



# Central Christian Church

*Sharing Christ, Changing Lives, Delivering Hope*

## **Congregational Response to COVID-19**

By now, everyone is undoubtedly aware of recommendations by the CDC and now the White House about not meeting in gatherings of even 10 – 50 people. It is with this thought in mind that we have chosen to suspend in-person worship for the foreseeable future. This change will take place this Sunday (3/22). While we are not setting a definitive date when in-person worship will resume, we are prepared for this to be something that lasts several weeks at least.

This is not a decision that was made hastily or without much thought and prayer, nor is it one made out of fear. Instead, as people of faith who are not *of* the world, we nonetheless live *in* the world, and in the world in which we are living now, we believe this decision is the one that best respects the totality of our diverse membership. We understand that not all may agree, but we trust everyone to support the leadership of the church and this decision.

What does this mean for all of us? Several things for sure:

1) We are not cancelling worship. We will simply be offering an online experience only. You have three (3) ways to worship online.

At 8:00 a.m. we will offer a Facebook-live service in the sanctuary.

At 9:00 a.m. we will offer a Facebook-live service from the Great Hall.

At 10:30 a.m. we will offer a standard live-streamed service posted both to our church Facebook page and the website.

2) In keeping with governmental suggestions regarding social distancing, we will have less than 10 people producing the worship experience for you. That said, we will do our best to offer as “normal” a worship experience as possible. In planning for this already, our ministerial staff is confident you will be pleased with the interactive nature of the services.

3) This does mean that people need to be “plugged in” to participate, and that’s where we need your help:

- If you are not on Facebook already, please open an account. You do *not* need to post any personal information on Facebook ever, but you do need an account to view our Facebook-live services.

- If you know someone in our church who does not have a Facebook account, we would love to have you help them set one up. If you need our help, please let us know.

- To view the 10:30 service on our website, simply go to [www.cccdisciples.org](http://www.cccdisciples.org) and click on “Worship” and then “Live Stream.”

- If you, or someone you know, is *not* already getting our weekly newsletter or Pastor Michael’s all-church direct emails, please let the office know and we can put you on those lists. These are the ways we will be communicating information in this ever-changing time.

4) We will be updating the schedule each week as far as when groups will be meeting. Currently, nearly all in-person meetings, groups, and classes have been suspended through March 30.

5) We are already working on a plan to make sure that every person in our church community is contacted directly, by a pastor, elder, or deacon, once a week and anticipate utilizing video conferencing to carry out other business of the church.

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6) For the time being, the office will remain open as normal (Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.). You are free to call (217-428-4336) or email ([central@cccdisciples.org](mailto:central@cccdisciples.org)) and someone should always be there to answer.

The emergence of the Coronavirus is forcing all of us to adapt to new ways of living. The church is not immune. So much of our identity is shaped on physical togetherness and the notion of “two or three” being present, but your executive and ministerial team is confident! Confident that this time in our history is not an *obstacle* to our togetherness, but an *opportunity* to experience new ways of connecting, and confident in our collective ability to endure and come through this an even stronger community of faith than we are already!

In Christ and in one another we put our trust...

Michael Karunas, lead pastor

Tina Miller, pastor

Don Martin, pastor

Gregg Foltz, president

Brett Swallow, vice-president