



GLADSTONE PARK
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
www.gladstonepark.org
8378 Cason Road - (503) 665-2614

Connecting with Jesus - Connecting with People - Connecting People with Jesus

From the desk of:
Pastor Nate Hellman
3/16/20

Hello Church Family,

Just today President Trump advised that due to COVID-19 exposure risks, groups of over 10 individuals should not gather together to prevent the spreading of the virus. The Governor of Oregon announced a prohibition on all gatherings of 25 or more people until April 15.

There is a lot of similarity between us here in the United States and those suffering in Italy right now. Currently in Italy people in hospitals are no longer prioritized by "first-come, first served." They are being prioritized based upon age, life expectancy, and other facts. Just like in wartime. Our hospital system here in the Portland area cannot handle a large scale sickness and would be overrun unless we all act fast.

Because of that, with much prayer and thought, the board has agreed to cancel church and comply with both Oregon Conference decisions and Governor of Oregon's guidelines through April 15. This will include Follow the Lamb which had been scheduled for April 11, 2020. If the Oregon Conference and/or the Governor of Oregon updates the time-frame we will comply with that as well. **Therefore church is closed for worship services and gatherings over 10 people at least until April 15.**

Our recommendation for you is this:

Pray continually for our church community. Send in prayer requests via email and calls to myself and the church office.

Continue to use social distancing, hand-washing, and necessary self-quarantine procedures in the spirit of the Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12).

If you are healthy, commit to healthy preventative measures, and are comfortable in gathering in a small group of **NO MORE** than 10 people on Sabbath mornings, feel free to do so in knowledge of the risks.

At or around 11:30am I will start a Livestream sermon on at platform to be announced (likely Facebook or Youtube) which you are encouraged to watch.

But our church is so much more than a program on Sabbath morning. You are the church. I am the church. We are the church! And Jesus is still in charge. Please find ways to connect to keep community alive via calls, texts, etc. with members and especially the members in your vicinity. We will get through these tough times trusting in the Lord and in connecting with one another. So I encourage you to BE the church where you are.

Find ways in which to share your faith with those you meet during this time, maybe even invite some to watch the livestream on Sabbath mornings. The Gospel is full of hope and healing and while we need to be prudent and precautionary about making sure we are not passing on sickness, we need not fear.

Also, please remember that just because our church building is closed down, doesn't mean the expenses of the church disappear. Please continue to be faithful in your tithes and offerings. You can do this in a few ways:

- Online giving by going to our website (www.gladstonepark.org) and click on "Giving."
- Downloading the Adventist Giving app on your Android or Apple device
- Bringing Tithes and Offerings to the church during regular office hours:
M-W 10am-2pm, Thurs. 10-3pm.
- Mailing a check with instructions for the amounts to our church:
8378 Cason Rd. Gladstone, OR 97027
- Putting it somewhere safe and bring it with you when we meet again.

We also are facing a few cancellations. Follow the Lamb, Fitness, and Adventurers are canceled during this time. At this point the Women's retreat is **not** canceled, but stay posted.

Please remember this whole process is not out of fear of Covid-19, but of protecting our vulnerable, and flattening the curve of sick people. This is so our hospitals remain capable of treating those who have Covid-19 and other ailments without being overwhelmed and sending us into a wartime type triage.

This is an opportunity for us to shine as a community of believers. Eugene Cho said it well the other day: "When the church began there were no buildings, fancy productions, pews, or spotlights. It was just people, the Holy Spirit, and the glorious Gospel. The building may be closed but Church is still alive!"

With many of our congregation who fit the "high risk" profile we should be continuing to connect. I'm committed to giving you regular updates on a weekly basis at a minimum. Please be sure to share this with those who may not be on Facebook or receive the news blasts in their email. The elders and I are still available for phone calls, safe visits, and any other method listed above.

May we be the light shining of the love of Jesus through this. May we continue to worship and to share the Gospel.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Nate Hellman,
on behalf of the Gladstone Park Board.