



March 20, 2020

Dear CF Family,

Please read this entire message as it contains timely and important information for individuals, families and groups. Also take a few minutes to view today's **video message from Pastor Will** which is posted on commfell.org/coronavirus.

Praise God that Community Fellowship was able to hold the annual Men's Advance as well as open our doors for Sunday services last weekend. Both these gatherings were used of God to enrich, encourage and strengthen people to trust in the Lord in these uncertain times.

However, as you are aware the events of the week related to the escalation of COVID-19 have resulted in new information and limitations placed on public gatherings and include strong recommendations that everyone be disciplined in practicing social distancing.

Due to changing guidelines the elders have decided to make necessary changes to our ministry gatherings but also desire to share this scriptural perspective with you.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."
2 Timothy 1:7

This verse instructs us that fear is not of God. We make decisions not out of fear but with godly wisdom and with sound mind. In these difficult and uncertain times, trust in God for a sound and sober mind, love God and love others for their good and for God's glory and lean into the power that resides within you through the active presence of the Holy Spirit.

We begin with an important update about public gatherings at CF.

ALL GATHERINGS SUSPENDED - With much thought and prayer and after considering the various recommendations regarding group gatherings, Community Fellowship has made the very difficult decision to **suspend ALL ministry and programming gatherings held at CF** effective immediately and until further notice.

For now, the decision means we will not be able to gather together. While scattered, our methods of being church may change, but our purpose and intent of being **the church** does not change – and we must not waver in that commitment.

WORSHIP ON SUNDAY - We invite you to join our worship service this weekend via video streaming. You can access the live stream worship gathering through your computer, tablet or mobile device at facebook.com/commfell at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday. Our understanding is that you do not need a

Facebook account. Simply go to [facebook.com/commfell](https://www.facebook.com/commfell), scroll down the Facebook page to “video” to watch and participate in the worship celebration on your own or with your family. An event specific URL for this video stream will be available on our website and social media at least by 9:00 a.m. on Sunday.

The service will include music, scripture, prayer, and ministry updates. Pastor Will intends to give a reflection on **“Let not your hearts be troubled...”** using John 14: 1-3 as his text. If for some reason you cannot view the service during the live stream, you should be able to view it at a later time at [facebook.com/commfell](https://www.facebook.com/commfell).

Another viewing option would be to use this link (<https://bit.ly/2J2OMYr>) which connects you to the CF YouTube channel (commfell) to view the service on your TV or other smart device.

And as always, we hope to make the recorded sermon available on the website for future listening and for sharing with others. ([commfell.org/sermons](https://www.commfell.org/sermons))

TIMELINE - We do not know how long there will be limitations on public gatherings. Our hope and prayer is that we will be able to gather together soon. That is a day we truly look forward to! Until that is possible our commitment to you is to offer a God honoring and personally enriching streamed service each Sunday.

FAMILY RESOURCES - We intend to provide a PDF document each Sunday with study questions that will help you or your family dig deeper into the content of that week’s sermon. In addition, our Family Ministry team intends to prepare and provide other resources for parents to use with children. These resources will be available on the CF website each week.

STAY CONNECTED TO ONE ANOTHER - We encourage you to be intentional about staying connected with others in your ministry and relational networks. While encouraging the importance of social distancing it is our desire to battle against isolation. Lean into Jesus, but also figuratively link arms and hearts with others as we seek to love, support and care for each other. Our elders and staff are available to you and they will seek to check in with you.

PRAYER – The church moves forward on her knees. Most of our prayer requests are submitted on Sunday morning. While scattered, let us know how we can pray for you by sending your prayer requests to the office using cfprayer@commfell.org. Your requests can be sent at any time during the week, however, all requests received by Monday morning will be included in the usual Monday prayer email. The prayer team along with elders and staff are committed to continue to support you by praying with and for you.

PERSONAL NEEDS – Do you have a need for help – with anything? **Let us know.** Members of the church are ready and mobilized to help anyone at risk or experiencing personal hardship. Let us know if we can help you in any way (getting groceries, running errands, basic home repair, assistance, etc.). Send your request to the secure email in the office at info@commfell.org.

SMALL GROUP - All groups should use extreme caution so as not to compromise anyone’s health or home and not to place any undue pressure to gather together. For that reason, and until further notice, we encourage small groups and Bible study groups to meet in **virtual environments** rather than face to face. Reach out to Enoch ehaven@commfell.org or Donna dschnauffer@commfell.org for information about virtual platforms and resources that groups can use while scattered. We intend to provide an

online PDF document before each Sunday with study questions that will help your small group dig deeper.

MIDWEEK DEVOTIONAL – During the weeks that we are not able to meet, we hope to offer a midweek video devotional. Our intent is to post this devotional on commfell.org and facebook.com/commfell on Wednesday of each week.

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA - Regularly check the CF website (commfell.org) and Facebook page (facebook.com/commfell) for encouragement, information and resources. In particular refer to the COVID-19 Information and Update page (commfell.org/coronavirus) for all relevant information and updates from elders, staff and ministries.

BUILDING - As a reminder - ministry activity and events at CF are suspended until further notice. Activity related to streaming Sunday services and leadership functions will continue, but for the protection and wellbeing of our community, the **building is closed** for all other activity. Thank you for your cooperation.

CF OFFICE - The CF office may remain open for limited hours and with reduced staff presence. Staff will remain active, some from home locations. The office phone will be monitored during regular hours. Thank you for understanding as staff hours and availability may vary as we make some shifts to accommodate flexible and virtual schedules. CF staff and elders will continue to be available to serve you and pray for you. Refer to the “our staff” page on the CF website (commfell.org/staff) for staff and elder contact information.

COMMUNICATION - We will not produce a Sunday bulletin until we are able to gather together again. We will use the CF website and the Friday Briefing to keep you informed while we are scattered. Please regularly check both for updates and announcements, as well as for resources and tools that might be useful while separated from ministry gatherings.

TITHES AND OFFERINGS - Your tithes and offerings are still vital in your worship of our Lord and Savior. During the time we are not gathering the continuation of CF’s ministry, outreach and services is dependent on the giving of God’s people. While scattered, here are a few ways that you can continue your faithful and generous giving to CF.

- Use online giving (commfell.org/give) to establish a recurring gift via ACH transaction. (Currently about 30% of all giving to CF is via online transactions. This is a safe and viable way for you to give now and in the future.)
- Mail your check to Community Fellowship, 28w240 North Ave., West Chicago, IL 60185.
- Through your bank establish a recurring or onetime electronic bill pay transaction.

For more information about these giving options OR to set up your recurring online giving check out the “My Giving” page of on the CF website – (commfell.org/give). If you need assistance contact Judy Riley – jriley@commfell.org.

Thank you for your faithfulness and sacrificial generosity even in the midst of uncertain and troubling times!

“Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

John 14: 1-3

Gather together virtually this weekend to learn more about these reassuring and comforting words from Jesus – and may Jesus’ instruction strengthen us both in our own discipleship and for our discipling of one another during these uncharted days.

Thank you for your prayers for the Pastors and others as they prepare for the worship and teaching using a new digital format. To God be the Glory!

Partnering together in worship, service and witness for God’s glory.

CF Elders and Staff