

## PASTORAL MESSAGE

For 6/6/20

If all goes according to plan, we will worship together next Sunday, 6/14/20! Praise be to God!

The leadership is finalizing the plan for reopening face-to-face worship. It includes measures to ensure that everyone who attends feels safe.

\*The building will be clean. We have staff and volunteers dedicated to maintaining a clean and sanitary environment.

\*We will wear masks. We agree to protect one another from aerosol created through our breathing, speaking, and singing.

\*We will keep a list of participants. Should someone develop symptoms of COVID-19, we will notify everyone who was gathered together for worship, for the meeting, or for the small group.

\*We will self-quarantine from gathering, if necessary. If any of us are feeling ill, or have been exposed to someone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or who has tested positive, we will do the right thing, and choose to not come.

\*We will pray. Not everyone will feel comfortable coming to face-to-face gatherings, especially if they are in high risk categories (elderly, immune compromised). We will keep one another in our prayers, in our thoughts, and we will maintain connections with our “distanced” brothers and sisters, in a multitude of ways (cards, calls, emails, texts, etc.)

For us to feel safe, we need to be assured that others will not violate our trust. With freedom comes responsibility. In this time, living out the Golden Rule is especially important.

The Way of Jesus includes many different ways to use your gifts and talents to further the Kingdom of God. God’s grace and presence, that works with you, and for you, will help remove darkness and increase the light of love in your life. But we also have a role. Seek to grow in holiness.

As we prepare to gather face-to-face in worship, small groups, and meetings, let us prepare our hearts. Let us seek to increase sensitivity to not violating the trust of others, and to fulfilling our promises, expectations, and upright behavior that protects and honors one another.

Let us use this time to also reflect on the struggles in the world, that in many ways boil down to the same basic ideas. Leaders, police officers, institutions and governments carry specific expectations and burdens of appropriate behavior. Honesty, integrity, honor. When violations of trust happen, especially when the violations are continuous and unrepentant, we as Christians are called to protest these violations. Peaceably, but also unapologetically.

In *The Careless Society: Community and Its Counterfeits*, John McKnight says, “And if you listen carefully, you can hear the words: ‘I care for you, because you are mine, and I am yours.’” How we live matters. May God bless you, and as you pass it on, may the world be blessed.

Peace and blessings,  
Pastor Chris