



Christ Presbyterian Church, New Haven

**CPC Covid-19 Update**  
17 March 2020

Dear CPC Family & Friends,

I pray that you are well as you take refuge not in any person or circumstance, but in God who is our *refuge and our fortress, our God, in whom we trust (Psalm 91:1)*. This is because God, and only God, is *Al-mighty (91:2)* and an *ever-present help in time of trouble (Psalm 46)*. Again, I think of the words noted in our previous updates - and perhaps a good one to memorize 😊

*The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?... I believe that I shall look upon the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living! Wait for the LORD; be strong and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!*

Psalm 27:1,13-14

As per our weekly practice until the COVID-19 threat subsides, our session convened last night to discuss the implications of an ever-developing situation regarding the coronavirus pandemic. Specifically, the most recent call by the White House as endorsed by the CDC for Americans to avoid social gatherings of more than 10 people and to limit discretionary travel. In response, the session ruled that *pursuant to White House and CDC recommendations issued on March 16th, all CPC sponsored events will be limited to 10 people for the next 15 days.*

As one member later stated well concerning our reservations:

*If we aren't heartbroken by this decision, something is wrong with us. But I do think this is an extraordinary moment, under God's providence. There are many times when I think we need to boldly defy the messages of our culture, but I think this is a time when we need to join efforts to "flatten the curve" for the sake of our most vulnerable. I am grateful for our "total Christ" spirituality, and I hope a silver lining of this difficult time is for our people to appreciate just how important koinonia is. Being a spectator is not the same as flesh-on-flesh participating.*

So what does this mean for CPC?

- 1) We will continue to live stream Sunday worship directly from our sacred "place" of CPC's sanctuary. We will convene a team of no more than ten wherein we will lead a full, five movement covenantal worship of God. WE WOULD ENCOURAGE YOU TO GET WITH A FEW PEOPLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE VIRTUAL SERVICE TOGETHER AT 10 AM. To be sure, while we will not actually partake in the flesh of the Lord's Supper, we will in spirit by God's grace share communion together in one spirit, even as

*We who are joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him.*

1 Corinthians 6:17

and

*There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call — one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

Ephesians 4:4-6

- 2) Otherwise, we will continue to allow CPC sponsored gatherings of no more than 10 people, although we want to repeat what is now being referred to as our “COVID-19 conscience”

*We want all church members to know that you have freedom of conscience to use your discretion as to whether to attend any CPC event that is still meeting or not. CDC has recommended that older adults or people with chronic medical conditions should take additional measures to protect their health (see [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) for a list of serious long-term health problems). If you are uncertain whether or not you are at increased risk, please call your healthcare provider and obtain a recommendation on the medical prudence to attend any church event. We continue to ask that anyone who shows any signs of illness (e.g. over 100.4 fever and cough, other flu like symptoms) NOT attend any CPC event still meeting.*

- 3) As of now, in addition to events already canceled in our last update, there will be no Compline Service and no Wednesday Night School of Discipleship. Board Meetings will meet virtually only. Otherwise, consult previous updates on previous actions taken by session that might still be relevant.

Finally, we want to encourage everyone to continue to find ways to participate together in the means of God’s grace given unto the church, even if “virtually” in so far as you are able. To be sure, as Christians we are “materialists” as to respect and steward the health and well-being of our bodies as given to us by God. We join with our fellow humanity in the “felt need” for medical care. But as Christians, we are also “spiritualists” who know that the soul (the inner person in the language of our confession) is as much real as the body and is as prone to soul/communal sickness as the body is to biological sickness. What then do we need to do as an individual Christian and as a church to be as vigilant as possible to care for our souls as our bodies? The answer? We should all consider together how we might best approximate such exhortations as “*not to forsake the assembling together*” and to “*one-another*” and “*attend to the apostles teaching and prayer*” wherein the fullness of *Christ who fills all in all* (e.g. flesh on flesh) can still be experienced. Towards these ends—here are some suggestions:

- Consider still meeting with your Life Group (c.f. as you feel comfortable). In the event that your life group is over 10, you could consider dividing it up such as to meet in two places. Be sure to practice sanitation best practices (such as using hand sanitizers, social distancing of at least 3 feet apart, etc.). Life groups are also encouraged to set up a Life Group specific WhatsApp. If you need help setting this up contact Annie ([annie.mchugh@cpcnewhaven.org](mailto:annie.mchugh@cpcnewhaven.org)).
- Consider calling a few friends and doing a prayer walk in your neighborhood or the neighborhood surrounding our church. Or take a walk on the beach together- get outdoors and enjoy the coming of Spring—life is moving on!
- To the degree that you have more “free” time—perhaps get a friend or more together and take one or more of the online courses that CPC has to offer. Most specifically, I would

highly recommend one or more of the following (with audio/video and handouts) in this order:

- [CPC Membership Seminar](#) (many CPC members commented how “everyone” should take this)
- [CPC Bible Interpretation Seminar](#) (A vital study as we enter into a post-Christian context)
- [CPC Confessional Theology](#) (Perhaps the most important class we teach at CPC)
- Be intentional and hyper-vigilant in reaching out to those who might feel alone and alienated or are at high-risk. OFFER TO GO GROCERY SHOPPING OR PICK UP MEDS FOR SOMEONE AT HIGH RISK. If you have a need for this, or are interesting in helping in this way, contact Annie ([annie.mchugh@cpcnewhaven.org](mailto:annie.mchugh@cpcnewhaven.org)) and we’ll put you in touch with the right person.
- And if you are feeling alienated or feel the need for community CALL SOMEONE. If you don’t know who to call, call the office and we will put you in touch with someone who would love (and has asked) to meet and/or talk and pray with you.
- We especially want to encourage the Mercy Coordinators of each Life Group to develop some kind of plan to make contact with those assigned to your group, some of which may not have come in a while. Also, there are our regular attenders who are not yet assigned to a group. Mercy coordinators will be receiving a communication about the people assigned to your group just in case you are unsure.
- If you are without work and/or suffering financial stress, please contact Jeff Hutchinson ([jeff.hutchinson@anabaino.org](mailto:jeff.hutchinson@anabaino.org)). Our mercy fund is here for such times as these!
- For the kids! We want to continue providing connection for our children’s Sunday School classes through virtual classrooms (meetings of about 15 minutes). More details will be emailed out to our Sunday School teachers from our Coordinator of Operations regarding the technology used and class format.

In all the above and more—please utilize our CPC virtual conferencing platform. We have subscribed to ZOOM, with the capacity to have 10 video conferencing events at the same time with up to 300 people attending. Especially all key leaders or other members who would like to connect (either for church related purposes or fellowship), please contact Annie, our Coordinator of Operations for instructions on how to access this very user-friendly platform ([annie.mchugh@cpcnewhaven.org](mailto:annie.mchugh@cpcnewhaven.org)).

I leave you with the encouragement received from God’s word this past Sunday. (If you were not able to “attend” or hear the sermon, we would encourage you to do so as there was a COVID-19 specific relevance that I think you will find encouraging and helpful.)

*You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. 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.*

Matthew 5:13-16

Yours most affectionately,

Preston  
Senior Pastor, Christ Presbyterian Church

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