

Tuesday 24 March 2020

G'day Gateway family,

Wherever you are right now, I hope you are all healthy and safe and that you know the grace and peace of God at this time. This is a really important time for us to stand together in faith as the family of God. I know many of you have had the stress of your own family members rushing home from overseas or interstate so you can be together. Others of you are in self isolation and unable to see your family and friends at this time. And there are some of you in recent days that have lost jobs and are very uncertain of the future. This is a difficult time for many and I want you to know that our ministry team has been praying for you all today and will continue to do so regularly in this season. We may be physically more isolated than normal but let's keep standing together in faith and caring for each other in creative ways as the family of God.

As I have said a few times in the last few weeks, this is a really important time to be diligent in following the directives of our government leaders. While we stand in faith and not fear, we must also be compassionate to our most vulnerable by being wise in the way that we interact. Last week we suspended all of our Sunday services and generations ministries and that will now continue until further notice. I was so encouraged to see so many of you engaging with God through Gateway Online on Sunday and hearing how you were blessed by worshipping together in this new way. The really good news is that we had 17 people make decisions to follow Jesus that we are following up on this week. I had so much joy seeing some of our Gateway Beyond family join us from around the world as we chatted and worshipped together. In a changing world, our unchanging God is still powerfully at work right around the world!

As we continue to follow government guidelines, we are now suspending all of our regular ministry groups that normally meet at our campuses. This includes our weekly prayer meetings. We will no longer meet to pray; for a time we will just have to pray in in our own spaces. We would like to call the church to prayer together on Tuesday nights. Why don't you gather your household together tonight after dinner to pray. This week we would love you to pray for 3 things:

1. Pray for those who had to close businesses or have lost jobs.
2. Pray for God's peace to be experienced by those filled with anxiety, and those who are isolated and/or sick.
3. And thirdly, we have heard some great stories about people who started a relationship with Jesus through our Gateway Online services on Sunday. Give thanks to God for them and pray they experience His presence this week.

Some of our groups finished the Alpha course last week; others in progress are moving to an online Alpha experience this week. As of today, I am asking all of our life groups in every campus to stop meeting physically together but to also move to an online gathering as a life group. Many of our life groups have already made that move in the last week and our ministry team will be in touch with all of you to provide some simple resources to help you make this move. We have all heard how important social isolation is to stop the spread of this virus. So,

we do need to stop meeting together physically, but to make sure we keep connecting and caring for one another online and over the phone.

If you joined us for Gateway Online on Sunday, you would have heard me talk about being a church that chooses to share with those in need and not to store up for ourselves. Over the next few days at all of our campuses, we have some drop off times to give a bag of groceries to share with those in need in our community. All the details of those times and most helpful items are on our website and social media. In the coming days and weeks, our Op Shops and Care Centres will be repurposed to become distribution centres for those in need in our communities. People in our community will be able to come by appointment at certain times to receive care packages and we will distribute to families in need through our staff team, life group leaders, school chaplains and other agencies that have reached out to us for help, throughout the week. If you know someone in need please get in touch with us and we will help get essential items to those in need as fast as we can.

There will be more updates in the days to come via email, social media and posted on our [website](#). On Friday this week you will receive an email from your Campus Pastor. If you haven't given us your details or don't receive that email, click the '[Get Connected](#)' link on our website. Please keep checking in for new information and please keep checking in on one another to support and care for each other in the days to come. Please join us again for Gateway Online on Sunday at 8am, 10am and 6pm and invite your friends and family to join us also. Everyone is always welcome at Gateway.

Now more than ever, we need to stay connected to God and to each other. Psalm 46 says, "God is our refuge and our strength, our ever-present help in times of trouble". I will continue to pray that you would know His comfort and strength in this season. See you at Gateway Online on Sunday.

God bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jason Elsmore".

JASON ELSMORE  
SENIOR PASTOR

**Need to get in touch?**

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