

Campbellsburg Christian Church Newsletter

A Family of Faith, Hope and Love

Volume 16 Issue 5

May 2020

Julie's Journal

I hope this newsletter finds you healthy and happy. Our time of quarantine has helped many people re-evaluate what is important in their lives, and has made even more people grateful for all of their blessings. It has also brought many people together (with a social distancing factor of six feet or online). Americans seem much less polarized in their views and more concerned about "being in this together."

With that being said, we must remember that some people are experiencing the pandemic much differently than others. For some, their families have grown stronger, but for other families domestic violence is on the upswing. Those who need to be attending AA or NA meetings can only attend online and it is just not the same. Some have lost jobs and in some cases careers leading to fears of losing their homes or not being able to feed their families. Still others are overwhelmed with anxiety about the future or the possibility of a worldwide depression. Seniors are missing out on prom, graduation, and other fun activities. Others are so stressed that they are having difficulty concentrating. Still others are having sleeping difficulties. Essential workers live in constant fear of getting the coronavirus and bringing it home to loved ones. We also often forget that many, many people do not own a computer and they are feeling especially isolated. Yes, we are in this together, but the experience can be quite different. We pray that everyone feels the presence of God during these trying times. May we all be a little kinder to each other, too.

Of course, we must also continue to pray for essential workers, those who are sick, those who have died and those who are grieving.

Although the number of new cases of Covid-19 appears to be plateauing in Kentucky, we have to remember that until there is a vaccine or cure, there's still a strong chance that we will see a resurgence in the number of cases. At the time of this writing, we have just received guidelines from the Regional Office concerning a phased return to normal church activities. Please see page 5 of the newsletter for details. Many, many details are involved with reopening the church.

Each week, we are having more than 400 views of our Facebook page. The Regional Office called to check on us, and told me that many churches are having four to five times the number of views than they normally have in worship. We may want to consider keeping our worship services online even after we are back together again in person. Remember that you do NOT need a Facebook account to watch worship. Just go to the Campbellsburg Christian Church Facebook page and watch. I know there have been some issues with sound quality. Please make sure that you turn up your speakers before the start of worship. Next week, we will move the phone closer to me when I am speaking. We are expecting a new microphone especially designed for Facebook Live to be delivered around May 7th.

On the personal side of things, I get closer to retiring from Bellarmine every day. I never thought that I would end my 35-year teaching career by teaching online. I have been working at home since March 11th and genuinely miss my students and colleagues. My family continues to pray that my daughter, Megan, and her fiancé Travis will get to have their wedding in November. As I write this article, we are grieving the loss of our 16-year old dog, Phyllis. She has given us so much joy over the years. It is very hard saying goodbye to a family member even if it is a pet. If you have pets, please honor Phyllis today by giving your pet(s) some extra attention.

I will be preaching from the following texts during the month of May:

May 3rd — Psalm 23

May 10th — Mother's Day, I Corinthians 13:4-7

May 17th — John 14:15-21

May 24th — Ascension Sunday, Acts 1:1-11

May 31st — Pentecost (Wear red to church or as you watch online), Acts 2:1-21

If you have pastoral care needs, please let me know! I am not a mind reader. Do NOT feel like you are bothering me. I am available for counseling, prayer, communion, and more. With my retirement from Bellarmine, I will have even more time to devote to these activities. Although I have been making many phone calls, hospital visits, and counseling sessions, I do want to keep members' information in confidence. Thus, I tend not to mention these activities in public. This has led to some members thinking that I am not interested in pastoral care. Nothing could be further from the truth. Being God's representative to those who are hurting is a very important part of ministry. I apologize for any misunderstandings concerning pastoral care.

Keep praying that we can worship together by the end of May or the first part of June.

*Blessings,
Julie*

Musical Musings

I am blessed to be a member of a women's Bible study group, which has been doing at least three different studies each of the past nine years. Due to the social distancing that has been mandated during the Coronavirus outbreak, we had to postpone the last half of our most recent study. However, during each week that we have been apart, my friend, Becky Bowling, who leads our studies, has sent at least one email...sometimes two or three...during the week to encourage us and let us know how much we are missed. With her permission, I would like to share Becky's "list" of lessons she hopes we have learned during this time of social distancing. Although the list is hers, the commentary is mine.

