



March 18, 2020

For even if the mountains walk away
and the hills fall to pieces,
My love won't walk away from you,
my covenant commitment of peace won't fall apart."
The God who has compassion on you says so.
(Isaiah 54:10)

This is a letter I never thought I would write, but this is also a time I never thought I would see. In support of latest CDC and KCMO public health guidelines and in an attempt to diminish the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic, the Session of Pine Ridge Church voted last night to suspend all in-person gatherings at the church, including worship, for the foreseeable future. This means:

1. Beginning Sunday you will be able to participate in worship through our live-streaming service at 10 a.m. A link will be sent out, and the full service should also be available for viewing later on the website. We are working hard to make the technology accessible to as many people as possible. The session realizes that this could be distressing to some in our congregation. While we pray this will be very temporary, we feel strongly this is the correct action at this time in order to lead by example.
2. No groups, committees, boards, classes, or choirs from within or outside the church will gather in the building until further notice. Concerts and events will be rescheduled for a safer time in the future. Help is available for virtual gatherings for meetings or groups. However, communication is always encouraged in other ways. Both the fancy, high-tech kind, as well as old school phone calls, cards and notes.
3. Staff have separate offices and can remain socially distanced, so they will work at church and at home but schedules will undoubtedly be more irregular. They are all reachable by phone or email at any time and are eager to support anyone who has questions, needs or ideas. Session is also reachable at session@pineridge.org
4. Parents Day Out and Preschool are suspended subject to ongoing review by Session, staff and parents.

Although difficult times call for difficult measures, the Session, staff and volunteers are working hard to find new ways to connect in order to continue some sense of normalcy. We want to preserve social distancing but enhance spiritual intimacy.

Thank you for your prayers and patience as we experiment and learn. It is a time for creativity and encouragement. It is an earthquake to be sure. We are all off balance, but God is unshaken and always faithful. Let us know what is working and what is missing. Watch for updates in E-tidings. And as the old hymn says, "God be with you, 'til we meet again," which hopefully will be very soon.

Peace,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jim Gordon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jim Gordon, Pastor, Head of Staff and Moderator of Session