

***PDA Announcement:
The Coronavirus And The Impact On PDA Hosting Ministry***

We are reminded of the words from I Thessalonians, “*Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.*” Local communities are built up and disaster survivors are encouraged when a volunteer group arrives to lend a hand.

We are also reminded of the words from Galatians, “*So let us not grow weary in doing what is right...*” Volunteering to help rebuild after a disaster can be wearisome during the best of circumstance. The Coronavirus has added a new level of concern. PDA continues to monitor this developing situation.

At this time, the coronavirus continues to spread with more cases in more communities. The experts have been consistent with their guidance to limit travel and follow social distancing recommendations. As a way of being proactive, to limit the possibility of someone carrying the virus or contracting the virus, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has suspended all international and domestic travel indefinitely. Thankfully, most airlines have relaxed their rules related to cancelled tickets.

PDA will abide by this decision for all staff and all volunteers. Effective immediately we are strongly recommending that all PDA partner host sites throughout the states and territories suspend hosting activities at least through June of 2020. We are reaching out to all volunteer groups that are registered through June and strongly recommending that they cancel and reschedule their trip. The PDA Call Center PDA.CallCenter@pcusa.org will work to cancel and reschedule pending trips.

It is understood that in the short term, this will have an impact on the groups that have planned for many months to help a community rebuild. It is understood that in the short term, this will have an impact on the ability of organizations in the disaster impacted communities to do the work that needs to be done. It is understood that in the short term, this will have an impact on the families that are still trying to recover.

However, this is the right decision so that in the long term we can help to stop the spread of the coronavirus as quickly as possible. In the long term, we can keep our faithful volunteers healthy and remove the possibility that our volunteers might bring the virus to another community. In the long term, there will be volunteer groups ready to resume the crucial work of Long-Term Recovery.

Hosting is one expression of PDA's commitment to long-term recovery. PDA will continue to assist the Long-Term Recovery Groups through virtual support and grants made possible through designated giving and the [One Great Hour of Sharing Offering \(OGHS\)](#).

Let us finish with words of reassurance from the Prophet Isaiah, *"For I, the LORD your God, hold your right hand; it is I who say to you, 'Do not fear, I will help you.'"* During times such as these, we need to be prudent with our decisions and as people of faith we need to show the hope we have that God walks by our side.

Peace,

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