

Mill Creek Church of the Brethren
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Friends of Mill Creek,

The last 2 weeks have seen an incredible shift in the way we see our world, and in the way we understand our role as a church. As your pastor, I find myself seeking the best way to bring Jesus and the church to all our church family, as well as our community. I believe that the world desperately needs the church to be a beacon of light in this time.

Anyone who has ventured to the grocery stores in the past couple of days has witnessed empty shelves, rationing of certain items and a general sense of changed interactions between strangers. While it is good to be prepared, we are also witnessing the grip of fear on people's hearts.

The Apostle Paul writes in his second letter to Timothy 2:7, "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (fear), but a spirit of power, of love and self-discipline." The early Brethren lived with the motto, "For the glory of God and our neighbor's good" and now is a time for us to model this as a church, and as individuals. We may be tempted to view the current restrictions and recommendations on health to be oppressive and inconvenient, but I would challenge us to look at them through the eyes of love. They are not unnecessary, burdensome regulations that threaten our everyday practices but rather concrete expressions of love and self-discipline. We follow these "best practices" not because we are afraid for our own welfare and safety, but because it is an act of love not to expose those who are most vulnerable to potential illness needlessly. We base our decisions "for our neighbor's good."

I believe deeply that we will find ways of tending to the needs of each other within our church community and also our neighborhoods. God's Spirit will be and is at work, stirring our imaginations and doors will open that are not yet visible.

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As a faithful response to the ongoing crisis, based on our best information, Mill Creek Church of the Brethren will NOT have Wednesday evening meals, programs, or music practices March 18 or 25. We will also suspend our worship service for March 22. The cancellation of Wednesday and Sunday activities may be extended for additional weeks as we wrestle with the current pandemic.

At this time, we are working to establish an opportunity for Mill Creek to worship through an on-line presence this Sunday, and for subsequent Sundays as needed. Please refer to our [Mill Creek Church of the Brethren](#) website and/or our [Mill Creek Church Facebook page](#). Please join us, if you are able.

During this time, we can also begin to feel isolated from the rest of our church family. I would like to encourage all members to take time and reach out to someone else in the congregation. A call or a text can be especially meaningful to someone as they adjust to life in a different way. The deacons of the congregation continue to minister as they are able, so please let them know of needs or of prayer requests you may have.

The church office will continue to publish our weekly newsletter which can be found on the church website, posted toward the end of each week. Print copies are also available at the church office window.

I close by sharing the prayer offered by our District Executive Minister, John Jantzi:

Lord, by the indwelling of your Spirit, grant us the spirit of power, love and self-control.

Help us to truly act in the spirit of our neighbors' good.

Give us eyes to see the possible during restrictions.

Help us see ways of worshiping that go beyond our sanctuaries.

Help us to care for each other that transcends the limits of physical space.

Help us to pray in ways that call for the love and power of God to be present among us.

Help us to act in compassion, mercy and generosity.

May God Be Glorified,
Amen

Pastor Glenn