

## **English Commission of the Presbyterian Church in Chinatown In the Loop for March 2020**

After a state of emergency was declared by the city and county of San Francisco, and the state of California followed by a declaration of national emergency on March 13<sup>th</sup>, the Commission convened four Zoom meetings in March to discuss the impact of sheltering in place on English ministries.

### **March 13 Meeting**

#### **Status Reports**

1. Mandarin Worship – Services will be canceled for March 15 and 22.
2. Cantonese Worship – Don agreed to preach for one and possibly two Sundays in Rev. Kaan's absence.
3. Food Pantry – Will be held as planned on March 14.

#### **English Worship – Plans for March 15**

1. Dave Chan is upgrading, installing and testing equipment to enable livestreaming of the worship service by this weekend.
2. Nancy will provide hand sanitizers and cleaning wipes for attendees.
3. Social distancing will be practiced in the sanctuary and fellowship hall.
4. Teatime and Lenten soup are suspended; however, there will be fellowship time.

### **March 16 Meeting**

#### **Food Pantry – March 21 and thereafter**

1. According to the public health order, this service to the economically disadvantaged is viewed as an essential service that can continue to function while the shelter-in-place directive is in effect.
2. Susie Wong alerted Don of the need to recruit more help to backfill the anticipated shortage left by volunteers aged 60+ with underlying health conditions who should adhere to the stay-at-home order.

#### **Cantonese Worshiping Community**

1. Action: Now that a national state of emergency has been declared, the Commission recommends cancellation of Cantonese worship and other social gatherings till further notice. Don will inform Rev. Kaan of the change in plans.

### **March 17 Meeting**

All regular items on the March 17<sup>th</sup> agenda were tabled except for two items so that the Commission could devote its time to emerging issues:

1. Pastor Don provided an update on recent pastoral care activities.
2. Action: MSC to authorize a budget of \$1000 for Mission Study Team expenses.

#### **EWC Response to Shelter in Place**

1. The Commission was informed that a person who attended worship on March 15 was notified later in the evening that a co-worker had tested positive for coronavirus.  
Action: Out of an abundance of caution, the Commission will inform the church community of a possible coronavirus third-degree separation exposure. (i.e. indirect exposure through two people removed from the primary infected person)
2. Fellowships/Bible Studies – All gatherings are canceled until further notice.
3. Food Pantry – Staffing will be a significant challenge as a large number of the volunteer workforce meet the criteria of *vulnerable populations* who ought to remain at home.  
Other food pantries are facing similar staffing challenges and have reached out to PCC

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for help. Many food pantries have temporarily closed; their recipients can now pick up food from any of the food pantries that remain open including the PCC.

4. Worship on March 22 – The Commission weighed the three options: (1) suspension of worship services for the duration of sheltering in place, (2) full utilization of virtual worship services with all participants remaining at home, and (3) a hybrid approach in which a very small crew of worship leaders broadcast from the sanctuary while the rest of the community participates via livestreaming. Computer technology needs to be upgraded and additional costs will be incurred to produce virtual worship experiences (options 2/3).  
Action: The Commission agreed to employ a hybrid approach (option 3) for the March 22<sup>nd</sup> worship service.

### **March 31 Meeting**

#### **April 5<sup>th</sup> Celebration of Communion**

1. In the context of livestreamed worship, the Commission considered the options to cancel or offer the sacrament of Communion in the worship service. The PCUSA Stated Clerk's previous advisory on administering communion has been revised in response to this period of national emergency.
2. Action: MSC to offer Holy Communion at the April 5<sup>th</sup> worship service.
3. Worshipers will be instructed to supply the bread and a choice of wine, grape juice or water. All who attend worship will be invited to partake.

Revised Capacity of Sanctuary – After reviewing the Order of the Health Officer of San Francisco (C19-07), the Commission agreed to place a limit on the number of persons allowed in the sanctuary to produce a livestream worship service and perform the duties of preacher, musician, tech support, liturgist, and reader(s).

Action: MSC to impose a maximum of 7 in the sanctuary to deliver livestream worship services until further notice.

#### **Communications**

1. Email Digest – To manage the flow of emails to our community in a time of crisis, messages will be batched in the form of a weekly digest. Jeanette volunteered to assist Pastor Don with managing this form of communications.
2. Pastor Don subscribed to Zoom once sheltering in place took effect to facilitate audio/video conferencing for 100 participants at a time.
3. Action: MSC to purchase a second Zoom subscription at \$14.99 per month to increase the church's capacity for audio/video communications with David Chan assigned as the host/scheduler.

#### **Mission Study**

Action: Due to the current state of emergency and its impact on the worshiping community, there was consensus to delay the start of the Mission Study team.

CROWN Sports – Initial discussion was held regarding the upcoming registration deadline. Additional fact finding is needed before action is taken. Pastor Don agreed to speak further with key representatives.

#### **Upcoming Events**

April 12 – Easter Sunday

April 19 – Resource committee meeting

April 21 – English Commission meeting