

Dear family of North Coast United Methodist Church:

Last evening our Governor Gavin Newsome passed a "Stay at Home" order for all citizens of California. Under the new statewide mandate, businesses that do not provide "essential services" are required to close. Those allowed to continue operation include grocery stores, health care facilities, pharmacies, gas stations, convenience stores, banks and laundromats, according to a question and answer forum on Governor Newsome's website.

Currently, we are following these orders. Our office closed Tuesday, our Bible study and worship services have moved to online platforms. Please follow these orders put in place. Even if we are healthy, it is warned we could be carriers and could pass along any illness to the vulnerable who live with us.

As many of you know, I have a deep love for things science fiction. This morning, as I have been preparing for the day to come, Star trek has been playing in the background. Through the beginning of two separate episodes, I have heard the voice of William Shatner utter the iconic phrase "to boldly go where no man has gone before."

With the new "Stay in Home" order, I see a new challenge and new frontiers for our and other churches. I find these opportunities exciting! Some of these new opportunities may actually have us to return to former traditions.

In our new frontier, we are using Facebook, YouTube, and Zoom to have our worship services, Bible studies, and necessary meetings. This weekend we will focus on the celebration of the reality we have and create beautiful sanctuaries even in our own home.

As we look at our traditions, we as a community can return to the community-building practice of writing letters and making phone calls. I am blessed to know that members of our visitation team have become a phone call team. In the time of texting and emails, we are returning to the tradition of phone calls and letter writing to maintain a community for our dear community of friends who are not electronically inclined.

We will continue to pray over and work through the reality there are still places of celebration in this time we, as Cody Runnels recently shared, "Need to stand together through standing apart."

I will continue to contact you through the electronic avenues and, along with others, have also made phone calls. We still have a time of celebration as we embark on this new frontier of ministry. Please also pray the words of Matthew 18:20 "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them". Even gathering on the internet, in a letter, or with our loved ones in our "home Sanctuaries"; the Holy Spirit holds us all together.

God is Love, Pastor Drew Davis