



1123 Vilas Ave
Madison WI 53715
608-620-4658, makoch.org
kumcmadison@gmail.com

A LETTER TO SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN CHRIST

Greetings from the Korean United Methodist Church in Madison, WI. It is truly unprecedented and a troubled time that we are currently living in. COVID-19 pandemic has impacted us, our loved ones, and our communities, both small and large. Last Sunday, we launched our first online worship service, allowing our congregation to join the service from home. We have been diligently practicing social distancing from our friends, at times our family members, and the members of our Madison community to keep each other safe. During this time of Lent, we also reflect on many things that we previously have taken for granted, particularly those that used to be much more accessible.

The pandemic has not only created physical disconnection amongst us as we practice social distancing, but it also has brought emotional disconnection, distrust, and fear in our community, which are largely based on nationality and racial affiliation. We hear incidents of xenophobic acts, biases and hate crimes that are targeted against Asian and Asian American communities across the nation. We hear stories of individuals who were spat on and who were verbally or physically assaulted in their own community settings. Sometimes for our members, the fear of discrimination exceeds the fear of contagion. In response to the increased incidents of bias, UW-Madison has recently sent out a message to reaffirm that "*no one person, country, or ethnicity created this pandemic—disease does not discriminate*".

About a week ago, a friend of ours encountered a video on Youtube of an elderly Italian woman who was advising people to wash their hands and cover their cough. What she also said stayed with us for a long time. "The virus may go away, but discrimination

perpetuates. There is no cure for discrimination." There are only so many things that we can do right now, and we continue waking up to morbid news about new confirmed cases and constant fear. Nevertheless, we reflect on how the safer at home order and the social distancing remind us of how closely our lives are connected to one another's and how these policies were motivated by the love and consideration we have for one another, especially for our most vulnerable population. We pray that this period allows us to become more loving and compassionate Christians. We truly adore and put our faith in our God who shows no partiality. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). We pray that our good Father provides you peace, safety, and courage to stand up for one another as faithful followers during this difficult time. Peace be with you.