1. *God still reigns.* Amen and amen! Even though none of us have a clue about what really caused the Coronavirus, how to develop a vaccine for it, when it will truly be safe to "go back to normal" again, etc.,

God is and always has been in control. "God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1)

2. *His Word will always ring true.* I am so thankful to have the Bible and the freedom to read and study it alone and with others. In God's Word I can always find guidance, strength, comfort, hope, peace, joy...and the list goes on. "Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path." (Psalm 119:105)
3. *Even in fear and despair, hope is alive.* As followers of Christ, we do not live as those who have no hope. We know that no matter what happens to us in this life, we have the hope of eternity with Christ. "Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise." (Hebrews 10:23)
4. *This too shall pass.* How many times have you made this statement, or heard someone else make it? Oftentimes when we are in the middle of a trial, we think it will never end. Maybe right about now you're wondering when you will ever be able to return to church, visit your children or grandchildren, eat out at your favorite restaurant, or (fill in the blank). The end may not be in sight, but it will come eventually. "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." (Romans 12:12)
5. *There are many people to help.* Do you have anyone in your family or your neighborhood who could use some extra help? Maybe you know someone who is unable to get to the grocery and needs some food brought to them. Maybe someone else has lost their job, either temporarily or permanently, and could use some extra cash to make ends meet. Maybe you could help distribute food at a local food pantry or make facemasks for people who don't have access to them. These are just a few suggestions, but I'm sure you can come up with many more! "Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Philippians 2:4)
6. *Encouragement goes a long way.* "I hate it when someone tells me they are praying for me," said no one ever! Praying for others, sending a card, or making a phone call are great ways to lift someone up when they are feeling down. A simple "thank you" or "you're doing a great job" to a cashier, grocery clerk, or the person at the drive through may be just what they need to help them make it through the rest of their shift. "So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing." (1 Thessalonians 5:1)
7. *We still have 24 hours in a day.* Some of our schedules and daily routines have not changed all that much, while others, like mine, leave me struggling to remember what day it is! I am ashamed to say that I certainly have not taken advantage of all the extra time God has given me during the past several weeks of "down" time. However, it's never too late to make the most of each day we are given, because every day truly is a gift from God. "Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom." (Psalm 90:12)
8. *Prayer is our weapon!* Prayer draws us closer to our heavenly Father and helps us defeat Satan's schemes. Prayer can help our leaders make the right decisions. It can help scientists develop a

vaccine for the Coronavirus. Prayer can keep our medical professionals healthy and give them the strength and energy they need to continue treating their patients who have been infected. There is no end to the things that can be accomplished through prayer! "Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere." (Ephesians 6:18)

9. *Jesus loves you!* OK, so we all know this, right? But do we have any idea how much He loves us? Jesus loves us more than our parents and grandparents love us. He loves us more than we love our children. Jesus loves us more than our husband or wife loves us. No matter how much love we can imagine, Jesus loves us even more than that! Jesus loves us so much that He took on the sins of the entire world and gave His life so that each of us could be forgiven and have eternal life with Him in heaven! I don't know about you, but sometimes that is just too much for me to even comprehend, but it's true. He loves us that much! "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends." (John 15: 13)

I'm sure there will be many more lessons to learn in the coming days. My prayer is that through all of this we will become more kind and compassionate, more patient and understanding, more forgiving and less judgmental, more willing to offer and receive help, more aware of God's love for us, and more willing to share that love with others.

In His service,
Cheri

From the Chair

Have you ever thought about what Jesus did to the cross? I think we all know what happened to Jesus on the cross, but I mean what Jesus Christ actually did to the cross. The cross was a horrible symbol of torture, humiliation and death. The cross was a bad thing. The cross was for punishment and to instill fear in people. What did Jesus do to the cross? He changed it. He took an ugly symbol of pain and suffering and made it into a symbol of great love and hope! Now we see crosses everywhere and wear them on our necks because it's a great symbol of love and devotion. What a change! Jesus can take all kinds of bad things and turn them to good. He is really good at that.

