

March 17, 2020

Dear Friends,

Today, Bishop Park sent out a letter to all the lay persons, churches, and pastors in our conference. He is imploring us not to have any worship services or church activities for at least the next two weeks. You can read the letter from our church website's link below.

We need to honor the bishop's request. It is in-line with the best recommendations from experts on infectious diseases. So I am canceling in-person worship and church activities for the next two weeks. The earliest we might worship again in-person would be Palm/Passion Sunday April 5. Please share this announcement with anyone you can think of.

As a charge we need to make sure we keep in contact with each other. Help each other in ways that are safe. If you know of any needs or concerns, let me know. We can see what we can do.

I have to admit that I am a little lost about what to do. I have talked with the other cluster pastors about online worship and we really did not come to anything we could do together. Neither church is really set up for streaming both in terms of technology or licensing.

If there is interest, we could do a video conferencing/telephone Bible Study or prayer meeting. I am open to other ideas of what might be helpful. Again, I am lost in terms of how best to be your pastor in this present moment.

Please continue to pray for Pastor Barbara. Her health issues are related to her skeletal system. Right now she is severely limited in what she is allowed to do. They are hoping through her current care regimen and rest, she will not need surgery. She needs our prayers.

At our cluster meeting (we used a video/phone conferencing system), I gave a devotional on Psalm 46. The author reminds us that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble," (46:1, *NRSV*). We don't know what the future holds, but to paraphrase the Reverend Ralph Abernathy, we know who holds the future. One way God uses and redeems troubled times is when we by God's grace draw closer to God. Hardship reminds us God is our refuge and strength, our solid rock.

Do not hesitate to call me if you want to talk or need prayer (304-554-9131). Be safe. Be well. Take care of each other. Let us continue to pray.

In Christ's Love,  
Andrew

[http://juniataministry.org/pdfs/notes/bishop\\_march\\_17\\_2020.pdf](http://juniataministry.org/pdfs/notes/bishop_march_17_2020.pdf)