

Dear Laurelwood Women,

Life has been full of changes this past week! For me, a very full calendar with church, appointments, meetings, volunteering, and kids' sports and activities has suddenly come to a halt. I take comfort in having a plan and knowing what is coming up next. As I think about the next 6 weeks (or more), I find myself getting excited about the opportunities I have to do life a little differently. Though I'll miss connecting with you all in person, I'm excited to slow down, simplify life, spend more time with my family and connect with my neighbors. I know that God will use this time to show me a different way of following Him and that's the most exciting of all!

With ALL Women's Ministries activities cancelled for the next 6 weeks (GEMS, Bible Studies, and other activities), I'd like to suggest that you take the time to do a few things:

1. **Pray** (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18). Not only for the situation that's affecting our world, but for yourself and for your response during this time. I'm so thankful for the time we just had at Shine a few weeks ago. Ladies, this is our moment to "Shine"! Not for our glory, but for His! How you respond in this crisis may impact others for eternity. Pray for boldness and for opportunities to share where none may have existed before. This is our time not just to GO to church, but BE the church! The world is watching us.
2. **Read** (Romans 15:4) and **"Meet"** (Hebrews 10:24-25). Though we can't physically meet together, there are other ways for us to "meet". Get a group of friends together online and do a Bible study through the YouVersion Bible App or other available online studies (proverbs31.org or shereadstruth.com are just a few that I know others have used). I have a small group I've been meeting with a small group via the YouVersion App for several weeks now and it's been a huge blessing to me. If you'd like to join me in the current study I'm using, the link is: <https://bible.com/p/24599667/5d6e1aceed36e2cda753317857e4f02>
Or, just open your Bible and share something you learned with a friend--reading through Philippians would be a great place to begin! Though we can't meet together in person, there are creative ways to stay connected.
3. **Encourage**. Starting next week, women will begin sharing a short devotion or testimony on Facebook and Instagram once or twice a week. If you have a story to share of how you're seeing God work, please let me know! I'm excited to hear what you're learning! Also, I realize that many of you are not connected on social media, or even if you are, email might be better for you. If you'd like to receive these "posts" of encouragement via email, please let me know (adeviney315@gmail.com) so I can include you in an email list.

Another way you could be an encouragement to others is to write someone a note or give them a call. Check-in on those that you know might need a helping hand.

My goal in anything we do right now through Women's Ministry is to keep things simple--not add another "thing" to your to-do list. But, using the resources we have available, we want to keep you connected with our faith family. Finally, if you are in need of extra help during this time (trips to the grocery store, a meal, ideas for homeschooling your kids), please let me know. There are many who would be happy to lend a hand.

I am praying for you and am excited to hear what God does through you in the coming weeks!

Allison DeViney
Laurelwood Women's Ministry Leader