



MORAVIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, SOUTHERN PROVINCE

Provincial Elders' Conference

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Dear fellow-workers in Christ,

Thank you for your faithful leadership in challenging times.

These days provide opportunity for all of us to draw on our Moravian heritage of missional resilience and the capacity to figure out how to keep moving forward. The members of the PEC are praying for you, your staff, the church boards, and the members and ministries of our congregations, fellowships and emerging ministries.

Attached you will find a Pastoral Letter from the bishops residing in the Southern and Northern Provinces.

Recent developments call for response and adjustment:

- March 15, the Centers for Disease Control set a 50-person limit for group gatherings for the next 8 weeks (through May 2).
- March 16, President Trump issued 15-day guidelines (through March 30) to avoid social gatherings greater than 10 people; to work from home whenever possible; to avoid public food and drink establishments; to avoid discretionary travel; and also advised older adults to stay home and avoid contact with others.

As we shared in our March 12 memo, we want to act with the health and well-being of our members and the wider community in mind, and follow the recommendations of civil authorities as part of being good neighbors and citizens.

Through the end of April, the PEC now strongly encourages pastors, church staff and congregations to:

- Continue the suspension of on-site worship services and all other large group gatherings.
- Make alternative plans for services during Holy Week and for Easter Day.
- Suspend or postpone face-to-face small group gatherings and meetings -- whether at church, or elsewhere -- such as church committees, fellowship groups, mission teams, mid-week Bible studies, etc. Where possible, use online or other options for these activities.
- Move church board meetings to online or other platforms, such as video conferencing, telephone conference calls, or structured email exchanges.
- Limit individuals coming to church offices to essential functions and take "safe distance" precautions.
- As facilities will permit, and the health safety of members allows, continue emergency pastoral care visitation (to hospitals and homes), observing recommended precautionary measures.
- Use and, as needed, expand electronic, social media and other communications channels to keep members informed and to provide support, encouragement and spiritual care.
- Provide pathways for church members to continue their financial stewardship and giving to support the staff, ministries and mission of the congregation through its annual budget. This may be through online giving, or by simply asking people to use the postal service.

The Rev. David Guthrie, President • The Rev. Dr. Nola Knouse, Vice President • Mrs. Peggy Carter
The Rev. Jeff Coppage • Mr. Tommy Cole • Mr. Keith Kapp • The Rev. Judy Knopf
The Rev. Dr. David Marcus, Assistant to the President

Notes:

- 1) If guidelines from civil authorities change, or there are significant developments, the PEC may provide other instructions, or shorten or extend the suggested time frame (through the end of April).
- 2) For suggestions about various live-streaming, online, and conferencing options, [click here for helpful information](#)
- 3) An interprovincial team is working on virtual worship resources. You can [check here for information](#).
- 4) For those in the Forsyth County area here are links to information about hospital visitation at [Wake Forest Baptist Health](#) and [Novant Health](#). [Note, this information may change.]
- 5) For churches that do not have their own online giving options, the Moravian Ministries Foundation in America has recently added all Southern Province congregations to its online [Giving Portal](#).

In today's *Moravian Daily Texts*, the author of 1st Peter points to one of the resources out of which we live our Christian lives:

"You have tasted that the Lord is good." 1 Peter 2:3.

May we evermore rely on the Lord's goodness and be ready to share it with others.

In a pastoral letter sent today by Dr. Agnes Abuom (Moderator, Central Committee) and the Rev Dr. Olav Fykse Tveit (General Secretary) of the World Council of Churches, are these words to the Church:

In the face of this challenge, fear and even panic is a common reaction, and self-interest often pushes solidarity aside. We pray that our living and loving God will calm our fears, and quell any rising panic, so that we can be able to focus on what we can do for one another.

David Guthrie, President
Provincial Elders' Conference
Moravian Church in America, Southern Province