All throughout the Bible, He does this. Think about it. Lepers become Christians, prostitutes become followers of Christ, Zacchaeus, a tax collector, has a major change. Then there is Paul... Jesus takes an intense persecutor of the Jews and makes him into one of the key apostles of all time!! And I can never forget the greatest of all... Christ's death on the cross. What a gift!! The Bible is full of these stories of people and things that turned from the dark side to the light because of our Lord and Savior.

So this gets me to thinking (Yes, I know, that is scary). If you have something in your life you feel is bad, or even sinful, what could you and Jesus do with that? It may be this crazy Corona virus or something even more personal, but I bet that between you, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and God, it can be turned into something much better than you imagine. It will be all right.

In Christian Love,
Les

Scripture of the Month

I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." **Psalms 91:2**

Financial Info

As of April 30th:
Balance in the Checking Account: \$ 41,357.45
Total Offerings for the Month: \$ 2,410.00
Balance in the Memorial Fund: \$ 17,999.90

From The Penny Pincher

I thought this would be a good time to bring everyone up to date on our Financial Status. Obviously we have not been physically in church for the last several weeks, however the expenses of the church continue to go on whether we are there or not. In March we had a negative cash flow of \$1,700 and in April we had a negative cash flow of \$2,262. I just received our quarterly property insurance payment of \$1,100+ that will have to be paid in May in addition to our other regular expenses.

Year to Date for 2020, we have taken in \$6,660.00 less that we have paid out in expenses.

Soooooo, if everyone will pitch in and catch-up their offerings it would be greatly appreciated. Checks can be mailed to the church at P.O. Box 399 Campbellsburg, KY 40011. If you would rather leave a check at church in one of the collection plates on the Communion Table that would be fine also. I'll try to swing by there a couple of times a week.

Thanks,
Chet

May Calendar

All Worship Services will continue to be posted on Facebook Live until further notice.

- May 2nd: *Happy Anniversary – Scott & Angie Southworth*
May 3rd: **3rd Sunday of Easter**
Psalms 23
Happy Birthday – John Ellegood
May 7th: **National Day of Prayer**
Happy Birthday – Ken Parker
May 10th: **4th Sunday of Easter**
Mother's Day
1 Corinthians 13:4-7
May 14th: *Happy Birthday – Linda Schulten*
May 15th: *Happy Birthday – Rory Allen Barnett*
Happy Anniversary – David & Sherry Cooper
May 16th: **Armed Forces Day**
May 17th: **5th Sunday of Easter**
John 14:15-21
May 21st: *Happy Birthday – Janet Jackson*
Happy Anniversary – Doug & Mindy Lawrence
May 24th: *We May Possibly have in Church Worship*
According to Guidelines Listed beginning on Page 5
Memorial Sunday
6th Sunday of Easter / Ascension Sunday
Acts 1:1-11
High School Graduate Recognition Sunday
Call to Worship – Isaac Schwarz
Elders – Les Lyle
Kevin Mullikin
Deacons – Jill Bohman
Tina Spencer
Acolyte – Ava McKinley

May 25th: **Memorial Day**

May 26th: *Happy Birthday – Mark Todd*

May 30th: *Happy Birthday – Gale Graetz*

May 31st: *We May Possibly have in Church Worship*

According to Guidelines Listed beginning on Page 5

Pentecost Sunday

Acts 2:1-21

Call to Worship – Les Lyle

Elders – Tracy Carpenter

Chet Lawrence

Deacons – Becky Bush

Isaac Schwarz

Acolyte – Jake Moore

Happy Anniversary – Larry & Allison Jesse

June 3rd: *Happy Anniversary – Chet & Cathy Lawrence*
Tony & Karen Osborne

June 4th: *Happy Anniversary – Kevin & Kim Mullikin*

June 5th: *Happy Birthday – Betty Spradling*

June 7th: *We May Possibly have in Church Worship*

According to Guidelines Listed beginning on Page 6

Call to Worship – Tina Spencer

Elders – Alice Lyle

Kevin Mullikin

Deacons – Patricia Carpenter

Ben Lyle

Acolyte – Matti Tillett

Mother's Day

A Mother's Love

Of all the special joys in life,
The big ones and the small,
A mother's love and tenderness
Is the greatest of them all.

