

Pastor's Update, Saturday, May 8, 2020

Happy Saturday WFMC Family,

As usual, here are the links to tomorrow's "gatherings:"

**Sunday Worship (all links will be live by 6:00 a.m., Sunday)**

[WFMC YouTube Channel video service](#)

[WFMC Truthcasting/podcast message only audio](#)

[WFMC Facebook page, for you Facebook users](#)

**ABF Meetings, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. (unless otherwise noted)**

[Click here for the current list of ABFs meeting online, their times of meeting and links to meeting sites.](#)

Note that the following ABFs are meeting via Zoom and welcome new members: Explorers, Café Berea, Young Families, Upper Room and Homebuilders.

**YBF (Youth Bible Fellowships) 10:00 – 10:40 a.m.**

We are also offering a middle school class (grades 6-8) and a high school class (grades 9-12.) [Click here for those links.](#)

**Thanks to Our Youth and Children's Sunday School Staff** for throwing a drive-through, end of the year party for the kids and teens last night! Much fun was had by all.

**Here is a Hallelujah Chorus Worth Hearing**...and watching. [Click here to check it out.](#)

**The First of Three "Editorial" Items:** The guidelines for church re-opening from the KY Health Department, created in conjunction with the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the Kentucky Council of Churches, were released last night. I have forwarded these (also attached) on to the staff who will recommend to our Board of Administration a path forward for our church. As I've written before, there are many details to consider, but we'll be communicating a plan soon.

**Second Item of Three:** Last night two different district judges here in Kentucky granted temporary restraining orders, effectively allowing Kentucky churches to meet in person beginning immediately - disregarding the government's phase-in timeline - conditioned upon churches practicing the social distancing guidelines. The convincing argument seems to have been based on the churches' claim that meeting in person, for them, is essential to their "business" of worship. The courts agreed, noting the unfairness in the government thinking that people in Lowes or Target or other businesses it's deemed essential, for example, are more able to respect the social distancing guidelines than people in churches, and so can do business days or weeks before the churches. In that sense, the rulings had not so much due to a freedom of religion argument (although the constitution's declaration of such was noted) as they were a declaration of the unfair and somewhat random application of the idea of what is essential and with that, a rejection of the arbitrary dateline / timeline in the government's phases for reopening.

While the court noted that the motive for the government's orders was good and all was done in the interest of the welfare of the population in a global pandemic, the judges' restraining orders and arguments are good news for all faith groups...a healthy check on the potential for government over-reach in times of crisis. They may also prove to be good news for all businesses as well, since the ruling seems to call into question the government's ability to 1) define what is "essential," and, 2) determine why some groups can gather and other's cannot, even if practicing the same health guidelines.

**A Third Item:** In the interest of maintaining perspective, I've included below a letter to the editor from a high school history teacher that appeared in the newspaper of my hometown. My mom sent it to me. ☺ It's a little long, but I think worth reading.

Please know that, by including it today, I'm not in any way minimizing the present situation facing our nation, the hard work in health care that many are doing, and the hurt (physical, emotional and financially) many are going through. I include it simply as a tool for contextualization because, in addition to faith in Christ, one thing that helps in not allowing present circumstances to carry us away is the witness of history. You've heard me repeat it often: people who know history are typically the wisest people in the room. Someone in the church office, upon reading this editorial, remarked, "This is a reminder that we've really had it pretty easy." Indeed we have.

East Liverpool (OH) Review, Letters to the Editor, May 4, 2020  
(Also appeared in the Salem (OH) News, May 5, 2020)

To the editor:

As we watch the evening news...present us with the doom and gloom that this virus is causing, I'm sure we all feel more than a little concerned. After all, we are watching — according to everyone from entertainers to talk show hosts to news anchors, "an unprecedented disruption."

We are experiencing (according to the "experts") a world crisis no one has ever seen. Economies are cratering, jobless rates are skyrocketing, and as of May 1, we have over 50,000 deaths in America alone.

"More than the Vietnam war!"

"NYC Doctors and health care workers near the breaking point!"

"It's like Armageddon!"

Not to belittle any of that, or diminish in any way the very difficult circumstances those on the front line fighting this virus are experiencing, but let's put this in some context.

Imagine you were born in the year 1900 anywhere in the U.S.A.

— On your 14th birthday, World War I starts, and on your 18th birthday it ends. A total of 22 million people perish in that war.

— Later that year, the Spanish flu epidemic hits the planet and runs wild until your 20th birthday. A total of 50 million die from it in two years. Yes, that's right, FIFTY — 5-0 — million.

