



Announcement regarding coronavirus COVID-19

March 17, 2020

My Dryden Full Gospel Church family,

This morning Premier Doug Ford declared a state of emergency in the province of Ontario. Included in this is the prohibition of gatherings of over 50 people, including places of worship. **In light of these ongoing developments the elders and board of our church have agreed that we will be immediately postponing all live worship services, ministry meetings and studies until March 31st.** We will continue to assess the situation as events move forward.

I want to affirm that this is not a decision based in fear, but rather one we make as an act of loving our neighbours. I would also remind us all that the church is not a building, but the people of God. While worship services may, for a season, be postponed, the presence and mission of the Christian church—worldwide and centuries deep—is never on hold.

As disciples of Jesus, our calling is still to love God and love our neighbours: to attend to the needs in our community, to seek the good of our cities, to pray, to serve, to disciple, to live and declare the good news of the Gospel and the hope we have in Christ. We live not in fear, but in the love and wisdom of God. (2 Tim. 1:7)

Gathering to worship together is an important aspect of living as a Christian (Heb. 10:25). We recognize this, and look forward to when we will gather together in celebration again soon. In lieu of in-person worship services, we are looking at a variety of available live-streaming options and online gatherings as a way for people to still connect as a body of believers on a Sunday morning. We will keep you posted via our website (www.dfgc.ca), email and social media.

Also, I would encourage you to look to sound biblical wisdom during this time. I have seen pastors misinterpreting Psalm 91 as though it's a magical charm against catching diseases. Some have shamed people who have felt they should stay home to avoid spreading germs. This is neither sound biblical interpretation nor a loving response. I would remind us that the devil tried to use Psalm 91 to tempt Jesus into putting himself in a dangerous situation so he could 'test' God (see Matt. 4:6). Jesus rejects this temptation: it is a wilful misuse of the Psalm to encourage the faithful to put themselves in unnecessary danger. I would caution us not to misuse this passage either, and to be of sound mind. Our decision today is simply to help keep our population safe. I encourage us again to extend grace to those around you: whether you feel they are over or under reacting to this situation.

And now a personal request from me: would you send me a selfie or recent picture of you or your family? I would love to keep you in prayer during this time, and the pictures will help me to do that.

Again, we will keep you all informed as things develop. I would ask that all of us lean into Christ, find hope in his Word, and engage, perhaps more than ever, in prayer and loving our neighbours. We serve a good God!

Grace and peace, my friends,
Nikolas Amodeo, Lead Pastor (nikolas@dfgc.ca)