

Busti Federated Church

Spring 2020

A Church for the Community

What Will the Church Look Like When the Masks Come Off?

In 41 years of serving as a pastor I have never experienced anything like we have during the past few weeks. Churches closing their doors to public gatherings for corporate worship, shutting ourselves in our homes except when going out for essentials, learning how to properly wash our hands, numerous applications of hand sanitizer, social distancing, and wearing face masks. It all started in March and now we are close to the end of May, and everyone is asking, when will this end?

Even though we do not know when the church doors will reopen, I am grateful that God's arms are still wide open. Wide open to envelope us in His love and care, provide for our needs, and receive anyone who would accept Jesus into their lives. This is prime time for the church to draw closer in relationship with God and come out the other side of this pandemic in the "power of the Holy Spirit."

So, what will the church look like when the masks come off? That is up to whether we will determine to be obedient to the Holy Spirit's guidance or not. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness where he dealt with the onslaught of Satan's temptations. Jesus faced his tempter and with one statement "It is written" stood strong. It suggests that being solid in the Word of God is of utmost importance. We overcome by the Word of God, not being politically correct, or whatever the current cultural fad is. It is through the Word of God that we find strength to overcome. Unfortunately, there are churches that have strayed from the true meaning of Scripture and have become more like social clubs blending into whatever may be socially acceptable. God help us!

The Church must come out the other side of the pandemic looking and acting more like Jesus.

How do we do that? We do it by studying the life of Jesus Christ, and then taking what we learn and do what he did. Jesus gave a new commandment in *John 13:34, 35* "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Love would reveal that we are Jesus' disciples. Then Jesus commanded in *Matthew 22:37-39* "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" God extends his love to us which in turn we extend to others. As if that were not tough enough, Jesus tells us in *Luke 6:27-28* "But I say to you who hear: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you." Love God, love each other, love your neighbor, love your enemies, which is exactly what Jesus did. Show me one person that Jesus did not love. You will not find it anywhere in the Bible. Yes, God hates sin but loves the sinner. We are to take the example of Jesus seriously and do likewise.

What will the church look like when the masks come off?

The answer is not profound, but simple. The church will look and act more like Jesus, full of passion for the Gospel, and compassion for the people. Communities will look at the church empowered by the Holy Spirit and see the face of Jesus!

Love you all in Christ,
Pastor Lee

Around the Church

Church Finances

Keeping In Touch

Church leadership has been diligently trying to keep lines of communication open. To do this we are relying on help from everyone. Not only is it important not to lose sight of our continuous needs but also to keep in touch with each other through these unordinary and trying times.

- ◆ Church Email: If you have been a part of the email prayer chain we will continue to utilize that for new requests and updating current needs.
- ◆ Phone Tree: We have implemented something similar to the prayer chain we used to use by telephone. We have divided everyone into groups of five or six and each group will have a leader that will make all of the calls. We will be using this if there are requests or information that are urgent or need to be seen sooner rather than later. We will still be using the email prayer group to pass along request
- ◆ Buddy System: Audrey has worked to create a buddy system within the church. Each person should have one or two “buddies” to keep in touch with throughout this crisis and hopefully beyond.
- ◆ Website and Newsletter: We are consistently adding new information to the website. There is a contact form if you need to submit any information or have an needs. There is also a link to the weekly virtual worship service. During the pandemic we are trying to include updated information from local and state government.

Most importantly we can keep in touch with each other. Make a few random calls per week just to check in and keep in touch.

June

Birthdays

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Dan Siggins | 2nd |
| Marly Hanson | 4th |
| Caryl Bergstue | 6th |
| Bernie Lenihan | 16th |
| Grace Hanson | 20th |
| Nancy Walter | 27th |

Anniversaries

| | |
|--------------------------|------|
| Gordy & Jean Robbins | 9th |
| Boyd & Mary Lou Matteson | 15th |

July

Birthdays

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Jim Dustin | 5th |
| Pam Ellis | 16th |
| Anna Phillips | 18th |
| Julie Fried | 22nd |
| Kathy Lenihan | 31st |

Anniversaries

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| Sue & Bill Allshouse | 3rd |
| Steve & Judy Grove | 3rd |
| Bernie & Kathy Lenihan | 5th |
| Jim & Julie Fried | 10th |
| Jim & Shirl Streib | 28th |

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Working On A Plan

Hopefully sooner rather than later we are going to be able to come together to worship. In order to be prepared we've started working on some guidelines to use to help keep everyone as safe as possible. Depending on when we open and following the guidance of our public officials we are working with the following guidelines:

- In order to avoid groups we are asking that you arrive at church as close to the start time as possible and proceed directly to the sanctuary. There will also be no community friendship time so that everyone can leave once the service has ended.
- In the sanctuary we ask that no one sit next to or directly in front of or behind anyone else.
- Hand sanitizer will be readily available as you enter the church and outside of the sanctuary. There will also be disposable masks available if needed
- To avoid passing items between people we will not have ushers handing out bulletins. The bulletins will be located outside the sanctuary on the table which will also have a collection plate to place your offering in before or after the service.

It's important to remember that things are constantly changing and some of these steps may become unnecessary and others may need to be added. The most important thing is to be able to provide a safe environment to worship together again. We also understand that not everyone will feel safe returning to church right away. We will still provide the service online and other forms of communication we are currently doing.

Praying that we can come together again soon and that everyone remains safe.

Thank You

One of the things we excel at as a church is pulling together and helping each other through the good times and the bad. These last couple of months have been difficult for many of us but have pushed forward. You have continued to support the church with your giving and our bills are paid and we are financially stable.

I remember it was a Wednesday when several of us met at church and made the difficult decision to close the doors. Beginning that next Sunday we started offering a virtual service. We have been learning as we go and there have been a few bumps in the road but everyone has been very supportive.

Since that first Sunday we have seen an increase in both visitors to our website and Facebook page as well as views of the service video on Youtube. This past Sunday we surpassed 100 views. Along with comments to the posts this shows us that we are reaching out beyond our congregation. This is something that we don't want to lose when we are able to come back to an actual service.

Moving forward.....

Even after the strongest storms the sun will always shine through. Although this pandemic has been hard it has opened several doors for us. On June 7th we are planning on livestreaming our worship service through our Youtube page. The service will also be saved so that it can be watched anytime. It's important to continue to reach those that have started watching and depending on us.

We are also working on additional projects that we will tell you about when we have more specific details. Please continue to pray for the church and our community as we work towards a new normal. We know that God is in control no matter what.

All our infirmities, whatever they are, are just opportunities for God to display his gracious work in us.

C. H. Spurgeon

Memorial Day — Never Forget

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

On this Memorial Day,

I am thankful for the sacrifice so many throughout our history have made, for the men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice and for their families who had to carry on without them. It is a sacrifice that is easy to forget. For those who have it, freedom is like oxygen. It's something we just have. Many will not understand just how precious either is until they are at risk of being taken away. Today I remember a sacrifice made and a debt I cannot repay. Today I pray for the God of heaven to bless the families of those who have lost loved ones while serving our great nation. I pray for Him to bless and comfort the walking wounded who are still with us, and bless their families as well. It is also my prayer that we remember their sacrifice and the precious gift of freedom every day, not just once a year or when they are in danger of being taken away.

"Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate — we cannot consecrate — we cannot hallow — this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract.

The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation shall have a new birth of freedom and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Gettysburg Address
Abraham Lincoln
November 13, 1863

"A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself."

Joseph Campbell