— On your 29th birthday, the Great Depression begins. Unemployment hits 25 percent here in America and higher worldwide. The World GDP drops 27 percent. The economies of all of Europe are virtually destroyed leading, in large part, to the rise of Fascist dictatorships in Germany and Italy.

— On your 30th birthday, the "Dust Bowl" begins. For the next 10 years the worst drought in recorded in U.S. History destroys an entire region.

— A year later at 31, massive dust storms hundreds of feet high carry the topsoil from Oklahoma to Washington D.C. There is a mass exodus from the plains states of Oklahoma and west Texas. Food becomes scarce. The country nearly collapses.

— When you turn 39, World War II starts. You aren't even "over the hill" yet — you're still "young" by today's standards. And don't try and catch your breath because:

— On your 41st birthday the U.S.A. is attacked at Pearl Harbor and you're pulled into WWII. If you're a male – even at 41 you will most likely volunteer to fight. You may even see your sons volunteer and be sent off to war. If you're a woman you will see your husbands, brothers and maybe your sons go off to war with a distinct possibility you will not see them for four years...or maybe never.

— Between your 39th birthday and your 45th birthday, between 70 and 85 million people will perish. Europe and Asia will have great cities totally destroyed. Atrocities thought unimaginable just a few years before will have taken place.

— At 50, the Korean War starts. Five million will perish.

— At 55 the Vietnam War begins and will not end for another 20 years. Four million will perish in that misbegotten conflict.

— On your 62nd birthday you will witness the Cuban Missile Crisis and hold your breath as you watch the world coming as close as it ever will to a nuclear holocaust. Life on our planet almost ended

— When you turn 75 the Vietnam Wars ends and America is disgraced. Our politicians have disgraced themselves, and our "trust" in our government will never be the same.

Keep in Mind when you were born in 1900 – there was no — NONE, ZERO — paved highways, radio, TV, electric appliances, indoor plumbing. Personal hygiene was washing your hair once a month and taking a bath once a week. Men grew beards because shaving was just too time-consuming and dangerous. As a woman, everything you consider "normal" in personal hygiene standards and sanitation did not exist. Really...think about that for a minute.

The average life expectancy of a man was 45 years. Most doctors didn't graduate from college...they went to medical schools. If you didn't kill it or grow it yourself, you probably didn't eat it. That means you, your spouse or someone in your family killed and gutted some kind of animal every week. There were no "teenagers;" you went to work at 8, 9 or 10 years of age and if you were a boy, most likely you were going to do what your dad was doing for the rest of your life. As a female you were expected to clean, wash cloths, cook and do most domestic chores. Schooling was an option only for a very few. If you made it to 20 without being married and having children you were considered a "spinster."

So, again, I intend no disrespect to those out there dealing with this virus. But instead of holding our heads in our hands and thinking "poor, poor, pitiful me," just remember how tough our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents were. Suck it up, quit being a snowflake and let's beat this thing.

And while we try to find a cure, let's remember that life is full of risks. For those that came before us life itself was a risk. If we're young enough and strong enough, let those of us that wish to do so take that risk.

~ Robert Spaitte, Columbiana, Ohio

**And Finally, In the Interest of Keeping our Sense of Humor:**

**Notice:**

Since 500 people can  
safely be inside Home Depot...  
This week's service will be in Plumbing.  
Bring your Bible.

Peace and Blessings, Sisters and Brothers,

Pastor Daryl

## Requirements for Places of Worship

Places of worship will be expected to meet the same [Healthy at Work Minimum Requirements as businesses](#). In addition, places of worship will be expected to meet the requirements below in order to reopen and remain open:

