

In The name of Allah, the All Merciful, the Very Merciful

All praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. May Peace and Blessings be upon our prophet Muhammad S.A.W., and upon all of his family and companions.

Dear Community members,

We all know by now that COVID-19 is an extremely contagious virus. To protect the most vulnerable and to avoid an influx of serious cases, health experts are strongly recommending social distancing. Some states have even declared emergencies, and mandated closures of schools, businesses, and travel. On March 16th, the White House Corona Virus Task Force issued an additional recommendation, limiting gatherings to groups of no more than 10 people.

It is intrinsic to Islam that preventing harm takes precedence over gaining benefit. Just one example of this is how Muslims don't engage in interest bearing transactions. While taking interest may benefit the guarantor of a loan, it would cause much difficulty to the borrower, and therefore such transactions are prohibited. No doubt, we can gain immense spiritual benefit from gathering in the Masjid. However, if such a gathering could result in serious health risks to the community, then we must carefully reconsider our approach in light of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

In the hadith, it is mentioned that on a day of heavy rain, the Prophet peace be upon him, commanded his companions to pray at home. In another hadith the Prophet p.b.u.h. has said that "a sick camel should not mix with the healthy ones" (Bukhari). The Blessed Prophet p.b.u.h. has also stated that "there should be neither harm, no reciprocation of harm" (Ibn e Maja). Allah S.W.T. had commanded Banu Israel to pray in their homes during the time of persecution. In the Holy Qur'an, it states "And We revealed to Musa and his brother, have houses for your people in Egypt, and make your houses worship oriented and establish prayer and give good news to the believers". Furthermore, Jurists of Islam have stated in their rulings that it is not required to perform prayer in congregation during times of major calamities. (Allama Ibn e Nujaim, Bahr ul Raiq).

Based on the aforementioned teachings, as well as the precautions suggested by the World Health Organization and the U.S. government, we have made the very difficult decision to temporarily close our masjid for daily congregational prayers and Friday Jummah prayer. We are also pausing any other daily or weekly activities for two weeks, Starting Friday 03/20/2020 till Thursday 04/03/2020.

In the meanwhile, we ask our fellow members to observe 5 times prayers with congregation at their homes. Jummah prayer may be performed by a minimum of 4 adults, including a short Khutbah and 2 rakat of fardh jummah salat. May Allah S.W.T. bestow his mercy upon us and protect us during this time, ameen.

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