

May 27th, 2020

Greetings CCWC Family!

It has no doubt been an interesting and often difficult season in our world. The church has not been immune to this tumultuous time. It is hard to believe that we have been engaging in online corporate worship for 10 weeks, 10 weeks of being together / apart.

Often the question I have received over the past couple of weeks has revolved around *when we will, "re-open."* The response to this question is not an easy one, believe it or not there are many different opinions on how all of this should be handled. Beliefs on re-opening plans, government procedures, and COVID statistics have brought divides in our country and sadly Christians have joined in and taken sides. Perhaps the most discouraging part is the anger and frustration coming from each camp.

The CCWC COVID survey/questionnaire was a great eye opener for our church staff and re-opening team. This forum offered opportunity to gather authentic feedback about how you (our church) family is feeling at this time. The data also revealed that we are split almost right down the middle on our beliefs regarding this virus and the path moving forward. Fortunately, even though we do not all agree on the solution we can be encouraged that no matter where we disagree in life we can all stand together in Jesus.

The COVID survey also revealed to us as much through direct comments and responses as it did when we read between the lines. As our leaders met to discuss the re-opening process we sought first to answer the big question, "Why Gather?" It is only after we answer this question that we can lay the foundation and building blocks for the future. Policies, legal obligations, government restriction will not govern our decisions; we will first ask *why*, and then use these important elements to further God's answer and journey for us. Ultimately as we look at the mission of the church and hear the heart of our congregation we know that much transformation takes place through the context of corporate public gatherings. Worship services are not only a place to grow in Christ but a place to fellowship, join in one accord, and serve. Furthermore, it should be pointed out that most *means of grace*, such as communion and song, are corporate exercises.

Therefore, corporate gatherings, *worship services*, are not to be neglected and should be reinstated ASAP.

Throughout this process one of the things we could be most confident in is that whatever we know about COVID today will probably change tomorrow. It has been difficult to place timelines or even enact guidelines because of the volatility and inconsistency of all the information about COVID. Putting concrete dates on things can be a daunting task, especially because things could change quickly. **With this in mind we have decided to re-launch our live worship gatherings on Sunday, June 7th.**

In hearing your heart we have decided to move forward with caution but to also meet our most desired and biblical expectation, unswerving corporate worship. **For the foreseeable future we will facilitate one 9am Drive-In worship service on the parking lot in front of our CCWC facility.** Currently, because of reasons stated above we do not feel comfortable dating the next step in the process. Furthermore, we will continue to keep our building closed to activity.

Much thought, prayer, and discussion has gone into this decision. We believe this will act as a timely & appropriate step back toward our desire of meeting regularly in the Worship Center.

Elements that Contributed to this Decision:

- Drive-in church services avoid all the complexity of CDC guidelines regarding capacity regulations and the general use of a building.
- This step will give us opportunity to observe, evaluate, and make adjustments regarding how the larger “re-opening” process effects the viral spread, without contributing to it.
- Drive-in church services create opportunity for each family, couple, or individual to engage in as much or as little social distancing as they feel comfortable with.
- An outdoor venue eliminates large concerns revolving around the spreading of this virus through singing and in enclosed spaces.
- Drive-in church services reduce a felt obligation on the part of volunteers to “have to attend” even if they do not feel comfortable.

Items to Note:

- Individuals may exit their own cars, however we ask that everyone respect the self-governing desired social distancing of others. Handshakes and hugs will not be prohibited but discouraged, please be sensitive to others and their choices.
- We are asking that any individuals who plan to attend that might be high risk place a blue cloth in their front windshield, indicating that they would appreciate the courtesy of social distancing and are not being unfriendly or unwelcoming.
- Worship song lyrics will be on our website each week and available for you to print from home or read from mobile devices.
- No items will be distributed during the service; bulletins, coffee, guest cards, etc.
- The building and playground will be not be open on Sunday mornings.
- Our online virtual service will continue each Sunday at 9am.
- Publishing a multi-phased plan to engage in unimpeded corporate worship experience would only cause more confusion and frustration moving forward. We plan to make changes and take steps forward as we evaluate the temperature of our everchanging environment.

If you still do not feel comfortable joining us for our live *Drive-In* service know that our virtual worship experience will still be available live at 9am, or a recorded copy can be viewed from our website after its air date at your convenience.

If you are not ready to return to live worship please do not feel any obligation to attend. However, please understand that **we are here when you are ready**.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have about our process moving forward.

God Bless,

Pastor Steve