

May 7, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ –

Greetings and blessings to all of you! I sure miss seeing your wonderful faces and smiles! We have certainly been living in unprecedented times. There has been an abundance of emotions felt by many people. Some have felt isolated, exiled, imprisoned, sorrowful; others have experienced a new sense of purpose and refreshment. The bottom line is that we are all in this together. As I have thought about our time apart, it does feel like we have been exiled. Just like Paul when he was imprisoned, and John when he was exiled.

As a church, I believe we have endured this well. We are trying to stay connected, sending out daily devotions and making certain our worship is of the highest quality, as we are on a steep technology learning curve. We have remained busy at the church as a new website is being unveiled. We hope you like it. It has the same URL, www.alexabc.com.

As Governor Holcomb is slowly reopening different parts of the state, we want to follow his guidelines. We would love to meet tomorrow! However, that would not be prudent. There are a number of logistical issues we want to make sure are in place before we resume meeting together. In fact, please understand, *the church has never closed*, we have still been able to worship! We just could not meet in person. Moving forward, we are going to be reopening the building in a very structured and safe manner.

With that in mind, we will be resuming worship at church on *June 7*. (Insert virtual high fives and clapping here!)

The Deacons were unanimous on this date. That gives us 4 more weeks to make sure that all plans are appropriate for everyone's safety. Some churches will be meeting sooner, but we believe this is most appropriate for our sized congregation. We want to assure everyone that the building will be safe from week to week.

I'd like to offer some guidance as to how we will start up meeting in person once again. This date is subject to change depending on further developments in our region.

Per state and local guidelines in accordance with the Center for Disease Control, we encourage anyone who meets the following criteria to utilize our online worship opportunities. Persons who:

Are at a higher risk of contracting COVID-19 (people over 65, people with underlying health conditions, such as lung, heart, kidney, liver disease, and those who are diabetic).

Are caring for someone who is at high risk of contracting COVID-19

Have recently been in contact with someone who has contracted COVID-19

Have a fever, cough, shortness of breath, chest pain or other suspicious symptoms

We are taking the following steps to protect the health and safety of the congregation.

Sanctuary seating will be done by ushers, complying with social distancing rules. We will also be using every other pew. As a result, sitting in your normal seat may not occur! Sorry!!

High contact surfaces will be disinfected between worships and meetings.

Hand sanitizer will be available in high traffic areas.

Masks are highly encouraged. Nobody will be ridiculed for wearing a mask.

No coffee or food will be available.

There will be no handouts, no bulletins, etc. Children's bulletins will be available via the church website for you to print at home. We can also email them to you.

Greetings such as handshakes and hugs are strongly discouraged.

No childcare or children's church will be provided for the present time.

Hallways and certain entrances will be closed off. The Family Life Center will not be open.

There will be two entrances used. The main entrance (south doors) and the north entrance, opposite the main entrance.

Sunday School will not be resuming for the foreseeable future as well.

I know some of this sounds very restrictive, but we want to assure everyone that we are maintaining a safe and secure environment at the church. All worships will be on Facebook, hopefully live and on the church website (later that day).

Adjustments will continue to be made as needed, but for now, we want you to know we are thinking of you and praying for you as we prepare for a safe return to our regular worship.

If you have any needs or questions, please contact the church.

Blessings,

Pastor Michael

Pastor Michael