



Connecting people to Jesus, one another, and ministry.

Dear church family,

We are “the body of Christ and individually members of it” (1 Cor. 12:27). Coming together for fellowship and worship regularly is an essential expression of the people of God as the body of Christ. Jesus died to create a united people, not just isolated Christian individuals. Hebrews 10:24-25 says “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.”

Scripture and history also teaches us that Christians are marked as different from the world around us as we show radical compassion and concern for the weak and those in need. 1 John 3:18 says “But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.”

With these scriptural principles in mind, the elders of our church family, like all of us, have been closely following the coronavirus (COVID-19) developments and seeking God’s wisdom in response. This week proclamations and orders were issued regarding the gathering of people in order to “slow the transmission of COVID-19 and protect vulnerable members of the public from avoidable risk of serious illness or death resulting from exposure to COVID-19.” These orders<sup>1</sup> completely prohibit the gatherings of 250 people or more. Gatherings under 250 people require older adults and those with medical conditions to be discouraged from attendance and for those who do attend to have very limited contact with each other including a distance of 6 feet from each other when together for 10 minutes or longer.

We are blessed as a community and church family to have the resources and ability to both continue to be the people of God together and show care and compassion by making every effort to protect the vulnerable in our communities.

As a part of being “subject to the governing authorities” (Romans 13:1) and caring for those most vulnerable, for the month of March:

- Our campus will be closed for all large gatherings, including Sunday worship.
- Midweek programs for our children and student programs will not meet.
- Special events like the High School Lock-in , MS Retreat, and Work-day are postponed.
- The campus will be closed during the week for all ministries, groups, and renters.
- Staff will work remotely as circumstances allow.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://bit.ly/HealthOfficerOrder> and <http://bit.ly/GovernorProclamation>

As part of being the body of Christ, called to be one together, we will:

- Maintain worship Sundays at 10:00 AM through online technology.
- Continue to support our mission and ministries through direct deposit, online giving, Facebook, or mail.
- Seek ways to serve and provide help to our community during this time.
- Continue our spiritual growth through video devotionals and teachings from our pastors.
- Pray daily for those at risk, our leaders, and an end to this outbreak.
- Be in regular communication with one another through phone, email, social media, and our website.

The best single point of information for our congregation continues to be our website:

**[www.newhopekent.org](http://www.newhopekent.org)**

All relevant information will be regularly updated on the website first before other communication channels are utilized. This will include our future plans for the month of April and any other updates as we monitor the situation day by day. Our staff, pastoral leadership, and elders are available if you'd like to share your thoughts, concerns, questions, and ideas as we navigate our response to this situation. Your input and feedback are truly important to us as we are one family together seeking to be the body of Christ and to demonstrate the gospel in word and deed.

2 Timothy 1:7 says "...God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." We take these steps deliberately with prayerful consideration as to the will of God for us as His people. We do not act out of fear but instead out of power, love and self-control. We act keeping in step with the Spirit of God as the people of God, light and salt in this world. Therefore, let us not fear, but with confidence use this opportunity to be the hands and feet of Jesus through our prayers and our care for others.

In His Service,

The Session of New Hope Presbyterian Church

Tommy Allen	Gregory Baggenstos	Edward Baldwin
Kenneth Dixon	Troy Glessner	John Messer
Rob Saunders	Samuel Weems	Don Wetter