~Anonymous

Outreach & Evangelism

Campbellsburg Kids' Kitchen –

We received the following email from Kayla Batts, our Kids' Kitchen coordinator, on April 29th:

Hello Everyone!

What a confusing time to be alive! Our worlds are upside down and we are living so differently than we were 8 weeks ago! I hope this message is finding you healthy, safe, and at peace knowing we still serve a God who loves, protects and heals!! He's far bigger than we could ever imagine!! Good things are happening everyday and we can give glory to God!

I'm writing to you this evening to inform you that we have partnered with the school and the resource office and made the decision to discontinue packing bags for this school year. Thankfully the school has worked very closely with our families to ensure they make plans to receive the food boxes from school. The district is providing so much food for families, far more than our one-gallon bags for a few weekend days! Please keep our kiddos in your prayers! They are in vulnerable situations and missing the love and nurturing from their teachers!

Hopefully we will resume school in August and look forward to serving our community families for what will be our 10th school year! Your commitment, support and dedication are so incredibly appreciated!

Love to all!

Kayla

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this ministry so far this year. As Kayla says, hopefully we

will be able to continue in the fall. We will keep you posted as we learn more.

Relay for Life –

Normally this month we would be having our “annual” *Relay for Life* bake sale / silent auction as *Relay* is usually held in June. As of right now, the *Relay* event is scheduled to be held Saturday, July 18th from 4:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m., at Henry Co High School football field / track. We will decide our plan of action whenever we are able to meet in person in church again!

Other Stuff –

Be sure to continue saving your pull-tabs, your bottle tops, and your pennies! Then bring them to church when we meet again!

2020 Church Camp

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the region has decided that it would be unwise and unsafe to host any camps this year at Camp Wakon' Da-Ho. The cabin housing and the communal dining facility at camp make it impossible to provide for CDC's social distancing recommendations. There is no way to conduct camp without risking the health of the campers, adult staff and employees. This was a very difficult conclusion to reach, however, it is in the best interest of all involved. Some virtual summer programs for our camp age children and youth will however be provided. Please watch for future communications about how you can participate in these activities.

4th Sunday Luncheon

We will not have our 4th Sunday Luncheon for May. Hopefully, we will be able to resume our fellowship luncheons in the near future.

A.D.M.er's

We will not have an A.D.M.er outing this month as restaurants are not listed as being able to open for in restaurant dining in the proposed openings. Hopefully, we will be able to resume outings in the near future.

Cookbook

I hope everyone is doing well and healthy. I would like to remind you about submitting your recipes for our cookbook. We have almost 180 recipes between main dishes, salads, side dishes, desserts and others. Kim has typed 90% or more of them and I want to extend a very special "Thanks" to her.

If we want a new church cookbook, we really need more recipes to finish this project. So, if you have more recipes to share, please email them to patoec@aol.com. We will really appreciate your support. I'm looking forward to be able to see you all at church.

Thanks and have a wonderful and blessed day!

Patricia

Editor's Note: If you happened to provide a recipe for “*Southwestern Onion Rings*” or “*Marshmallow Delights*,” please let Kim Mullikin know so your name can be included as the contributor.

Among Our Own

Thank you to whoever donated the lilies that adorned our sanctuary during the Easter season...

There are so many people doing things behind the scenes that make our church function smoothly, THANK YOU for all you do!

Congratulations to **Ava McKinley** upon her graduation from Henry County High School. Ava plans to attend JCTC and U of L to become a special education teacher...

Our **Christian Love and Sympathy** go out to **Ben Lyle** and his friend, **Regina Stratton**, in the death of her mother, Beverly Stratton on April 15, 2020 at the UK Medical Center...

