March 12, 2020

St. Francis Friends,

This afternoon I was on a urgent zoom call with Bishop Goff and 100 other clergy.  Later in the afternoon another 85 clergy participated in a similar call.  Bishop Goff has reached a decision to cancel all public worship for the next two weeks in the Diocese of Virginia starting today and lasting until March 25th.  For us this means that we will not be meeting for worship this coming Sunday, March 15, or the Sunday after, March 22.

Bishop Goff sent a letter to the entire diocese late this afternoon giving a full explanation for that decision.  You can see that letter below.

After speaking with our vestry committee members this afternoon I have decided to prepare a time where we can worship together on zoom.  This is a platform that allows us to have larger group meetings over the internet.  Obviously, we will not receive communion together by that means.  We will have prayer, scripture reading, a message from me, and a song or two from members of the music team.

As you can imagine this is not the reality any of us would have chosen.  While I am supportive of our bishop’s decision we still face a situation we would rather not have.  What I have often found in these kinds of situations is an encounter with God I have not expected.  Over these next two weeks while we meet together over zoom I invite you to ask God to enable you to perceive any encounters you may have with the Spirit of God, whether they be large incidents or smaller whispers.  I will be doing the same.  I look forward to some time of sharing about that as well.

On Saturday I will send you a link for the zoom meeting.  All you need to do is click on it and you will be added into our time together.  I plan to have this zoom worship at our usual time- 10:00am Sunday morning.  Some of our members do not have any internet service.  You might invite them to join you at your house to take part.  I will also record our time together for those who need to see it later, especially for those in Goochland County who may not have sufficient internet service to take part in a live session.

Thank you for your faithfulness, flexibility, and prayers.

Grace and Peace,

John

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