

HCC Family,

These are unique and challenging times. The world has changed seemingly overnight and changes continue to come like waves crashing on the shore. It's hard to keep up with the new developments and to keep safe and healthy with a virus for an enemy we cannot see or know how to protect ourselves. Overnight we have been driven away from work, away from our hobbies, away from our schools, away from our normal lives.

But some things have not changed. Jesus remains King and we remain his redeemed people. We are still the church. We have gotten very comfortable being 'the church gathered.' We are used to coming together on Sunday mornings for worship, to hear the Word, to engage in fellowship, to break bread together as God's covenant family, and to pray together for one another. We set that time aside as a reminder of Jesus' lordship over our lives not just for those two hours on a Sunday morning, but for the other 166 hours of each week too.

But now things have changed. The church is no longer able to gather. We are, for this season, 'the church scattered.' I'm reminded of Acts 8 when persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem and Christians were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. The church was forced out of its routines, away from its close-knit community, and were scattered across the countryside. But the very actions that sought to silence the church caused the church to grow. Even though they were scattered, they were still the church. They still devoted themselves to the things the church has always been devoted to: the apostles' teaching, the fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer (Acts 2:42). God used this scattering in order for the church to be made visible to people who had not yet known it first hand. People heard the Word and came to faith. People saw the fellowship and care the church had for one another, and experienced that care and came to put their faith in Jesus too. Though the church was scattered, they remained the church and the Holy Spirit caused the church to grow.

I have been asking the church to pray for a revival. I have invited you to pray in order that our faith in Jesus might become more central to our lives and recognize, in a more profound way, our need for Jesus and for what he did for us on the cross. God has responded to these prayers in a unique way. For this season, we have been scattered. Might this be the way God leads us into revival? Might this be an opportunity for us to be the church in the sight of our neighbors and friends who may not know the Lord? Might this be a way for others to witness the church in action, living out our faith as a covenantal family in Jesus Christ and not simply as a once a week activity? We are scattered, but we remain the church and God will use this for his glory and for our good.

Right now, the HCC Session and Staff are working to equip us to be able to continue being the church, even though we are scattered. Allow me to update you on a few things:

**Until at least the end of March we will suspend all gatherings at HCC campus.** This includes Sunday morning worship, Bible Studies, Prayer meetings, session and deacon meetings, missions board meetings, youth group, and all other gatherings that take place on our campus during the week. The staff will continue to work regular hours so if you need something, we are available throughout the week. We will keep you informed as we know more about any changes that develop. We still strongly encourage you to take the proper precautions about gathering in groups larger than 10, if you're not feeling well, stay home. If you are in a high-risk category of age or chronic illness, please abide by the guidance of the CDC. We love you and want to avoid putting anyone at risk. To abide by these changes, we will have to adjust how we do things as a church.

**Worship:**

We will have worship together, live over the internet. For now we will stream on our Facebook Page at 9:30 Sunday morning. You can go to <https://www.facebook.com/HackberryCreekChurch/> and join us for worship.

We will also have a link on our website. We invite you and your family to participate in worship together. We will be emailing the worship order out to you and will be making it available on our Facebook page as well as our website. This will include song lyrics. It will also give instructions for how to give an offering, even during the worship time! We encourage you to continue to be united together under the Word as a church family, even though we are in own homes. **We will be sending out a one page information sheet on how you can access our worship services either live stream or recorded after.**

### **Discipleship:**

We are working on a way for Sunday school teachers to make lessons available each week. We want to make your meetings and classes possible, not just those who meet on Sunday morning, but also Tuesday mornings and evenings, prayer meetings, youth group, and other ministries of the church. We will be working to provide places to share devotionals, prayer requests, and conduct business either over the phone or internet. Take time to pray with your families and study the Bible together. Ask your neighbors for things they'd like prayer for. Be intentional about reaching out to your church family to see if they need anything. We will be looking for ways to hold gatherings over Facebook and Zoom in order to continue meeting together devoted to God's Word, Fellowship, breaking bread, and prayers.

### **Mission:**

This is an opportunity for the church to bless our community. Maybe this will look like collecting food to give to families whose children receive free school lunch. It might look like doing some grocery shopping for someone who can't get to the store without putting themselves at risk. The missions board is reaching out to our missions partners to see if we can assist them in anyway as well.

### **Giving:**

As I mentioned above, we will continue to provide a time for the offering on Sunday mornings. We won't be passing a plate but you will have some options to give either on Sunday morning as part of worship or during the week:

1. You can put Hackberry Creek Church on your bank's bill pay list and they can send the church a check from your account.
2. You can go to our church website: [www.hackberrycreekchurch.com/giving](http://www.hackberrycreekchurch.com/giving) and you can sign up to pay online.
3. You will be given an opportunity to give during the live stream on Sunday morning on our Facebook Page.
4. You can also mail in your offerings to the church and we can receive them that way.

**We thank you for your continued generosity and commitment to support the ministry of HCC.**

### **Caring:**

Finally the Elders and Deacons have created care teams across our church family. Elders and Deacons will be paired together to check in with our church family during this time of being scattered. Members and regular visitors are going to receive a phone call or an email in the next few days to see how you are, if you need anything from the church, and to inquire if you know of a need in your network of friends and family who need assistance.

I believe God has given us a tremendous opportunity in the midst of this storm. Let us be bold in our witness to our Lord. Let us be humble to serve those in need in these uncertain times. Let us be confident in the refuge of our God. Let us continue to be devoted to the Apostles' Teaching, the Fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer. Though we are scattered, we remain the church of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Jonathan