Beverly is survived by her husband, Floyd Gene Stratton, her daughter, Regina Ann Stratton; two grandchildren, Gabriel Gene and Lucia Grace Stratton, all of Lawrenceburg; sister, Linda (Larry) Moore and brother, John Wayne (Diane) Turner, both of Versailles; sister-in-law, Sheila Turner, Lawrenceburg; and lots of nieces, nephews, family, and friends. A private funeral service was held at Gash Memorial Chapel with a private burial in the Lawrenceburg Cemetery. Memorial contributions instead of flowers were suggested to help her granddaughter, Lucia.

The following is being shared with Regina's permission. If you would like to make a donation on Lucia's behalf, please make your donation to the church and we will make a lump sum donation. Please mark all donations “for Lucia.”

Meet Lucia Stratton. *She is a vivacious 8-year old who loves playing outside and being crafty.*

She loves art, animals and creating her own dessert creations. She dreams of one day meeting Adriano Zumbo to trade baking magic secrets! Lucia is in need of a seizure assistance dog to help her with two rare, genetic, invisible diseases. Lucia has Osteogenesis Imperfecta and Sunflower Syndrome. A service dog will assist with Behavior Disruption such as lapping, touching, kisses, deep pressure and nuzzles. A service dog would also be able to help her with Balance and seizure/scent alert.

Osteogenesis Imperfecta: Lucia was born with Osteogenesis Imperfecta Type 1 also known as Brittle Bone Disease. Lucia has already had 10 broken bones but this disease hasn't slowed her down except when a bone needs time to heal. We have spent a lot of time in the ER.

Sunflower Syndrome Epilepsy: The second invisible / not so invisible disease developed when she was 6 years old. It took a while to realize what was happening at first. Lucia started out of the blue waving her hand over her eye. At first we thought it was her hair getting in her eyes. She was after all trying to grow princess hair and it all needed to be one length. She kept increasing her hand waving to the point our family said we should just cut her hair; princess hair wasn't worth the constant distraction. So she got bangs, but that didn't stop her obsessive motion of hand waving. Her school suggested we see a neurologist thinking she may have a tic. We took her to a neurologist and due to her odd movement they thought she could have Tourette's. They performed a one-hour EEG and during the strobe light portion of the test, they had to stop the test, her reaction was so extreme with seizure activity they had to stop the test.

The neurologists at the hospital had never seen this type of reaction to light with the hand waving motion. Lucia was diagnosed with a rare form of Epilepsy called Sunflower Syndrome. Only 1,300 people in the world suffer with this photosensitive form of epilepsy. She is sensitive to both interior light and the sun. There is no rhyme or reason as to which frequency or angle of light triggers the seizures.

The doctors have told us that the prognosis of being controlled by medicine was not good; this type of epilepsy is very drug resistant. After trying multiple medicines to reduce or control the seizures, nothing has worked so far but we keep trying.

With my own research, I found Dr. Thiele in Boston at Massachusetts General Hospital. She agreed to meet Lucia and take her on as a patient. During a 24 hour EEG she found Lucia had 54 seizures in just 1 hour from the daylight coming through the windows of her hospital room. Her case is extreme. We continue to work with Dr. Thiele and a Children's hospital closer to home that consults with Dr. Thiele.

I feel hopeless as a parent. My carefree little girl who loved to play outside, ride bikes, go hiking and swim now has been severely hindered in everything she does. It's now impossible for her to go outside on her own to play. She even struggles in the mornings brushing her teeth due to our bathroom lights. Everyday activities are compromised.

The affects: Lucia's seizures are mostly Absence seizures but she has had 3 Atypical Absence seizures.

The scary part is she does not realize she is having the seizures at times. Often she has walked into or fallen over objects. She is unable to walk outside without assistance, and must be with someone at all times for fear she will hurt herself. Often when she has a cluster of absence seizures, she just stops and when she pops out of the seizure she walks the opposite direction and is confused. She will stop in the middle of the street frozen in the seizure; it is too dangerous to let her go alone without holding her hand to keep her moving.

