

**Good Shepherd COVID-19 Task Force Meeting**  
**March 15, 2020 Noon**  
**Pr. Chris's Office/Zoom**

*Attending online: Pr. Chris Enstad, Rick Blum (Dir. Of Administration), Brent Marshall (Nursing Home Facilities Manager), Andrew Seaborg (Board President), Paul Bekx (Medical Director of Department of Corrections), Kristi Jones (Director, Community Services Programs at UW School of Medicine and Public Health) Paul Friesen (UW Bio-Chemistry Professor, Head of UW Virology Department) Diane Kohrs (Emergency Planner Expert), Tracy Dahl (teacher and Music Director), Matt Wentzel (MPD Detective), Sarah Schaettle (Child Psychologist), Sara McCormack (VP – Board)*

*The meeting began at 12:04 with an opening prayer.*

**Role of COVID-19 Task Force**

*Rick then introduced the concept of the task force. And Pastor Chris made sure everyone introduced themselves. Sara talked about being chair of the committee, and how she would communicate recommendations to the board, staff and congregation. Andrew explained the role Sara would play.*

*Rick B. said he would take notes at this meeting, and Diane Kohrs will take notes going forward.*

*Sara then asked how often we should meet. Andrew reminded the group to respect medical professionals time and do most of the work via email. After discussion, it was decided that we would tentatively meet again remotely next Sunday at noon, but that was subject to change.*

**Develop Contingency Plan**

*Rick B. gave an overview of the issues facing the church as of this moment.*

*Kristi Jones said we're being told to work remotely if possible. Paul Bekx agrees. This will be an evolving topic. We should do remotely as much as possible. We won't be faulted to move all our programming online. Paul Friesen also agreed 100%. Paul said the UW chancellor sent out an email saying UW will close its doors on Wednesday.*

*Paul said the key is also social distancing. As much as possible, let's do things remotely. Paul says expectations are 60% of the population will be infected by this virus. We have to protect the elderly. We have to flatten the curve. It's going to get worse.*

*Matt also agreed. He said the 115<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing and police going to mission essential only.*

*Brent added that with the CDC and CMS directives, the nursing home he manages is basically locked down. Visitors are only brought in if there's an end of life situation.*

### **Food Pantry**

*Sarah said she had a thought on the food pantry. In Seattle they are pre-packaging and personal shopper. Kristi said it's important to coordinate with the neighborhood. Matt said we need to advertise we're open by email and phone.*

*Rick B. asked whether doing a drive-thru pantry was possible. Tracy advised checking with the Badger Prairie Needs Network about their plans. (UPDATE: They are closed as of Monday, reopening with a drive-thru model Thursday.) She also said you will have more volunteers available if needed. Paul Bekx asked whether we do anything like Meals on Wheels? The answer is no. Paul Bekx also reminded everyone that if you are a volunteer and are sick, please stay home.*  
**Plan: There will be a meeting on Tuesday led by Rick Thomas (in place of Joe Brosious) to decide what to do. The tentative plan is to move to a drive-thru model.**

### **Services**

*Everyone was complimentary of the service done online Sunday morning. Pr. Chris appreciated the support but let everyone know it might have to evolve going forward. But he said the fact that we had the technology was a big plus. Tracy said the band learned how to clean microphones online. We will have to buy a hair dryer. They had washed them on Thursday.*

**Plan: services to continue online for the foreseeable future.**

### **Little Blessings Pre-School**

*There was a long debate about whether to keep the Little Blessing Pre-School open. After much discussion, it was decided that it would remain open for as long as schools stayed open, but that Jodi should send out a note to parents telling them to only send their kids in if they didn't have any other options.*

**Plan: (NOTE: After this meeting, Dane County ordered all schools closed immediately. Therefore, Little Blessings followed the lead of the county, making much of the discussion about this issue null and void.)**

