

March 20, 2020

Dear St. Paul's United Church GP Faith Family,

Following the advice of Canadian Public Health officials and after careful reflection, the Council of St Paul's United Church, Grande Prairie has voted unanimously to SUSPEND all worship, until further notice, effective immediately. We know that this is an extraordinary measure, but these are extraordinary times. We feel that it is our responsibility to do all that is necessary to help "flatten the curve".

Activities suspended include Sunday morning worship, choir, UCW groups, CGIT etc. AA and all rental groups will be allowed to make their own decisions based on need and government guidelines.

All of our Ministry Teams and groups (Communications, M&P, Outreach, P&M, Worship, Trustees, UCW etc) will continue to talk and communicate as needed to ensure that we are continuing to care for each other, our building, and our surrounding community.

During this time, St. Paul's will continue to remain an active and vibrant faith family:

- Join Our Facebook Group (search for "St. Paul's United Grande Prairie – Group") and LIKE our Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulsunitedgp> (or search for "St. Paul's United Grande Prairie") for updates about what is happening, weekly worship resources and other things that may keep us connected and lift our spirits
- Continue to check our webpage <https://stpaulsuc.ca/> for updates
- Gord will work from home and the office and be available by phone, e-mail, or FB Message. He will NOT be conducting home or hospital visits, weddings or funerals at this time (outdoor, graveside family gatherings will be excepted if the need arises). Gord's e-mail is [gwaldie@stpaulsuc.ca](mailto:gwaldie@stpaulsuc.ca).
- Carla will work her regular office hours
- Alison will continue to plan and prepare music

We will work to ensure that ALL members of our congregation remain connected by:

- Increasing our presence on Facebook
- Updating our membership list to include a preferred mode of communication for all
- Using Facebook, email and phone calls to disseminate information and updates

From a financial perspective, our staff will still be paid and the bills will still arrive. If you're not already using PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance), this is a great time to consider making the switch. It's as simple as a phone call to Carla 780-532-2415. You can also drop your donation in the church mail slot, donate online on the website; send an e-transfer or mail cheques to the church.

There are many other ways we can help our neighbours and our family members:

- create cards or crafts that we will deliver to those who are home-bound. These can be dropped off in the church mailbox and we will be sure to get them to the right people.

- Do you drive? If you have a license and are able to assist by delivering cards or perhaps supplies to those who are in need of extra assistance, let us know.
- Do you know of a need that we could help with in the community notify the office or the communications team ([sharad2224@yahoo.ca](mailto:sharad2224@yahoo.ca) or 587-297-1570) and we'll try to get the word out.
- Make a call; send an email; post a message on Facebook; to stay in touch with those you usually converse with and those who may be isolated.

These next few days and weeks will be a challenging time for all of us. We encourage everyone to turn to their faith and remember Gord's words from last Sunday...

"We are not alone. We are in this together and God is in it with us."

We also include a prayer for pandemic by Cameron Bellm:

May we who are merely inconvenienced,  
Remember those whose lives are at stake.

May we who have no risk factors  
Remember the most vulnerable.

May we who have the luxury of working from home  
Remember those who must choose between reserving their health and making their rent.

May we who have flexibility to care for our children when schools are closed,  
Remember those who have no options.

May we who have to cancel our trips,  
Remember those who have no safe place to go.

May we who settle in for quarantine at home  
Remember those who have no home.

May we who are losing our margin money in the tumult of our economic market  
Remember those who have no margin at all.

May we who settle in for a quarantine at home  
Remember those who have no home.

During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other  
Let us yet find ways to be the loving embrace of God to our neighbours.

As fear grips our world, let us choose love and remember the words Jesus spoke so often, "Do not be afraid." Sheltering God, during this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us yet find ways to be your loving embrace to one another.

God, bless and keep us in this time, for we ask it in the strong name of Jesus, Amen.

We will update you as new information that could potentially change our situation becomes available.

Keeping all of you in prayer,

Gord Waldie

On behalf of Council

(with help from the Communications Team)