

Hi Mosaic,

Thank you for taking the time to watch this video as I share some important information around how we are responding to the COVID-19 challenge.

## **Cancellation of Our Public Gatherings and Large Meetings**

In an effort to make sure we do our best to protect the vulnerable in our community, we have made the decision to cancel all of our public gatherings and large meetings, as of Sunday, 22 March until further notice.

This means that none of our regular Sunday services will be taking place this weekend.

In addition, we have had to rule out meeting together at Page for the members meeting this Sunday afternoon. This is a significant meeting for us, so we are exploring all our options for how we might proceed under different arrangements, or at the very least how we appropriately share some of the important information.

Updates around this will go out to our members and regular attenders via email.

## **Other Mosaic Meetings**

In addition to cancelling our public gatherings, many of our ministry leaders are also making significant changes to our smaller meetings, or in many cases cancelling meetings altogether.

We know that some of these changes and cancellations are unsettling for many people, but in line with the advice of the Australian Government Department of Health, and the recommendations of our own Association of Baptist Churches NSW ACT. Our view is that acting early to stop the spread of this virus is one of the best ways we can love some of our most vulnerable members of society at this time.

## **Continuing to 'be' the Church**

So what does all this mean for us as a church?

On the one hand it is certainly challenging. Our normal rhythms and ways of being together are being disrupted. This is unsettling for many people in our church, and also for those who are a part of our community ministries. Cancelling our normal gatherings is significant.

At the same time, I believe God will use this time to stretch us and grow us as individual followers of Christ, and as church community. Many of you will have heard me say in the past, we don't go to church, we are the church. The church is not a building or a place, we are God's people, and we don't stop being the church because our weekly events need to change.

In the coming days, weeks and possibly months, each of us has the opportunity to explore new ways, and possibly some old ways of being Christ's church.

I want to encourage each of you to be proactive and reach out to others. Use email and social media, but also grab your phone. Call people and let them know you are thinking of them. Check in on people you know who may need support through this time.

If the virus does breakout in Canberra, lets make sure we help those who are most vulnerable ... simple things like offering to do the shopping so people most at risk can stay away from public spaces can mean so much.

## **How are We Supporting Mosaic Congregations?**

Our staff and volunteer leaders are looking into ways that we can continue to journey together spiritually as a church. We will be using a number of online platforms to provide video updates, messages, live chats and other resources to help people stay connected and share with one another. One resource is our new online church platform at <https://mosaicbaptist.online.church>. Individual congregations will be looking to use this platform to provide resources and messages in place of our normal gatherings in the coming weeks.

Alongside of this, congregation leaders are planning for ways to strengthen pastoral care and support for the whole church in this season, but our goal isn't to create a single central point of contact, but to strengthen small groups and relationships within each individual congregation.

If you are keen to help out with pastoral care or you have other ideas for how you can serve in this season, please get in touch your congregational pastor or leaders – they would love to know hear from you.

If you do need support in some way and you're not part of a Mosaic congregation, or you're not sure who to contact, please feel free to contact the church office, or myself.

Keep an eye on our church website as we'll be sharing more updates there about how we are journeying through this season together.

Finally, I'd like to read a few words from Hebrews 10:23-25. So let's *do* it—full of belief, confident that we're presentable inside and out. Let's keep a firm grip on the promises that keep us going. He always keeps his word. Let's see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out, not avoiding worshiping together as some do but spurring each other on, especially as we see the big Day approaching.

Thank you for taking the time to listen. God bless.