How a Life Saving Seizure Assistance Dog will Help - As a single mom raising two kids our family is in need of assistance to help give some freedom back to Lucia and to help protect her. As she gets older and becomes more independent a seizure assistance dog will be a vital part for her success and her safety. We need all the help we can get to protect her.

Please help Lucia with your kind & generous donation so my little girl can live a more independent life. Her two invisible diseases are a dangerous combination. The absence seizures increase her chance for broken bones. Since May of 2019, she has broken 6 bones. The sun and interior lights both cause seizures and we never know when they will strike. Thanks so much! Our family appreciates you!

Prayer Concerns

**Please See Newsletter in Church
For Specific Prayer Concerns
Due to Confidentiality**

All our military personnel

Our Church

Our Nation

WORLD PEACE

Stop Being Uneasy about Your Life

by Max Lucado

Worry has more questions than answers, more work than energy, and thinks often about giving up. There's not enough time, luck, credit, wisdom, or intelligence. We're running out of everything it seems, and so we worry. But worry doesn't work. You can

dedicate a decade of anxious thoughts to the brevity of life, and not extend it by one minute. Worry accomplishes nothing.

God doesn't condemn legitimate concern for responsibilities but rather the continuous mind-set that dismisses God's presence. Destructive anxiety subtracts God from the future and tallies up the challenges of the day without entering God into the equation. Jesus gives us this challenge: "Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else and live righteously; and he will give you everything you need" (Matthew 6:32-33).

From Fearless

Healthy at Church

Guidelines for returning to worship from the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Kentucky.

As Kentucky begins to reopen segments of its economy, the conversation has started to shift from being healthy at home to being healthy at work. As pastors and congregations, we should begin talking about how we will be healthy at church, especially healthy in worship.

Many congregations and clergy in the Region have asked about guidelines for reopening our churches and returning to gathered worship. The decisions on which steps to take and when rest with the pastors and leaders of each congregation.

It is our prayer that we will all approach these decisions prayerfully and collaboratively. This information is offered as a way for pastors and church leaders to listen to one another, discuss plans for each step, and communicate their decisions to the congregation.

Following state and federal guidelines, segments of the economy will reopen in phases. Congregations should plan a phased return as well. The federal guidelines call for a three-phase approach, and we expect that Kentucky's guidelines will follow a similar pattern.

Throughout All Phases

- Practice good hygiene.
- Anyone who does not feel well should stay home. This includes the pastors and worship leaders.
- Maintain recommended social distancing (6 feet).
- Wear masks as recommended by state guidance.
- Disinfect common areas and surfaces.
- Provide handwashing or sanitizing stations.

Vulnerable Populations

As we increase gathering, we must make decisions and communicate decisions clearly with our most vulnerable populations in mind. These are people most susceptible and most at risk to the novel coronavirus. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) define vulnerable populations as:

- individuals over 65;
- individuals with serious underlying health conditions, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, and asthma;
- those whose immune system is compromised, such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.

Those who live in the same household as a vulnerable individual should follow the guidelines as if they were also vulnerable.

As we think about the vulnerable individuals in our congregations, we might begin to ask:

- What portion of the congregation would be considered vulnerable individuals or households?
- Of those most vulnerable, how many would feel they should be at church and in worship if they know the doors are open?
- Are the pastors, elders, and other leaders vulnerable individuals?
- What special considerations are needed for these people in order for them to participate in worship or other activities even though they still need to be healthy at home?
- What plans do we need should the pastor become infected or be required to quarantine?

You Will Need

- Nitrile gloves
- Hand sanitizer
- Disinfecting wipes
- Training on the use of gloves and disinfecting practices. A healthcare professional in the congregation may be able to provide this.
- You may need to supply masks, but recommend that people bring their own.

Phase I

This may begin on May 20th per state guidelines.

- Vulnerable individuals and households should continue to participate in worship from home.
- Gatherings should be limited to 10 people, given that proper distancing is practiced.
- Schools and in-person youth activities remain closed.
- Church employees who can should continue to telework.

