

Dear FBC Family,

The last two weeks have been very eventful in terms of Covid-19. The number of positive cases have been rapidly increasing almost everywhere, including Mahaska County and even our own church body. This week, Governor Reynolds issued a proclamation which enhanced public health measures to slow the spread of the virus. She also publicly appealed to ALL Iowans to “do everything they can to slow the spread”.

At our regular meeting this past Tuesday, your FBC Elder Board spent a significant amount of time discussing how we should respond as a church body. As Elders, we are all in agreement that, out of Christ-like love and concern, it is our responsibility as a Church to take additional steps. Below is a list of actions that the Elders have directed in response to this crisis, all of which is effective immediately and is subject to change upon short notice.

First of all, we are strongly encouraging that you wear face masks when participating in all church activities. This is not a mask mandate, so the decision to wear a mask is still up to each individual but we are encouraging that you wear them.

For worship on Sundays, masks will be available as you enter the facility. We ask that you wear a mask as you move through crowded areas. Then, when you are seated in the sanctuary and have proper distance, you may remove your mask. Please wear your mask again when worship is over as you make your way out of the building or to Sunday School. Worship leaders, vocalists and instrumentalists will not be wearing masks but will have proper distance.

There have been some cancellations as a result of the recent Covid developments. The adult Christmas choir and all rehearsals have been cancelled. The Club 5:19 Children’s choir presentation and all rehearsals have been postponed until further notice. Until further notice, coffee and treats will not be served between worship and Sunday school.

For Sunday school, we are moving the start time to 10:15am. Sunday school will then end at 11:15am. Teachers and students are encouraged to wear masks unless proper social distancing can be achieved.

In the Nursery and Toddler rooms, volunteers are strongly encouraged to wear a face mask, and we are asking that parents please stay in the waiting area when dropping off and picking up their children.

Awana will continue to meet as scheduled each Wednesday and face masks are strongly encouraged for all children, leaders and volunteers. Reasonable adjustments will be made in order to facilitate social distancing during all Awana activities.

Youth Group will also continue to meet but the schedule has changed. Beginning this Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup>, High School and Middle School youth groups will both meet on Sunday evenings in the old Sanctuary.

Thank you all for your patience and understanding! We sincerely ask that you pray fervently with us as we navigate through this. Pray for the recovery for those who currently have the virus. Pray for wisdom for your Elders and leaders as we make decisions on how to respond. Pray for calm and unity within our church as we know there are wide ranging, heart-felt opinions on these matters. And most of all pray that we would stay focused on Christ and our Gospel mission even at this time.

Yours in Christ,

FBC Elders and Pastors

11/13/20