### Social Distancing Requirements

- Places of worship should, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to conduct alternative services, including tele-services, radio broadcasts, and drive-in services.
- Places of worship conducting drive-in services should ensure their congregants remain in their vehicles and not socialize through their vehicle windows, except at a distance of more than six (6) feet. Attendees should turn off their vehicles to avoid idling and protect everyone's health.
- Places of worship conducting in-person services should limit attendance to no more than 33% of the building occupancy capacity, including clergy and staff-employees, while maintaining social distance between household units of at least six (6) feet. This means that there must be six (6) feet between individuals on a row and individuals between rows, such that a six-foot radius is maintained around all household units. A place of worship that cannot maintain this space must further reduce its occupancy capacity until it is achieved.
- Places of worship should ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that clergy, staff-employees, volunteers and congregants wear coverings (e.g., cloth mask or bandana) over their mouths and noses while attending services.
- Places of worship should wait to reopen youth services (including, but not limited to, Sunday schools) until childcare services have reopened on June 15, 2020. Once they reopen, youth services should follow the requirements posted for childcare services.
- Places of worship should avoid congregational or choir singing during services, as doing creates a higher risk of spreading infectious particles. Houses of worship should consider alternatives to congregational singing, including by playing pre-recorded or live instrumental music (e.g. pianos and guitars - no wind instruments) during services.
- Places of worship should consider taking congregants' temperatures and asking about signs of illness before admitting them into the place of worship. If they do take temperatures, they should consider using a non-contact thermometer or thermal imager. If a place of worship must use a standard oral/aural thermometer, consider having the congregant take their own temperature and relay the information to maintain social distancing and sanitize the thermometer after each use.

# Healthy at Work

## PHASE 1 REOPENING



- Places of worship should not allow individuals with elevated temperatures (100.5 degrees Fahrenheit or above) or signs of illness (coughing, shortness of breath, sneezing) to attend in-person services. Houses of worship should direct those having symptoms of COVID-19, as well as people who have had close contact with a person who has symptoms like dry cough, chest tightness, and/or fever, to refrain from participating in any aspect of in-person services. Places of worship should encourage symptomatic persons to stay at home or seek immediate medical care or want to be tested.
- Places of worship should use greeters to direct congregants to available masks and bulletins. Greeters should be masked, maintain social distancing, and consider wearing gloves.
- Places of worship should display markers and signage in the sanctuary/meeting space to guide social distancing.
- Places of worship should communicate with the congregation often and with clarity and transparency. Prepare the congregation for worship and for the changes that are occurring in procedures due to the national health crisis.
- Places of worship making restrooms available must ensure restrooms are only used by one person at a time and all portions that are regularly touched (e.g., door, sink, and toilet handles) are appropriately disinfected after each use.
- Places of worship conducting in-person services must, to the greatest extent practicable, provide hand sanitizer, handwashing facilities, tissues, and waste baskets in convenient locations.
- Places of worship should not provide communal food or beverages to clergy, staff-employees, volunteers, or congregants.
- Places of worship should restrict access to common areas, to the greatest extent practicable, in order to maximize social distancing and reduce congregating. These common areas include, but are not limited to, foyers, lobbies, vending areas, community and multi-purpose rooms, and event spaces.
- Because of the requirement to socially distance at least six (6) feet apart, places of worship should refrain from the practice of handshaking, handholding, or hugging.
- Places of worship should encourage those at higher risk for severe illness per CDC guidelines not to attend in-person services. These guidelines are available at:<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#Higher-Risk>. Instead, places of worship should, to the greatest extent practicable, provide services that are not in-person, including tele-services, drive-in services, and/or radio services for those individuals. If a house of worship is unable to provide alternative services, they should,

to the greatest extent practicable, implement hours where service can be safely provided to congregants at higher risk for severe illness.

### **Personal Protective Equipment Requirements**

- Places of worship should ensure, to the greatest extent practicable, that clergy, staff-employees, volunteers and congregants wear face coverings (e.g., cloth mask or bandana) over their mouths and noses while attending services.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting Requirements**

- Places of worship must ensure facilities are properly cleaned and ventilated.
- Places of worship must ensure cleaning and sanitation of frequently touched surfaces with appropriate disinfectants. Appropriate disinfectants include EPA registered household disinfectants, diluted household bleach solution, and alcohol solutions containing at least 60% alcohol. Places of worship must establish a cleaning and disinfecting process that follows CDC guidelines when any individual is identified, suspected, or confirmed as COVID-19 positive.
- Places of worship, as appropriate, must ensure they do not use cleaning procedures that could re-aerosolize infectious particles. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding practices such as dry sweeping or use of high-pressure streams of air, water, or cleaning chemicals.

### **Training and Safety Requirements**

- Places of worship should ensure appropriate signage is posted throughout their facilities to inform clergy, staff-employees, and congregants about good hygiene and new practices.
- Places of worship should ensure clergy, staff-employees, volunteers, and congregants are instructed to avoid touching their faces, including their eyes, noses, and mouths, particularly until after they have thoroughly washed their hands upon completing work and/or removing PPE, to the greatest extent practicable.
- Places of worship should ensure clergy, staff-employees, volunteers, and congregants are informed that they may identify and communicate potential improvements and/or concerns in order to reduce potential risk of exposure.