Online Sanctuary, Week 2

Dear GLIDE Congregation and Friends,

Confirmed cases of Coronavirus (COVID-19) have been rising slightly in the Bay Area, and the San Francisco Department of Public Health has rolled out even more aggressive recommendations for San Francisco to reduce the spread of the virus.

These recommendations include social distancing and the temporary suspension of large public gatherings of 50 people or more. We are listening to these recommendations.

These decisions can feel at odds with who we are as GLIDE Church, because being a part of GLIDE has always meant that we are believers in family and faith and not fear. Being family and being faithful to our Unconditional Love lessons, we are also compelled to hear Life speaking clearly through the medical and public health leaders who are monitoring the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19): If we are the beloved community, then we needn’t risk anything or put anyone in the beloved community at risk to prove that. This is not driven by fear. Our actions are rooted in love.

Here is what we are doing:

We will be holding our Sunday Celebrations this week and next (March 15 and March 22) online only. We ask that you join us for Sunday Celebration through GLIDE’s Facebook Livestream page only. Here is the link. And please share the word and let our people know.

- For our unsheltered neighbors who are used to gathering for simulcast Celebrations in Freedom Hall, we will be with them curbside at Taylor Gate, offering connection, safety information, hot coffee and danishes, and community.

Sunday Celebrations are essential services, and this guides the implementing of Online Celebration. The instinct to gather at church, is church. Choosing to become church, and not “go” to church, is church. Being able to summon the values of GLIDE, wherever you are, is also church. This is our faith-based response: We must provide the optimal atmosphere for spirit, science, safety and solutions to emerge.

We as a community can make Online Celebration a large church gathering of elders, the immunocompromised, families, children and seniors—a channeling of Unconditional Love.

Modifications to congregational life groups and activities are taking place through March 22 as follows.

- Ensemble rehearsals are paused while Celebration is in live-stream mode.
- GLIDE Sunday Store and Sunday Tabling in Freedom Hall are paused during this time.
- Sunday Voter Registration project is also paused.
- Bible Study is now meeting in the Sanctuary for more space. If deemed advisable, Bible Study may undergo further modification or a short pause in its operation.
- Mediation has moved to Room 206 for added space. Leaders are assessing future sessions during this public health event.
- Speak Out, Keeping It Real and Pride Team have been paused during this public health event.
- Prayer Circle is considering moving temporarily to an online gathering.
- A Better Me will either pause or temporarily move to an online gathering. This is still being worked out, updates coming soon.

Any further changes will come to you via our next email update, as well as over social media and on the Church pages of GLIDE’s website. We continue to work expeditiously to plan contingencies based in faith, community, radical inclusivity and unconditional love to support our congregation while keeping everyone safe.

In the meantime, know that we are here for you. If you need spiritual support from the GLIDE
ministry staff, please contact the GLIDE Church Office by phone at (415) 674-6090 or by email at churchoffice@glide.org.

And as always, you can also stay connected with us and find updates on our social media channels: Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram; access past Sunday Celebrations on our alternative streaming site; or enjoy Sunday Celebration as a podcast available for download on Podomatic and iTunes.

Until we see you in person, we'll be hugging in the comments section.

In Unconditional Love,

Marvin K. White  
Minister of Celebration

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