

# Fellowship Life Groups Response to COVID-19

as of 3/19/2020

## Latest COVID-19 News Affecting our Life Groups:

- As of 1pm, 140 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Texas
- Responding to the declaration of a public health disaster, Executive Order from the Governor of Texas (effective Friday at Midnight): For the next 2 weeks, Texans must avoid social gatherings of 10 or more people
  - Dine-in areas of restaurants, bars, clubs are closed
  - Gyms and Movie Theaters (and other Entertainment venues) are closed
  - Schools are closed and shifting to online education
  - Nursing homes, retirement centers, long-term health facilities will not allow visitors
- Fellowship Sunday Service and Building closed officially through March 29<sup>th</sup> with the heavy possibility that this will extend to into April.
  - The Elders are meeting every Tuesday morning and will be reassessing.
  - Plan for the worst and pray for the best!
- Situation keeps evolving and seems to be spiraling out of control BUT:

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling.*

*“Be still, and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.”*

(Psalm 46:1-3; 10–11, ESV)

## Our Promise to You

We are a family!

1. You are not going at this alone! We are all in this together!
2. We will do our best to spiritual feed you!
3. We will serve you if you get sick! We will be on the front line to help you as our family of leaders.
4. We will encourage and help you share the good news with your neighbors!

## What should Life Group Leaders do during this time:

### **1. Keep Meeting!**

- Digital Meetings through Facebook Groups, Zoom, Google Hangouts, Slack, or other group platforms.
  - <http://www.markhowelllive.com/how-to-take-your-life-group-online/>
  - Larger Home groups can subdivide into groups of 2-4, etc.
  - Midsized Groups meet as tables. Time is up to you!
- Capitalize on this Opportunity
  - These adjusted meeting styles will provide the easy of flexibility of timing and meeting from home, or the advantage of getting to know several individuals on a deeper level.
  - **\*See “Get Together” and “Get Real” Values in your Life Group Leader Handbook on pages 13-16.**
- Keep up with your current study!
  - Group Choice Season
    - Leverage resources like RightNow Media

- If group members need to be able to watch videos from home, they can create a Right Now Media account at [FellowshipDallas.org/RightNowMedia](https://FellowshipDallas.org/RightNowMedia)
- Practical Tips:
  - Try to keep the same rhythm but Meeting time might need to change for convenience with your group.
  - Take things like childcare into consideration.
  - **See Pages 4-8 in your Life Group Leader Handbook for more on Life Groups being “More than a Weekly Meeting”, a “Spiritual Rhythm of Presence” and tips on “Staying Connected through Social Media”**
- Practical Tips for a Video Meeting
  - Watch Video ahead of time, don't try to do it in the digital platform you are using
  - Have a group moderator, don't try and facilitate and moderate.
  - Keep video on, it's an important time to see each other
  - Social Cues for Video Meetings:
    - Think about your Audio.
      - Avoid being near loud sounds such as the dishwasher, street noise, kids/dogs, etc.
      - If you have noise in the background, mute yourself when you aren't talking.
      - Get in the practice of having everyone mute themselves when they are not talking.
        - At the beginning of the meeting, you may want to have everyone practice muting and unmuting.
    - Think about your Video.
      - Choose a space with an appropriate background.
      - Make sure your computer or recording device is at the right angle and level – consider using books or a box to prop it higher, angling your laptop camera to point to the center of your face, or propping your phone up on a stable stand.
      - Watch your lighting.
        - Make sure there is adequate lighting in the room from lamps, windows, etc.
        - Light behind you disrupts the video's focus. Aim for a window in front or beside you to light you up.
- **Helpful Links for Digital Meetings**
  - Zoom tutorial: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=prw7rEhehEQ&feature=youtu.be>
  - Online LGs using Right now media: <https://support.rightnowmedia.org/hc/en-us/articles/360041083591>

## 2. Keep Caring!

- Reach out individually to all group members.
- Make sure you have an active digital messaging platform (i.e. group text messages, Facebook group, etc.)
  - Overrespond
- Spiritual Self-Care
  - Rhythms
  - Spiritual Disciplines
    - Take a walk
    - Take time for quiet (no phone, no news, etc...)

- Meditate on scripture (Matt 28:20, James 1:2ff, Philippians 4:6-7)
  - Embrace the time of solitude
  - Memorize scripture
  - Fast
  - Listen to worship music
  - Journal
  - Write a personal psalm
  - Pray
- Fellowship Resources:
  - Text/Send prayer requests to: 469.972.7222 or email [Prayer@FellowshipDallas.org](mailto:Prayer@FellowshipDallas.org)
  - Pastor on Call for emergency needs: 972.852.4173
  - Abbreviated Care Fund Application- [Care@FellowshipDallas.org](mailto:Care@FellowshipDallas.org)
- Practical ways to help Your Group and Others:
  - Childcare: financial help or volunteering for time slots
  - Groceries/supplies/meals: financial help or volunteering to pick up for them
  - Lawn Care
  - Animal Care

**\*See Get Together and Get Moving Values in your Life Group Leader Handbook on pgs. 17-20.**

**\*See “Responding to Disaster with LAPS Paradigm” on page 21 of your Life Group Leader Handbook.**

### **3. Keep Praying!**

- Pray for your Life Group
- Pray for our church
- Pray for our global partners
- Pray for our city
- Pray for opportunities to take advantage of opportunities that arise at a time like this
  - Evangelism: <https://www.evantell.org/how-the-coronavirus-impacts-evangelism-and-outreach/>

### **Misc Notes for Leaders:**

- If your group does not meet, please report attendance as “We Did Not Meet” or “Cancel” the event. Do NOT submit an attendance report of 0 Attendees, as this will hurt your group and individual attendance/engagement statistics. **(See page 24 in your Life Group Leader Handbook for more on the attendance system)**
- Covenant Membership
- **Service Opportunity - Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup> Drive-By Food Drive at Fellowship**
  - The Vickery Meadow Food Pantry serves the most vulnerable of our Vickery neighbors, providing boxes of food to help sustain families when grocery store shelves and their pantries are empty. On Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, 10am-12pm, drive-by the North entrance of Fellowship Dallas and drop off your donated items into vehicles awaiting to transport those items to the food pantry so we can restock their shelves.
  - Families in need receive a box from the Vickery Meadow Food Pantry that contains the following items:
    - Peanut butter
    - Canned tuna/chicken

- Pasta sauce
- Mac & cheese
- Canned soup
- Canned fruit
- Bread
- Eggs
- Please bring one of each item (that you can find in stores or from your own kitchen). To practice safe social distancing, we'll allow one vehicle to unload at a time.

Remember to keep focused on the Bigger Picture!!! God is in control!