

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: [GCF] COVID 19 Update for GCF
Date: March 6, 2020 at 2:05 PM
To: gradcf-group@uw.edu

Dear friends,

tone: grief

tone: difficult, blessed

We write this with a bit of **grief**...But we suspect you that you will not be surprised to learn that GCF, in light of the Covid 19 outbreak and UW's class suspension, **will not be meeting for the rest of the quarter**. This is **tough** because we were so **blessed** to hear stories of God at work in the lives of three students last night. And I know we were looking forward to hearing more next week. I also know several of you were looking forward to hearing Dr. Felak's talk on friendship today, but this too has been **postponed**.

logistic:
postponed

Out of an **abundance of caution** and out of **respect** for UW's decisions regarding student meetings, we'll **resume** meeting together when the spring quarter begins. Obviously, **keep following all the advice of the CDC, UW and healthcare officials**. Wash your hands. Please and thank you.

source: gov & university

If you are currently attending Church on The Ave, stay tuned. Because this community is not officially connected to UW, we do plan to meet this Saturday. However, we will have several changes to our worship service. **Like other churches in the area**, we will work to **reduce physical contact** during and after worship.

tone: solidarity; logistic: adjust

On a **personal and pastoral note**, it's interesting to me that the Covid 19 outbreak is occurring during the season of Lent. **"From dust you came to dust you will return"** are the words we hear as we begin the **season**. We're all marked in ash.

scripture: conventional phrase

And it's **morbid**. And **bleak**. A rather striking invitation to **be real about life and just how fragile** it all really is...

tone: finite

I think it's also interesting to note that, as Jesus moves closer to the cross, to his death, he seems to become more and more **isolated**.

tone: isolation

He's **separated** from his friends, his disciples.

But it's **not an aimless isolation**.

value: purpose

He's in the garden **alone**...but he's praying, earnestly, to his father. He hangs from a cross **alone**...yet he reaches out to the ones nearest him and **offers poignant comfort and care**.

value: connection, care

For Jesus, **solitude**, time spent alone, seems to serve to **deepen his trust** in God the father and his sense of purpose...

tone: opportunity

As we all move into a time of communal solitude, might there be an **opportunity** here for us to **deepen our piety and to see anew the sacrifice** Christ made for us? How far were the **depths of separation** this God-man underwent?

value: deepen faith

I wonder: without classes or meetings hanging over you, what might it look like for you to, daily, spend some time in silence and prayer?

value: connection, love, care

Without reaching out to touch someone, how can you **still reach out and make known your love and care** for your friends, family, this little student community and the wider neighborhood and world that surrounds you?

Here's my advice: **Don't be aimless with this time, friends. Pray. Don't touch your face. Fast. Wash your hands. Remember and believe. Wash your hands. Hope for the resurrection. Cover your coughs. And do not be afraid.**

logistic: personal/spiritual

A here's our **blessing, modified** for the time we're in. May it cover you as you head into dead week, finals and spring break.

God goes before you to lead you. God goes behind you to protect you. God goes beneath you to support you. God goes beside you to befriend you. Do not be afraid. And may the blessing of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you. Do not be afraid. Wash your hands. Amen.

tone: comfort

With much **love and peace**,
Ashley

value: love, peace

P.S. The pastoral staff will still be **available for one on one meetings**. Don't hesitate to reach out.

logistic: available

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