

March 27, 2020

Dear CF family,

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

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1 John 4: 7-8

CF, this is a time when we the church must show and share God's love and compassion with others in our relational networks - family, friends and community. People who are suffering, afraid, anxious, isolated and spiritually lost all need to experience and know God's love – especially now.

Author and speaker Philip Yancey in a recent talk encouraged God's people with these suggestions.

1. **God is on the side of the sufferer.** As image bearers, we too should have a heart of love and compassion for the sufferer.
2. In uncertain times it does **not really help to focus only on the "why" questions.** Asking why looks back – rather look forward to what God will do, is doing and to what good can come.
3. When something unexpected for bad happens – **look for the helpers...and be a helper.** If you need help – ask for help! And if you see a person in need – help them with your love, encouragement, care, support and prayer.

Church, this is our time to look forward and find hope in what God is doing. It is also our time to be helpers, to intentionally share God's love, compassion and comfort with others in our community.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

2 Corinthians 1: 3-5

Allow us to offer some of the same information from last week. While scattered, we hope these are helpful reminders.

ALL CF GATHERING CONTINUE TO BE SUSPENDED - Until further notice, ALL ministry and program gatherings at CF have been suspended. While scattered, we encourage you, your families and friends to adhere to social distancing, sanitation and hygiene etiquette. And remember, although our methods of being church may change, our purpose and intent of being **the church** does not change.

WORSHIP ON SUNDAY - We invite you to join our worship service via video streaming again this Sunday. 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, 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 Enoch will give a reflection on ***“I will never leave you or forsake you...”*** using Hebrews 13: 5-6 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/resources/sermons/)

FAMILY and SMALL GROUP RESOURCE - We intend to provide a PDF document each Sunday with study questions that will help you, your family and your small group dig deeper into the content of the sermon. A discipleship guide that will help prepare you for the sermon to be delivered via livestream on Sunday at 10:00 a.m. is available under the March 24 date at commfell.org/coronavirus/. We encourage you to take some time to reflect on this guide before Sunday.

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.

PRAYER – The church moves forward on her knees. We only received a few requests this past Sunday. While scattered, let us know how we can pray for you by sending your prayer requests to cfprayer@commfell.org. Your requests can be sent at any time during the week. The prayer team along with elders and staff are committed to continue to support you with prayer.

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 needs, assistance, etc.). Send your request to the secure office email - info@commfell.org.

SMALL GROUP - Until further notice, we encourage all small groups and Bible study groups to meet in ***virtual environments*** rather than face to face. If you need help, reach out to Enoch ehaven@commfell.org or Donna dschnaufer@commfell.org for information about virtual platforms and resources that groups can use while scattered.

WEDNESDAY MORNING DEVOTIONAL – One way to stay connected and to be spiritually encouraged is through a mid-week devotional titled Wednesday Morning Devotional. In the coming weeks you will hear devotional reflections from some of the Elders and staff. We will post the devotional on social media as well as on the CF webpage every Wednesday morning. Here is a link to the YouTube page where you will find the video devotional <https://bit.ly/2J2OMYr>.

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA - Regularly check the CF website (commfell.org) and Facebook page ([facebook.com/commfell](https://www.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.

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. CF staff and elders will continue to be available to serve you and pray for you. Refer to the “our staff” webpage (commfell.org/staff/) for staff and elder contact information.

COMMUNICATION – E-blasts like this one along with the Friday briefing, website and social media will be the communication platforms we will use to disseminate information. Regularly refer to these for updates.

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.

Gather together virtually this weekend to learn more about these words from Hebrews 13: 5-6. May they encourage us in our own discipleship and also spur us on to love and good deeds.

***Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said,
“I will never leave you nor forsake you.” So we can confidently say,
“The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?”
Hebrews 13: 5-6***

Be strong in the Lord...be safe and stay well!

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

CF Elders and Staff