

4/22/20

Dear Faith Family,

I'm writing once again to say hi and keep you up to date on all our church activities. This is now our sixth week of shelter-in-place (depending on when you started counting), and this Sunday will be our sixth Sunday without meeting face-to-face. It's hard to believe we haven't seen each other in almost two months! As such, I would like to give you a few announcements:

First, this past Monday at our consistory meeting, the deacons, elders and I started discussing what reopening the church might look like. While this may feel a little pre-mature, I know many of you are tired of the uncertainty and would love some more definitive information. We also realize there is a lot of talk going around about reopening the state, and pressure is mounting on our government officials to do so.

Still, our church remains committed to not only following the laws, but continuing to base our decisions on what is in the best interests of our congregation—the physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing of all our members. At this time we plan on staying closed until at the very least the government has deemed it safe for groups of 50 or more to meet. For now it looks unlikely this will happen for at least another month.

Beyond this, we continue monitoring the news, reading up on the latest health expertise, and scheduling special consistory meetings to talk about and evaluate our procedures. While I hope we can be together soon, we would hate to open and then find out someone contracted the virus due to one of our meetings. So hang in there and continue availing yourself of the online services, online giving, and virtual meetings and/or phone calls with members from our church.

The second announcement I have is to regretfully inform you that Ashley and Lamar Foster have recently decided to resign their positions as youth directors. Due to personal conflicts, they felt they were unable to continue in their roles. We wish them the best in their professional endeavors and pray that God continue to use them to build His kingdom. Should you have any questions about this, please don't hesitate to talk to Pastor Andrew or the consistory.

Third, I wanted you to know this past week we got our carpets cleaned. Sno-King Carpet did a great job working throughout our building, and the place now looks and smells delightfully clean. We also had them perform a fogging, sanitization process to kill germs and viruses. This means when we are able to come back, everything should be nice and clean.

Next, I thought I would use this opportunity to suggest to you a few ideas for what you could do with your stimulus checks. For those of us who have not lost our jobs, and are not facing any kind of financial difficulty, it is a good idea to consider using these extra funds, not only to bless yourself, but to bless others as well. So here's a list of possible ways to use this extra blessing:

- Don't forget to tithe—a tithe is considered 10% of any money received, given to the church you call home.
- Donate to charity. There are a number of great charities in our area: local food banks, Vision House, Nourishing Network, Seattle & Everett Gospel Missions, etc. All are seeing an increase in need and could use our support.
- Consider supporting a local business. I have found purchasing Groupons is a nice way to let a local store or restaurant know you support them and plan on visiting them when they reopen. Ordering take-out and leaving a special tip is also a great way to support local business.
- If you know of a specific family in need, buying them groceries or a grocery gift card is a nice idea. My family has benefited from gifts like this in the past, and they are always a wonderful, unexpected blessing.
- Beyond your tithe, consider making a special, designated donation to the church. Designated offerings are moneys given for specific ministries. While I don't encourage this as a regular habit, when extra funds are available it is a great way to give towards something that is near and dear to your heart. Options can include the youth or kids' funds, missions, or our deacons fund that provides scholarships for youth going to college.
- Lastly, do something fun that will bless you and your family. While it is more blessed to give than to receive, I believe God is also a fan of us gratefully accepting His gifts and enjoying some for ourselves.

With that, let me leave you with one last word of encouragement:

Psalm 55:22 "Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never let the righteous fall."

1 Peter 5:7 "Cast all your cares on Him, for He cares for you."

Peace and blessings in Christ,

Pastor Andrew