



Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Gwinnett

Sustaining a Community of Love Through Trust, Compassion, and Inquiry

March 13, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of UUCG,

Last night we met with leaders from the Board of Trustees, Worship Team, Pastoral Care Team, staff, and other key leaders in our congregation to explore how we can best respond to the need to promote social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic. After careful consideration for the health and well-being of our members and friends, as well as the larger community, we determined that we must take measures to promote social distancing by cancelling all activities at the UU Congregation of Gwinnett for the next several weeks. We are planning to be closed between four and eight weeks. We will assess the situation regularly to consider when to resume our regular services and activities. This was not an easy choice to make by any means, and we did not make it lightly. We came to this decision as we pondered the question, "how can we best care for each other?".

This closure includes all events such as Covenant Groups, book discussions, Tai Chi, social events, game nights, CUUPS, Sylvan Sanctuary, rentals (including Yoga and Meditation), as well as committee and team meetings, Sunday morning events, and more. Exceptions to these closings include some staff presence during the week and essential staff and volunteers on Sunday to create live-stream services. The Turning Sun School will continue to follow the Gwinnett County school guidelines.

Because we know a great deal of meaning is found in the relationships we've all built at UUCG, we intend to offer online opportunities for people to connect from the comfort of their own home and computer. We know some people do not have computer or internet access, so we are exploring some alternatives, and our pastoral care team and other volunteers will be checking in regularly with people who live alone or who are particularly at risk during this time. We know this is not

an ideal way to be in community, but in the best interest of the community, we hope you understand these accommodations are necessary for the time being.

We do not wish to convey to you any sense of panic or anxiety over the spread of this virus. We make these changes to do our part to "flatten the curve" in the rise of potential infections so that our health care systems will be better equipped to meet the needs of those who will be most in need of medical support. Our primary concern is for your continued health, and the health of our wider community. We hope you will continue to heed CDC and other health experts who recommend limited contact with others and even self-isolation, especially for those who consider themselves or others they live with among the most vulnerable and susceptible to virus complications.

We'll send a follow-up message to you before Sunday morning with information about how to access a live-streamed worship service via Zoom, and to access a Zoom tutorial with Rev. Jan to be offered on Saturday afternoon, which will also be recorded and shared via Facebook and e-mail.

Please continue to follow CDC guidelines for prevention including hand-washing and limited exposure to others, whether they appear healthy or not.

We are still highly committed to our vision of creating a radically welcoming sanctuary in a green space, and fostering spiritual growth as we joyfully nurture connections and community within our walls and beyond. We will all be navigating this new territory together as we walk towards our vision with curiosity, courage and compassion, and our covenant will guide us on this path in the spirit of trust, compassion and inquiry - and a strong measure of grace. As we navigate this new, and temporary, way of being a faith community beyond our walls, we invite you to keep this mantra in mind: "Strive for Connection not Perfection!"

Blessings to you and your loved ones,

Rev. Jan Taddeo

Marcus Kabel, President