### **Counseling**

**Plan: Rick B. was advised by the task force to stop Samaritan Counseling immediately.**

### **Funerals**

**Plan: Pr. Chris said the church must be prepared to do a family size service for a funeral. Everyone agreed.**

## **Develop Communication Plan**

*Matt said the church send out email at the end of each day and tell people to watch for that email. Sara said we also need to develop a communication plan for members not on the internet. Tracy asked whether we can do a reverse phone call or robocall? Rick said he wasn't sure. (NOTE: Eric Holmer is looking into it.) Rick says you can do a mass text through Breeze. Matt said a text would be good idea.*

*Matt asked whether anyone showed up for church today and was asked to go home. Rick said no in Verona. Pr. Chris mentioned there were signs on the doors. Tracy believed the elderly were already not coming.*

## **Office Hours - Communication**

*Brent thought despite the concerns over separation, he thought you need to have someone there. Matt thought it should be 2-3 staffers there Monday-Friday.*

***Plan: The office will be open, but the doors will be closed. Judy will handle phone calls and emails. People that come to Madison can use the Ring-like doorbell installed outside, and decisions can be made about whether to lock them in.***

## **Communication/Connection to members**

*Kristi asked whether AMPED kids could send letters to our elderly or mail cards to people in nursing homes? Andrew thought that's brilliant, and we need to step up engagement in the church. Matt agreed, saying this is a great opportunity. We don't have to sit in our house for 30 days.*

*Sara asked about home communion. Paul Bekx said we don't want marginalized people to get lost. Matt asked whether we can send people out this week. Pr. Chris said the plan is not to visit but connect. Pr. Sheryl cannot. Her husband is in the testing facility at Meriter. Sara said Stephen ministers can be pressed into service. Diane said there are 30 people on Home Communion Team that reach out to shut-ins as well. Pr. Chris said they'll be responding. Using our home bound list to connect.*

***Plan: Home communion volunteers and pastors will reach out to shut-ins at church, using our Home Communion list as a guide.***

*The discussion moved back to contacting people who don't use the internet. Tracy suggested doing one mailing, one postcard, so everyone gets it.*

***Plan : Rick said he would try and get a postcard out to the entire congregation by the end of the week.***

*The group also thought daily emails would bring comfort and calm Matt said this will help ease anxiety for people living by themselves. Chances are between now and next Sunday, people test positive. Pastors may test positive.*

*Sarah asked whether there can be an opt-in to a daily message? Could be useful. Rick said he would investigate. Matt asked whether we could we do a video message? Rick said that may be possible, depending on how it gets done.*

### **Programming in light of COVID-19:**

Sara asked about the possibility of doing Sunday School online or doing Bible studies online.  
Diane asked about AMPED.

**Plan: All will be discussed at an emergency board meeting, including specific staff members, Monday night.**

### **Communicating Pr. Joe's situation**

Pr. Chris suggested putting a box out for people to drop off letters at church. Rick suggested setting up a Caring bridge website. Matt suggested sending things to church.

**Plan: we will update members about Pr. Joe in our daily email.**

### **Financial Considerations:**

Kristi asked that a lot of people want to do things. Are there ways GS can donate money to the Food Pantry? Pr. Chris suggested staff craft a response to that. The Food Pantry is our best supported ministry. If we find things we need to build. We might put out something for a specific purpose. Our food pantry fund in our Foundation is over \$500,000.

Clothes Closet?: we need to sort things out there..

Rick said his concern is people need to continue their offerings. I need that message to come through.

**Plan: treasurer Wade Huseh is crafting a financial appeal that will be sent to the congregation this week.**

### **Final Thoughts:**

Paul Freisen suggests washing your hands every 30 minutes whenever you encounter something.  
Paul Bekx asked Paul Friesen about the long-term prognosis about dealing with this virus

Paul Friesen said we don't know much about this virus. We can compare it to SARS in 2003. But SARS caused immediate disease. Those patients immediately checked in. UW is worried if a number of our undergraduates come back from Spring Break with the virus. Chances are virus will recede over coming months, but there will probably be a resurgence in the fall. But many people will be immune by that point. Next year at this time, we will have this vaccine, and anti-viral drugs. Bottom line, we don't know. Use common sense. Wash hands. Social distancing. I know it's scary, but we'll be better prepared.

Matt thanked the staff. He said our church is strong, very well positioned, leaning into it. We'll get through it.

**The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer at 1:25.**