

COVID UPDATE – MARCH 13 2020

A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR SCOTT



Hello VKHBC Family!

It is times like these that make me seriously wonder whether having more information is better than having none... but here we are with all the information and each left with the responsibility deciding what to do with it!

Before addressing our response to government recommendations in relationship to our future gatherings I first thought it would be helpful to mention the following.

Psalm 91:1-2 says "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." No matter what precautions we take in any area of our life to prevent or protect ourselves from necessary harm, God's people are truly blessed to have the enduring knowledge and privilege of trusting in the only unfailing bulwark and fortress of our Almighty God!!!

At the same time we must also consider that this was the same Psalm (91:11-12) quoted by Satan to tempt Jesus in the wilderness into foolishly testing God's sovereign protection.

Matthew 4:5-7 "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, " 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and " 'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.' "

Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

Regardless of what we do or don't do, the people of God should always be marked by peace and hope as we know better than anyone else that our future is in God's hands. But lest you think that great foundation promotes doing something as irresponsible as throwing yourself off a high building (Matt. 4:5), or greeting someone with Flu-like symptoms with a 'holy kiss'... I encourage you to instead consider the wisdom graciously granted to us in Christ. So let us also be marked by wisdom and seek to honour our governing authorities (appointed by God for our protection and good) as we seek to honour and worship our Lord according to His Word (though it may not be according to our convenience or habit for a time).

And let us keep in mind, as the Church, we have great responsibility and great opportunity at times of a heightened sense of uncertainty as much of the world seems to be at the moment. **Of course, the uncertainty in this life is truly always there!** Nevertheless, times like this are always good reminders of the importance and privilege of maintaining our focus as faithful stewards of the gospel.

Currently [Ontario's Ministry of Health Website](#) and [the Eastern Ontario Health Unit website](#) are not implementing or recommending anything specific to mass gatherings.

The [canada.ca website](#) is offering guidelines to various organizers of mass gatherings. In consideration of the current government guidelines **our church leadership is confident in moving forward with Sunday School and regular worship services until further notice.** As we should be at this time every year, we will encourage frequent

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wipe-down of high touch areas in our church building. I will continue to keep an eye on the above resources and if the guidelines change and call for the cancellation of worship services or the like we will get that message out to you. If you are traveling to regions with known COVID-19 outbreaks in the next two months, please follow the current advice for travelers returning from infected areas, as required.

In regard to the gathering of bible study/community groups we will leave that up to the discernment of each of those groups. The Senior's lunch next week has been cancelled, which I think is wise in consideration of the lighter weight of priority given to these kind of ministries (in comparison to our regular gathering for worship on Sunday's) and the higher vulnerability of that specific demographic.

As we have always functioned in the past, moving forward I would like to encourage individuals and families to discern for themselves based on their current circumstances whether it is wise to join us this or any Sunday. This is something Rosie and I have personally had to consider during flu season in past years because our twins (and currently Anna) are immune comprised. If illness or a compromised immune system keep you from being able to gather for indefinite periods of time, one of my joys as your pastor is having the opportunity to visit you in your home to minister God's Word and pray regularly with those who are unable to join us Sunday mornings ... and desire me to do so. If visiting you in person is too high a risk to your health, talking over the phone to connect and pray with you is always an option, and at the very least even in the absence of connecting we can all be praying for one another, trusting that God's sovereign sanctifying power is not limited by our physical limitations--in fact he tends to accomplish his work through them! (cf. Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4). Sermons are also available on our [website](#).

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him!

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Pastor Scott