

March 15, 2020

Dear E.O.O.R.C. Faith Communities,

We write to you on behalf of the sub-executive of Regional Council with hope and with love as we face the challenges of the coronavirus and COVID-19 in our country and around the world.

Many of you have contacted us seeking direction. We recognize that we have diverse communities of faith: we are rural, urban, big, and small; some of our buildings are used regularly by the public, some only on Sunday. Some of us are located in communities where COVID-19 has been detected, others in areas yet to be affected. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to know your own context, complying with any relevant directives regarding public gatherings from your local health unit and/or your local government.

How you worship is the decision of each local Session/Council. Continue to monitor the EOORC ([www.eoorc.ca](http://www.eoorc.ca)) and the United Church's ([www.united-church.ca](http://www.united-church.ca)) websites and prayerfully consider whether the traditional way of gathering is appropriate for worship or activities given the current situation. You should also consider rescheduling Annual meetings, or special events involving food, to a later date.

We encourage you to stay calm even as we face this health crisis.

We hope that you will take this as an opportunity to find other ways of reaching out to those who are in need throughout this crisis, especially with the use of technology.

We are with you in prayer, and we will continue to do our best to provide guidance during these challenging times.

May Peace abound,

Bronwen Harman, President, EOORC

Don Stiles, Past President, EOORC

Takouhi Demirdjian-Petro, President-Elect, EOORC