Most congregations probably will not gather for worship in this phase, and much of the church's ministry will still be happening online. Congregations will still be using online worship practices they have developed.

Small groups of ten or less might begin to meet, wearing masks and practicing social distancing. Surfaces in the areas where the group meets should be wiped down with disinfecting wipes before and after each gathering. Some office staff may return to the church building, but if possible, church staff should continue to telework.

Phase II

This may begin in the absence of a resurgence, indicated by another 14-day downward trend in cases.

- Vulnerable individuals and households should continue to participate in worship and other activities from home.
- Gatherings should be limited to 50 people, given that appropriate distancing is practiced.
- Schools and in-person youth activities may resume.
- Gathering in common areas, like the church narthex, should still be avoided.
- Avoid surfaces and objects that would normally be touched by different people, such as the handle on the coffee urn.

Worship gatherings may resume in several congregations; however, social distancing protocols should be maintained.

Distancing in Sanctuaries

Social distancing requirements will dramatically reduce the seating capacity of a congregation's worship and fellowship spaces. For example, to maintain a six-foot distance between households in the sanctuary, every other pew or row of chairs will be empty. Each pew or row

will be no more than half-filled. This reduces the capacity of the worship space by two-thirds or three-fourths. People returning to worship may not be able to sit in their regular spot during worship.

Give some thought to how you will indicate where people can and cannot sit. Also, congregation leaders will need much discernment about who will enforce required distancing and how it will be enforced.

Attention to Surfaces

Commonly used surfaces should be sanitized before and after any gathering. This includes meeting tables and kitchen surfaces. Current research indicates that the novel coronavirus only lives for three days on a dry surface. Surfaces and items that are only used weekly should not need to be disinfected. However, if time and people are available to disinfect these items and surfaces, it would be good to take this additional precaution.

Phase III

This begins with no evidence of a resurgence, indicated by another 14-day downward trend in confirmed cases of Covid-19.

- Vulnerable individuals and their households may return to church gatherings; however, they should maintain recommended distancing. Vulnerable individuals should use their discretion regarding whether they should attend worship.
- Everyone should minimize time in crowded environments.

Although we will likely never return to the way things were, we will begin to approach that in this phase. Nevertheless, we should continue to use what we have learned and the new skills we have developed. We will not go back to the way things were before. Through this crisis, God has called us into a new and hopeful future!

We will serve and witness in new ways, reaching more people with the good news of God's love shown to us in Jesus Christ!

Communion

- **Passing trays.** Probably the most contagious thing we do during worship is pass communion and offering trays. Communion is central to our worship practice, and it is also a highly contagious activity. We need to change our practices to reduce the need for several people to touch common surfaces and objects.
- **Preparation.** People preparing communion should wear masks, use hand sanitizer, and wear nitrile gloves. Find a way to combine bread and cup into a single unit. Congregations may use stacked communion cups, where a piece of bread is placed in a cup, a second cup is placed on top partially filled with juice. A congregation might also purchase pre-filled juice and wafer cups.
- **Cleaning up.** Empty cups can be placed in pew or chair racks. Persons who pick up and discard used communion items should wear gloves and masks.
- **Serving during worship.** We cannot serve in a manner where everyone in the congregation touches the trays, pulling out pieces of bread and cups of juice. Any form of common cup communion, like intinction, is strictly off the table. We can place stacked cups or pre-filled juice and wafer cups in trays and invite people to come forward to receive. Rather than allowing each to take their own communion, though, a gloved and masked deacon should hand each worshipper the communion elements. When transferring from one hand to another, don't touch hands. If a gloved hand touches an ungloved hand, the gloves should be changed immediately.

- **Bring your own communion.** Each household might bring their own elements of bread and juice. We should still have communion elements available for people who forget or anyone who might be visiting. This can be offered as people enter, observing the sanitize, mask, and glove protocol described above.

- **Place communion elements on pew or chairs.** Pre-packaged communion could be placed on chairs or pews prior to the worship service. This would also give an indication of where households are able to sit.

