

May 21, 2020

Alamance Presbyterian Church Family,

I have four things I need to share with you this afternoon.

1. While we continue to address some technical issues, we will present worship in a different format again this week. We are producing the service head of time again, rather than filming it live. We hope to be able to load it to Livestream. It will also be available in three parts on the church YouTube channel. The YouTube link will also be available through Facebook. Let us know if you have any questions about where to find the service! We intend to make it available on Sunday morning at 10:00. With any luck, we will be back to live worship on Livestream for **Pentecost, Sunday, May 31**.
2. The Session has formed a Reopening Task Force to create a timeline and policies and procedures for reopening the church for in-person gatherings. Last Sunday, Session approved these four recommendations from the task force.
  - **We will not resume in-person worship until AT LEAST the Sunday after three full weeks of Phase 2 of the NC Moving Forward plan.** As you know, the governor has ordered that the state move into a modified version of Phase 2 this Friday, May 22. Please note: Session has not yet set a date for the resumption of in-person worship. **Do NOT expect to be back in the sanctuary on June 14.** That simply is the earliest possible Sunday we would consider it. We will keep you up-to-date as we make these decisions.
  - **When we do return to in-person worship in the sanctuary, we will enforce social distancing by closing portions of our seating, and we will require all attendees to wear masks throughout the service.** Those who would prefer not to wear masks, and those who may have additional risk factors, we encourage to continue attend the service remotely through Livestream.
  - **We will not resume any other church activities in the building until some time has passed after the beginning of Phase 3.**
  - **We will continue to develop creative opportunities for ministry apart from the building. We affirm the continued operation of the Food Pantry and our service at Potter's House, provided proper distancing and mask use are observed.**

These measures were approved unanimously by the Reopening Task Force and the Session. While some of us may personally hold different convictions about the shape and scope of reopening, we hope everyone will understand that these recommendations take into account the diverse perspectives, demographics, and needs of our congregation.

We will always intentionally err on the side of the safety and well-being of our whole membership. We are committed to following the guidelines and recommendations given to us by federal, state, and local governments where they apply.

You may note that courts have ruled that the government has no authority to force churches to suspend in-person gatherings. That ruling, however, does not fundamentally change the guidance the government and its public health agencies have offered us. We seek the wisdom of those charged to govern, just as we seek the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit in the decisions we make as a church.

Please note that the Child Development Center is reopening next week, with new guidelines and procedures to address the safety of the children and the teachers.

3. One of those creative opportunities for ministry I mentioned above is the revival of the Photography Club. Danny Thomas and I gathered a group of interested folks about 18 months ago. We look forward to resuming that activity. We will meet virtually at first, looking forward to the day when we can meet in person. Whether you take pictures on a DSLR, a "point and shoot," a film camera, an iPad, or a cell phone, we welcome your participation in the club. Not only will we take pictures, but we will also spend some time learning about photography together. Contact me if you would be interested in participating.

4. Pentecost is coming up on **Sunday, May 31**. Be ready to wear something red, even if you are wearing it at home! While the rain (forecasted for the next ten days!) has hampered our plans for that Sunday already, stay tuned for news about a rain-delayed Pentecost activity we have in the works.

I miss you, Church. I'm praying for you. I love you. Stay safe. Be well. Keep the faith!

*Kyle*

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