

Welcome to my first intentional video appearance on Facebook.

Normally at this time I'd be standing here & welcoming you to church as we begin another time of worship, communion & fellowship. But we live in an unusual time. The Uniting Church SYNOD made the tough, but wise decision to suspend all worship services & congregational activities in the interests of public health. Just last week in northern Sydney seven people contracted COVID-19 at a single church service (not UC – but that doesn't matter).

While this is quite the upheaval to the way we have always done church – particularly at a time we are experiencing exciting growth; I am quietly excited about the possibilities of these enforced changes. They are a wonderful opportunity to propel us forward into what is next.

So, what are we going to do as a Church?

This week you will be contacted about joining a Circle of Care. One of the things we do exceptionally well as a congregation is look out for one another. We have strong networks of relationships & friendships that take care of each other. We are adding a secondary more formalised level to that nurture with our Circles of Care. A group of ten or so, individuals, couples or families that will contact each other regularly, pray for & with each other. Primarily this can be done electronically, by phone, text messages or email. Each Circle of Care will have a host couple or individual who will be in contact with you at least once every week; and we are asking you to contact at least two members a week as well. We don't want anyone of our church family or friends to be accidentally missed or overlooked during this extraordinary time – or ever. So, expect a call from your host in the next few days.

Excitedly, we will be sharing elements of our usual services electronically. This may take a few days to finalise, but I am envisioning the use of ZOOM – to teleconference a shortened form of the service – a few hymns, a short devotional message & prayer. We have eager volunteers to keep church life going.

We've also got some plans to quietly & safely continue to be a church that genuinely serves & loves our local community. You'll be hearing more about that in the coming weeks.

Suspending our services and activities wasn't a decision made lightly – it's not about those of us who are full of faith, or consider ourselves to be healthy & of little risk. It's about looking after the most vulnerable in our

faith family & community – the elderly, those with immunosuppressed conditions, those with other underlying health issues who COVID-19 is a genuine mortal threat.

Can I ask you, if you have friends or family in the Dayboro congregation, or someone who relates to us as a church somehow that aren't likely to see this post to take it to them or share it with them somehow.

God be with you & all those you love. Amen