

Dear Shiloh Members:

A lot has happened since our first statement on March 13 regarding the coronavirus. I want to continue to communicate with you as our church leaders are committed to doing whatever we must to provide a safe environment for you and your family.

On Monday Governor Dunleavy and Mayor Berkowitz announced several measures that the state and DHHS are recommending Alaskans follow to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 infection. One of those recommendations from our Mayor was that *gatherings of more than fifty people should be banned*. As a Believer and Pastor, I have two heavy burdens. One, I love our people dearly and am daily concerned about your well-being. Secondly, I'm faced with the dilemma of whether we should view this recommendation as an Acts 5:29 issue or a Romans 13:1 situation.

While God has not given us a spirit of fear (2 Tim. 1:7), He has called us to love our neighbors and prefer one another. Our church leadership feels that exercising caution is not only wise, but a good witness to our community. So, our decisions are not reactions of fear, but reactions of faith as we trust our Lord's word and consider the wellbeing of others.

After meeting with our staff team this evening, we have chosen to respond to this health issue in accordance with God's Word recognizing that what is being asked of us is not an issue of fear but faith in God's leadership in our state. We find that this decision is ultimately out of our desire to protect the members of our church who are most vulnerable.

With that being said, Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church is making the following decisions until **March 31**:

1. The church building is still **open Tuesday-Friday 9:00am-6:00pm** and **Saturday 9:00am-3:00pm**, with full staff.
2. All **Sunday** morning service gatherings on **March 22 and 29** are **anceled**. **Worship** on these Sundays will take place live on our **Facebook and Live Stream site** <https://www.shilohmbcalaska.org/watch/>. We will let you know what the structure will be this week.
3. All **Wednesday Bible Studies** are **anceled**. We are making provisions to continue Bible Study through social media. We will keep you posted as we detail these transitions.
4. All **ministry program gatherings** are **anceled** to include, choir rehearsal, Girls Ministry, Financial Freedom Workshop, Health & Wellness Expo, Ministers, Deaconate, etc. Measures are being taken to facilitate these and other programs via social media. We will keep you posted as we lay this out.
5. We will continue to provide Food Bank and Cold Weather services unless something changes. **Clothes Closet will be closed**.
4. Governor Dunleavy and Mayor Berkowitz, along with national professionals has also recommended that people at high risk of severe illness should stay at home to decrease the chance of infection. When we gather for meetings and services in the days ahead, please keep this mind. People at high risk include:
 - o Those over 65 years of age and who have serious underlying medical conditions
 - o Those with underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes
 - o Those with compromised or weak immune systems

An important thing to consider is the major impact that modifications like this can have not only on the economic condition of our families but on the church as well. For those who would be hindered from gathering during this time we ask that **you not discontinue your giving** to the Lord by means of your absence. Please consider using one of these options for giving:

1. [Online Giving Option](#)
2. Drop off at the church
3. Mail your tithes/offerings to the church office

So that the ongoing work of our church can continue forward without interruption, we are encouraged to continue our giving and being a good steward thereby ensuring the day to day operations and our mission obligations continue. This is part of our Whole-Life Stewardship responsibility for the work of our ministry.

Please take time **every day this week with your family** to read the following scriptures and commit to a dedicated time of prayer together to seek the Lord in unity about these matters:

1. Ask God, in His mercy, to stop this pandemic and save lives—not only in our communities but around the world, particularly in places that are unequipped medically to deal with the virus (Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 11:36).
2. Pray for our government leaders— local, state, federal, and international—to have the wisdom to direct us in the best courses of action for prevention and care (Romans 13:1-4).
3. Scripture says—*teach us to number our days carefully so that we may develop wisdom in our hearts*. Pray that the Lord will give us wisdom in this moment of fear as the foundations of what we know are shaken, that others would realize how fragile life is and how real eternity is, and they would see their need to turn to God (Psalm 90:12; James 1:5).

Finally, I am not discouraged; and I encourage you the same. God allows things to take place in our lives for His sovereign purpose, but we must not let our uncertainties keep us from being faithful to the gospel in our lives even when His sovereign will disrupts our customs. In the days to come, a few things will happen:

1. I will be connecting with you via video everyday
2. Membership Care Team will be in full force to respond to the emergency needs of all members, especially our seniors. Please contact your Parish leader if you need assistance. If you are not sure who your Parish Leader is, please call the main office.
 - **Parish Care and Support:** The Parish will **contact** the members **two times a week** just to check in.
 - **Home Deliveries:** Parish will make home deliveries to families that are unable to leave for **health and medical reasons only**. Members that need home deliveries will be responsible for calling their Parish Leader.
 - **Care Center:** If members are looking for resources and referrals, a member from our Care Center will connect with you via email or phone. Members that need resources and referrals will be responsible for calling their Parish Leader.

Do what you must for your best interest, health-wise, as we seek to be a good and Godly light in our community by honoring the recommendations of our leaders.

I Remain In Christ's Service,

Your Pastor,
Rev. Undra Parker