

CALVARY'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

This has been a whirlwind of unprecedented events over the last few days. The COVID-19 crisis that seemed to be half a world away has now arrived at our doorstep, forcing us to make some difficult decisions that will inevitably shape how life looks moving forward for the time being.

Taking note of recent public policies and precedents, we believe it is wise for us to follow recommendations from various health agencies, including Ontario Public Health, which has recently recommended to cancel gatherings of 250 or more. Above that, we are aware of wide-spread cancellations and closures of public institutions (schools, parliament, churches, etc).

In light of all these developments, our leadership team has decided to implement temporary cancellations at Calvary over the next number of weeks. This will include the following:

A) All Calvary "non-Sunday" events and gatherings (in the building) will be cancelled for the remainder of March. Events beyond the month of March are under review, and decisions will be made as time passes, and as we have more information.

B) Sunday Services at Calvary (Cambridge and Ayr locations) have been cancelled for Sunday March 15th, 22nd and 29th. As many public closures are scheduled to (tentatively) reopen in early April, we won't make any decisions about that until we are closer to that time.

These are not easy decisions to make, and we understand this is a significant development. Much prayer and many conversations have gone into this, and we will continue to seek God's wisdom as we move forward.

In light of these impacts, we believe it is still important for the church to be serving and ministering. Though that will look quite different over the next few weeks, we will by no means go silent or dormant. We need to hear and share the Gospel message of hope and life more than ever right now!

That being said, we want to communicate some initial steps we are planning for in the near future, to continue the ministering in various ways.

1. Sunday services are going to be moved online for the time being. Plans are in motion to share a mixture of recorded content and streaming services to share on Sundays, and posted to be viewed at later dates as well. If we can't meet together physically, we can still gather online, and continue sharing the Gospel message of hope, faith and love. More details about this will be shared in the near future, but you can start by

following along this Sunday morning at www.mycalvary.life/covid-19 where I will be sharing a special message specific to this situation, and am praying for God to speak to all of our hearts.

2. The church sanctuary will be open Monday-Friday (during business hours) for you to come and seek God in personal prayer and devotional time. Friends, we all need to be praying now more than ever, and you're welcome to come and meet with God during this time. Hand sanitizers will be made available, and there will be no organized presentation, speaking or leading happening during any prayer time. We will also need to ensure everyone keeps a safe distance from each other, and crowd sizes stay small. Please stop by the church office to check in before you go to pray.

As this situation continues to unfold, we welcome you to stay informed at the following webpage, where we will be posting any additional information for Calvary - www.mycalvary.life/covid-19

Our leadership team has discussed a few key implications these decisions could have on our church family. An obvious short term "personal faith" impact of not gathering together for a few weeks could happen, but we believe this can be overcome by connecting through our online services, with extensions of prayer and care happening as well.

The potential of a financial impact could also affect us, if there is a significant decrease in tithes and offerings. In light of this, we want to humbly emphasize the importance of everyone's ongoing commitment to their generosity toward God, whether through our digital giving platforms, or dropping off offerings to the church office during the week. We cherish and appreciate everyone's gracious commitment to generosity through these challenging times.

Friends, I invite you to pray for us to have the wisdom from God, as we lead through this unprecedented issue. We want to understand the times and know what to do. We are asking God to guide us as we move forward and continue serving/leading during this situation.

We also remember that no matter what is going on today, God is in complete control - even in times of chaos. We'll take our eyes off the fear of the coronavirus, and any impacts it might have on our health, our jobs, our businesses, and our families. We will fix our eyes on Jesus. He calms every raging sea, and offer us His beautiful peace today.

PASTOR JEFF