be honest - if you need help, let us know

We should all be free to demonstrate our concern for the very real fears and anxieties that we all are experiencing. If you are involved in a small group here at Valley Church, we are encouraging you to first reach out to your small group leader. If you aren’t in a group, call any of us below and we’ll be glad to encourage you in any way we can.

We’ll see you soon... hopefully online but I look forward to being together in person again soon. Paul said, *“But since we were torn away from you, brothers, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face...”* - 1 Thess. 2:17.

Until then,
Kurt Jones

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