

September 15, 2020

Friends in Christ---

“Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul.” (3 John 2)

What joy we experienced to gather again for in-person worship on September 13th! It was so good for us to be together again. May God grant that these connections deepen and strengthen as we move forward together.

As indicated in my last letter, “as we resume in-person gathering, and as groups and organizations of the congregation gradually begin to gather in-person again, these must be responsible to sanitize and clean their areas before and after use. We must exercise self-discipline. We must endure the suffering of social distancing, of not touching, hugging, etc. We must endure the suffering of doing extra prep beforehand and taking extra care to clean and sanitize afterwards. This reality applies to 100% of us. As we discipline ourselves to do these things, barring a coronavirus outbreak in the congregation, we will continue in-person gathering. If we fail to do such things, again we will have to suspend in-person gathering until such a time as we discipline ourselves to sanitize and clean before and after our particular functions.”

Last Sunday, we did rather well. We moved through our awkwardness together. We moved through our check-in processes together. We worshipped faithfully together. Yet, as we left the space, we had some hiccups. Some were quick to remove masks. Some were quick to hug.

Isn't it so very easy to fall back into old habits? Of being unmasked? Of exchanging hugs? Of hanging around to socialize? Of course, it is. Still---we must resist these faithful expressions of loving relationship. Once an in-person event or Sunday service ends, we need to move as reasonably quick as possible to open the space for others, especially for the dozen or so who come to receive “drive-thru Communion.” We also do this so that we do not unintentionally place one another at risk.

Live streaming worked well-enough for us. Sure, there were some hiccups, yet nothing so egregious as to make things irksome and meaningless. Please feel free to offer feedback to Shaun Arner. He has both the authority and the ability to make live streaming tweaks and changes.

Beloved, I pray that all may CONTINUE go well with us and that we may CONTINUE to be in good health, just as it continues to be well with our souls.” We did well. Perhaps, were we on a grading system, we'd have earned a solid “A.” With continued practice on exiting the space quickly and properly socially distanced, and with continued tweaks to our live streaming, we are certain to earn an “A+” Let's keep up our faithful, vigilant work, for, “This is how we have nice things.” This is how good things will CONTINUE.

God bless and keep you,

JDB+

Pr. J. David Bryant+