

May 14, 2020

Dear Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ at Evangel,

It is with great joy that I am able to announce that we will resume worship in the church sanctuary on Sunday, May 31st. What a blessing to be able to worship together again.

The decision by the Session in concurrence with the Diaconate to resume on the 31st is with a desire to once again meet as a family of believers as well as provide a relatively safe environment in the context of the coronavirus. Your safety is very much in our thinking. Like any place you might visit during this time, we cannot guarantee a germ-free environment. We proceed both with faith and caution. As James 5 tells us, we do everything, "if God so wills". We will need to reevaluate our decision to begin on the 31st at the regular Session meeting on the 26th of May. We would ask for your patience and kindness as we proceed in these most unusual times.

"And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God, in Christ, also has also forgiven you. Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma." Ephesians 4:32-5:2.

Our worship will be the same in its Biblical and God-centered focus but the context will be different in where we sit, how we interact and the times we meet. Once we become accustomed to these safety precautions, they will become familiar and not be a distraction. Please make an effort to consider the instructions below and follow them for your family's safety and the safety of others. These instructions are detailed but very similar to the ones you find in most churches.

The virus is still very much present in our community. As much as we would love for you to be with us, we would strongly recommend those 65 and over, those with immune suppression and other individuals with risk factors continue to worship online. Please do not attend if you have a fever or are ill. During this time, please understand there is no obligation, spiritual or otherwise for you to attend worship at the church.

We are very thankful for your participation in remote worship via the live-streaming of our services. The live-streaming, of course, will continue. You have been very faithful in your viewing as well as in your stewardship. This is a great testimony to the Lord's work in and through you as a congregation.

Please read the following instructions carefully. These are very similar to those in other churches. They are given in detail to encourage some measure of safety. I know they are difficult and are strange to us. We believe they are for the best for all who worship with us. Please be patient. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at (205) 664-0889 and I or any of our pastors will be happy to answer your questions.

- 1) We will have two worship services each Sunday at 8:00 and 10:30 This will provide space if needed. The sanctuary will be cleaned between services. Please, arrive no earlier than 10:00 for the 10:30 service. Zoom Sunday School will meet at its regular 9:00 time.
- 2) We recommend that everyone who does not feel safe, those over 65 and those with compromised immune conditions worship via internet.
- 3) We recommend you wear a mask when entering the church. This is not required but will benefit the safety of others and yourself. If possible, please bring your own mask. If needed, the deacons will have disposable masks.
- 4) All families need to stay and sit together. A six-foot space is needed between each family sitting on a pew. Please sit toward the end of each pew with the middle portion of the pew remaining empty.
- 5) Every other pew will remain empty allowing a six-foot space between those sitting in front and back of you.
- 6) The first three pews of the church will be reserved. In the event all seats are taken, limited seating will be made available in the choir suite.
- 7) We ask that all offerings be placed in the collection plates on the communion table or on a table at the back of the sanctuary.
- 8) Sadly, there will be no nursery or Sunday School at the church until it is safe for children to intermingle.
- 9) The main foyer doors will be open until the service begins. Exit will be made by dismissal through the front sanctuary doors.
- 10) Please reserve fellowship before and after the service for the parking lot with six-foot distancing.
- 11) Two sets of restrooms will be available: those down the front hall of the education building and those just to the right of the sanctuary entrance. Bathroom cleanliness will be maintained and each thoroughly cleaned after services.

May our glorious Lord grant us His grace and good favor as we seek to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth.

Please lift Evangel up daily in prayer.

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3:20, 21

In Christ our Lord,

Jeff Lowman
Sr. Pastor