

COVID-19 Update and the State of The Church - Issued 3/18/20

To: The congregation of The Word Community Church

From: TWCC Elders – Bishop J.R. Coleman, Pastor Robert Hutton, Pastor Dewayne Coleman and Elder Sean Tambagahan

Greetings Church Family,

Grace and peace in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. The elders of The Word Community Church have been closely monitoring the situation surrounding Coronavirus (COVID-19) and will be giving updates frequently to our local body via email, social media, and the church website.

On 3/17/20 the elders of TWCC met to pray, deliberate, and plan how we, as a church, will continue to minister to the spiritual and physical needs of our local body and surrounding community. This meeting took place as a result of monitoring the situation from the appropriate governmental and health officials, as well as collaborating and seeking counsel from members of TWCC leadership and staff, fellow local pastors and churches, and various local leaders and organizations.

Due to the speed in which circumstances and instructions from local and national authorities are changing, the resolutions outlined in this letter may change in the coming days. We will continue working diligently to keep you updated in a timely manner as new developments unfold.

Here are a few important updates:

1. **Until further notice we are suspending all physical gatherings at our church building.** This includes weekly bible studies, Wednesdays in the Word, Corporate Prayer, and our weekly Sunday Corporate Worship service. This decision was made in effort to be compliant with requests from our local governing authorities who have called for all gatherings of 10 or more people to be temporarily suspended.
2. **We will continue weekly corporate worship with music and preaching utilizing the online streaming service on our website.** Sunday service times will continue at 9:30am online at www.thewordfresno.org/sermons. We are dedicated to ensuring the spiritual nourishment and biblical equipping of our local body continues through regular corporate worship. So, no – we are not canceling corporate worship. We are simply worshipping together in a new way. By God's grace we have the ability, through technology, to do this; and we strongly encourage all the families and individuals of TWCC to join us.

3. **We will continue providing mid-week bible studies on our website and social media.** Wednesdays in the Word will continue and be accessible on Facebook and our website, as well as more periodic updates, teachings and words from the elders and ministers of TWCC.

4. **Our elders, deacons and ministers are prepared to continue to serve you, in your home.** We recognize that many of our congregants may be elderly, sick, or unable to leave their homes for various reasons. We're here to serve you. Home visits, hospital visits and prayer will continue as normal, and we are also working with local organizations who have graciously offered to assist with additional needs that our church body may have. If you need help or have prayer requests – please continue to reach out. Our church phone should still be available for answer during normal business hours, and we will be checking emails and website form submissions frequently.

5. **We will be providing updates and communication frequently, primarily online.** Our primary methods of communication include our website, Facebook, Instagram, and email.

Website: www.thewordfresno.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/thewordfresno

Instagram: @thewordfresno

Email: info@thewordfresno.org

To receive email updates, visit our website and subscribe to our email list.

6. **For those *willing* and *able* to continue giving tithes and offerings, you still can, and we encourage you to do so.** Though we are not meeting physically, tithes and offerings can be given on our website, through our app, or mailed to the church office.

2 Corinthians 9:7 says that “each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, *not reluctantly or under compulsion*, for God loves a cheerful giver.” We recognize that many people’s finances have been negatively impacted due to the current situation, making it difficult (and in some cases impossible) to give. We DO NOT want to add financial stress to those who are facing hard financial times right now.

However, for those who are willing and able to give during this difficult season, it greatly increases our ability to continue serving the spiritual and physical needs of the church, as well as continue providing salaries for our critical staff.

Here are a few ways you can continue to give:

Give Online: www.thewordfresno.org/give

Download the App: TWCC – Fresno, CA in your app store.

Mail Checks: Payable to The Word Community Church

2611 E. Hammond Ave. Fresno CA 93702

A closing thought

Many people are concerned, and even fearful because of these events. Some are fearful of the coronavirus while others are fearful of the economic and societal impact that is occurring as a result of the pandemic. However, the church's response to any trial regardless of the severity should be *faith*, not fear.

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but one of power, love, and sound judgment.”

2 Timothy 1:7

As elders and overseers of The Word Community Church, we can confidently say that we are joyful, not fearful. Joyful? Yes, it sounds strange. But consider the words of James:

“Consider it a great joy, my brothers, whenever you experience various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. But endurance must do its complete work, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.”

James 1:2-4

Now is the time for the church to rise and be the light of Christ amid the darkness. The more the darkness seems to prevail, the brighter the light shines through. To read more about how the church should respond to the coronavirus pandemic, see the article from Elder Sean Tambagahan on our website titled [Faith in the Frenzy](#). As always, contact us for any questions, comments, concerns, or prayer requests.

In Christ,

- The Elders of TWCC