



Dear Raintree Family,

We hope that you are all trusting and rejoicing in our Lord Jesus today, even in the midst of a sobering time due to the coronavirus situation. The Elders met on Tuesday evening and prayerfully made the decision to hold our services exclusively online until further notice. We have also decided to suspend all other in person weekly gatherings. This includes our small groups, Bible Studies, Treehouse, and Raintree Students. Our upcoming Women's Weekend Retreat will also be postponed to a future date. We will continue to reevaluate this from week to week as an elder team.

Let us explain how we came to this decision. As of Tuesday, Lees Summit posted that they "have amended its community advisory to prohibit large group events or mass gatherings of 50 or more people for the next eight weeks. This includes conferences, festivals, parades, weddings, sporting events and worship services."

We have also taken inventory of our church family, and realize that several of you are at risk or have family members that are more susceptible to contracting the virus. We want to exercise compassion for our church members and love of neighbor for our community.

Brothers and sisters, Christians should never be motivated by fear, because we serve a Sovereign God who is over all things. Our love for our neighbors compels us to minimize contact between people. However, we are not cancelling our services because we are afraid to get sick or even afraid to die. Philippians 1:21 declares, "To live is Christ, and to die is gain." Let's heed the words of Jesus and not let our hearts be troubled. Read God's Word, remember God's promises, help those who are needy, and trust in God. He is sovereign overall, and He loves you dearly.

As long as is necessary, we will be streaming our morning service on Sundays at 10:30am through [Facebook Live](#). You can access this by logging into our church [Facebook Group](#). It is open to all, so please like and follow this page. We will email the link to this page, so you can know exactly where to go. As some of you are aware, Facebook Live allows you to send comments that everyone else can view. Please feel free to utilize that feature and make your presence known!

These are challenging and extraordinary times for all of us. While we desire to protect our physical health, we must not neglect our own individual spiritual health and the corporate spiritual health of our church. While we insulate ourselves from this virus, we do not want to isolate ourselves from ministering to one another and caring for one another's needs.

Last year, you continued to give sacrificially to this ministry while we were without a Lead Pastor, keeping us on target for our yearly budget so we could continue ministering without hindrance. We are so grateful to you as a church for being so generous and kind! We as elders are asking you to continue this partnership, as you are able to, out of a heart that desires to give joyfully to the Lord. As you are able, you can give online through our website. If you need help setting it up, please call the church office and we will assist you. Otherwise, you can still drive to the church and drop it off at the office during the day, Monday through Thursday. The office will stay open during this time.

We realize that some of you might be going through an unexpected season of income loss and even unemployment. We want to walk with you side by side during this time of trial. Please let us know how we can help and pray.

We realize that meeting online on Sundays is not enough. It's not what God intended for His people. In Hebrews 10:23-25 we get our marching orders from God Himself:

*"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."*

These upcoming weeks are a sad reality that should create a longing within us to gather with one another to worship through singing, worship through giving, and worship through listening and obeying the preached Word of God...in person together! The staff and elders will be discussing systems and mechanisms by which we can be in touch with you and care for your souls. Our desire is not to isolate ourselves from you, but to prayerfully walk with you, side by side during this time.

Let's be wise and careful, and at the same time, let's rest our lives in the hands of our sovereign Lord, who is working all things together for the good of those who love Him. Please do not hesitate to call us if you need our help with groceries, supplies, prayer, a phone call, etc. We look forward to worshipping with you this Sunday!

Your fellow servants,

The Elders at Raintree