



Schoenbrunn Community Moravian Church
2200 E. High Ave. New Philadelphia, OH 44663
March 24, 2020

330-339-1940
scmchurch.org

Dear Schoenbrunn Family,

It feels like only a week ago my biggest concern was finding time to watch my favorite teams during March Madness, in the midst of Lenten preparations. My how times have changed! I do not think anyone could have predicted the impact CRV-19 would have on our society a month ago. We should prayerfully keep the Bible passage from our Lenten study on our hearts and minds Philippians 4:4-7 said:

“4 Rejoice[a] in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.[b] 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

These are anxious days indeed, but we can, in complete confidence, trust in God to provide all we need. It was a tough decision for our joint board to cancel in-person services and activities through March 25th, but we wanted to err on the side of public safety. **The health and well-being of everyone is also why the joint board has decided to follow the recommendation of the Moravian Church Provincial Elders Conference in cancelling all in-person services and activities through April 30. Please know that this decision was not made lightly but with much prayer and discussion.**



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Now is an important time to remember that the church is not a building but a

people. Anywhere we worship God can be holy ground. Services may be cancelled, but worship is not. You can still participate in worship during this time of social distancing. We will have an online recording that will be available every Sunday on our website scmchurch.org and on our Facebook page. The provincial worship webcast from Moravian Church Without Walls can be viewed at 11 a.m. every Sunday from Moravian.org. We had over 250 devices connected the first week and even more Moravians joined the second week!

Communication will be critical during this time period as well. We are currently using virtual teleconferencing via Zoom for our Wednesday night Lenten Fellowship/study. It is a new technology for many of us, but I was impressed that we had 17 people for our first Lenten get together. It is pretty easy once you get the hang of it! Please call me if you would like a tutorial in using this new technology. Everyone starts as a beginner sometime! We would love for you to join us for future studies.

If you have a prayer concern, health update, or just need someone to talk with during these anxious times please reach out to me or other members of the joint board. We have always prided ourselves on being a family and we need that church family mentality now more than ever.

Please reach out to us if you need anything at all.



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Financial stewardship will also be crucial at this time. We realize many families

are facing difficult financial circumstances during the CRV-19 pandemic, but please do not forget about your church at this time either. Please continue your weekly giving if you are able. You can give online at scmchurch.org by clicking on the giving tab or by mailing in your weekly offering. Unfortunately, like most households, a church's expenses do not decrease even during a time of cancelled activities. We know we can rely on your generous support to help us through these tough times.

This is the part of the quarterly letter where I'm supposed to inform you of upcoming events. There are a lot of question marks here! The biggest thing is to keep praying for the eradication of this virus from our world. Prayer, worship, participating in our Zoom studies, and sewing masks for hospital workers, are important activities of the church that we can participate in. We still have plenty of opportunities to serve!

Brothers and sisters, Easter may look very different this year, but we will be able to proclaim God's gift of resurrection hope just as we always have. That message can be proclaimed from a sanctuary, a mountaintop, or even the comfort of our own home. The important thing is we proclaim the message of God's redeeming love with as much gusto and faith as we ever have. The Lord will rise indeed! Amen.

Blessings,

Pastor Ben and SCMC Joint Board