- **Handing out elements as people enter.** This is an alternative to having worshippers come forward during the communion service, and it works well with the prepackaged wafer and juice cups. As with serving during worship, though, the deacons handing out communion elements should use hand sanitizer and wear nitrile gloves and masks.

Communion is a central part of our worship, and in many ways it reflects our core values and beliefs. Serving communion in the Reformed tradition by passing trays, for example, demonstrates the priesthood of the believer. We cannot and should not neglect the symbolic impact of changes in how we serve and share communion.

Offering

As with serving communion, we cannot receive an offering by having everyone gathered touch the offering trays. A box or bucket should be set up where people can leave their offering. We can also continue to encourage online giving.

Singing

Some of the first confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Kentucky were traced to a choir rehearsal. Singing is a very efficient and effective way to aerosolize and spread the virus. Choirs may not be leading worship music for a while. Consider instead using soloists, duets, or small ensembles where a greater than recommended distance can be practiced.

Congregational singing in worship is not only an expression of praise and a way of teaching the faith, it is also a community activity, something the assembled body of Christ does together. We unite our voices and hear the sound of the whole. If congregational singing continues, masks are absolutely necessary. Wearing masks will noticeably change the tone of singing, but this is preferred to the potential of spraying the virus into the room.

Baptism

Until a vaccine is widely available, baptism by immersion can only be done one at a time. That is, after one person is baptized, the baptistry needs to be emptied, cleaned, and refilled. If the baptistry can circulate water, it could be kept filled and an appropriate amount of chlorine bleach added to the water after a baptism. Still, the congregation would need to wait another week to hold the next baptism by immersion.

For the time being, a congregation could adopt another mode of baptism, such as pouring or sprinkling. If desired, when possible, candidates could be offered an immersion experience.

Another alternative would be to return to the early church practice of performing baptisms in moving water, that is, a running stream. Just as a caution, remember that moving water is colder.

Although we recognize other modes of baptism, practicing believer's baptism by immersion has been part of the Disciples' identity and core values. As with

communion, we should not neglect the symbolic impact of changing how we practice baptism.

Worship Bulletins

If the congregation continues to use worship bulletins, bulletins could be placed in the pews prior to the service.

Food and Meals

For the foreseeable future, probably until a vaccine is widely available, we will not be able to have the potluck and pitch-in dinners that we have shared and enjoyed. The primary issue is everyone passing through the line, touching serving utensils, and having their hands over the food.

A congregation might consider having plated dinners as an alternative. These could be catered with servers. Using servers would allow for proper distancing and minimizing contact with surfaces and utensils.

Seating for the meal would still require appropriate distancing.

Microphones

Do not pass or share microphones. Always use wind screens. Sanitize and replace windscreens after each service. Clean the microphone grilles as feasible.

Masks may not be required when people are singing or speaking. This makes it all the more necessary to sanitize and replace windscreens.

Visitors and Hospitality

One thing that separates churches from many workplaces is our desire to have people we don't know join us for worship. We are called to offer hospitality to strangers. During this season of online worship, many pastors have reported attendance at online services that significantly exceeded attendance at in-person services.

We are called to offer hospitality, and that call requires us to consider several questions. What if folks who have worshipped with us online decide to attend when we start holding in-person worship? How are we going to welcome people who may come to worship without a mask? How will we respond if welcoming additional people in worship means we cannot maintain required distancing?

Community

Each congregation serves in a different context, and each congregation makes their own decisions. Make the decisions about how and when you return to gathered worship in conversation with other congregations and pastors in your community. Don't succumb to pressure or bullying, and lead in a way that brings others with you. Don't miss this opportunity to collaborate with the other congregations in your community.

Resurgence

Remember that if we see a resurgence of Covid-19, we will return to being healthy at home. The clock will start over, and that may happen. We may be in a start and stop economy for the next several months.

Congregations can help avoid that resurgence by acting prayerfully and collaboratively. By listening to one another and clearly communicating our plans to the congregation, we can hasten the day that we gather again, uniting our hearts in one accord and in a shared space.

We are going to get through this. We will gather again for worship, building one another up for mission, witness, and service.