

# ❖ Faith Builder ❖

Volume 20 Issues 9

*"A Church with a Heart for People"*

September 2020

## Message from the pastor

### The Plan

Dear Faith Family,

I want to thank you for recently filling out our church-wide, reopening survey. It was very helpful to see where everyone is at, hear your concerns, and use this information to help us chart a path forward. In case you're curious, here are some of the results of that survey:

In response to the question, 'when would you feel comfortable returning to church?', 17% said the sooner the better, 17% said once we move into phase 3, 20% said phase 4, 20% said whenever there's a vaccine, and 27% said they were unsure.

In response to the question, 'would you be interested in attending a Saturday sermon recording?', 31% of you said no, and 52% said either yes or maybe.

And in answer to question 4, 'what are your main reopening concerns?', 37% said general safety, 42% said all of the above (safety, masks, lack of distancing), and 12% said they didn't have any concerns.

In looking at this data, the consistory and I have drawn two major conclusions. First, it seems like our church aligns more on the cautious side of the spectrum. But second, in terms of when we should reopen, our congregation seems to be all over the map, with the majority of people simply being uncertain. In light of this, we have come up with the following plan of action to help lead us into this next season of ministry (at least September through December):

**Saturday Sermon Services:** starting September 5<sup>th</sup>, we will be moving our Friday sermon recordings to Saturdays at 10 a.m., with a maximum of 25 people allowed in attendance. There will be no singing, and people need to make a reservation the week before. Anyone who doesn't make the cut will be given first priority the following week.

**Sunday Services Reopen:** our church will reopen Sunday services once our county moves into Phase 3. During this phase, however, services will be capped at 25 people taken by reservation just as in the previous item. There will be some worship/singing, but no fellowship time. The Saturday recording will also continue during this time, and once our county reaches phase 4, the number of people in attendance will increase for Sundays, and we may possibly do away with the Saturday services.

\*\*\*Masks and distancing will be expected for all in-person activities.\*\*\*

**Online Church Continues:** for those who cannot attend in-person services, we will continue to offer our version of online church from now until at least December. As per your requests, we will try to provide more frequent video of Pastor Andrew (actually seeing his face) as well John and Tanya's welcome videos.

**Online Bible studies:** Starting mid-September, we will be offering midweek, online (zoom) classes for women, men, teens, and children, as well as occasional Fellowship, Worship & Prayer (FWP) events. Please see the announcements to sign up for these.

Please understand that our main intention behind these plans is to serve as many people as possible, while still staying as safe as possible. This means if you do not feel comfortable attending an in-person activity, (continued on next page)



### Giving Options

We now have online giving! Please see our webpage ([www.faithedmonds.org](http://www.faithedmonds.org)) or download the Tithe.ly app to be able to make payments through credit card. Or, you can still send in checks through the mail. Thank you for your faithfulness during this difficult season!



### Sunday Sermons available online

If you missed a Sunday Sermon, they are now available online under the worship tab. at [www.faithedmonds.org](http://www.faithedmonds.org),

### July General Giving

Anticipated:	\$16,700.00
Given:	\$11,488.98

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(cont'd)

please do not feel pressured to do so. In-person activities are for the people in our congregation who are eager to get-together and healthy enough to take that risk. Our desire is to minister to everyone right where they are at and, strange as it sounds, this is not the right time to be inviting people to an in-person church service. Instead consider inviting people to watch our services online, or, if you're able to, host a church-viewing, socially distant, party with a few close friends right from the comfort of your home.

As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, we will continue to hold these plans loosely, knowing that God may have other ideas. As things continue to evolve, we will adjust and re-adjust to the latest information we have.

Finally, I want to mention very quickly that our giving has been down. The past 3 months of giving have been the lowest our church has seen in the past five years—about \$6,000 below what is budgeted each month, on top of a loss of income from our regular renters. If you are able to increase your giving at this time, we would sincerely appreciate your support in this. I do want to encourage you to consider using the Tithely app to set up regular, scheduled withdrawals from your bank account. This way you won't forget to give even if you're not in the building. Thanks to all of you who have continued to faithfully support us at this time. Joyful giving is an important part of a life of worship, and we celebrate your obedience in this way!

Thank you for reading this far. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you have any concerns or questions.

Blessings and peace,

Pastor Andrew

## Announcements

**Saturday Recording Services:** If you would like to attend one of Pastor Andrew's live, sermon recordings, on Saturdays at 10 a.m., please email/call/text Pastor Andrew the week before. Attendance is capped at 25 people, and safety protocols are emailed in advance and expected to be adhered to. Pastor Andrew's info is: [andrewedmonds@gmail.com](mailto:andrewedmonds@gmail.com).

**Men's and Women's Fall Bible Studies:** This Fall Faith Community church will be hosting online, zoom bible studies for men and women. The women's study will be led by Tricia Edmonds, pastor Andrew's mother, going through the book of Colossians on Tuesday evenings at 7:30 p.m. The mens' study will be led by pastor Andrew and Chris Huffines, going through the book of Ephesians on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. Both studies will last approximately 8 weeks. Please email the church and/or pastor Andrew, to let us know if you're interested.

**Teens and Kids' Virtual Mentor Studies:** Kids and Teens are invited to join a mentoring small group where they will be going through the book of Mark at an age appropriate level. As part of this teens are encouraged to do double duty where they will be mentored by an adult, and then turn around and lead their own group with younger participants. If your kids would like to join a group specifically tailored for them, please let us know asap. Schedules will be determined based on each group's availability.

**FWP Event:** Our next online Fellowship, Worship and Prayer (FWP) night will be on Wednesday, September 16 at 8 p.m. Be on the look-out for the zoom link in the next couple weeks.