

5/3/20

Greetings Church,

We find ourselves in a unique place in history which has redefined culture, medicine, economics, and even the way we worship. Like you, we wrestle with the uncertainty of what the future holds. As we anticipate the re-opening of life, we must be cognizant of the viral threat which continues to loom around us. This both informs and complicates the formation of a strategy for how the Church moves forward. Not clearly knowing how things will progress and knowing there are among us those who are significantly at risk, we have discussed and thoroughly prayed over the options. Instead of being driven by fear, but rather by love for our brethren and community, the elders have decided that it is still inadvisable and logistically impossible to meet together safely at this time. Therefore, until further notice, we will continue to meet digitally on Facebook Live. This decision will be re-evaluated at minimum on a weekly basis, and decisions will be based upon facts, safety, and what is in the best interest of the congregation as a whole.

While this decision may be disappointing to some within our body and even to the shepherds themselves, it remains paramount that we remain united. These difficult decisions are being done to protect and shepherd the flock at 1310 National Road. They have been driven by their love for the Lord and for you.

The beauty in all of this is that, although we have been prevented from sitting in the same room together, the church still thrives! Numerous reports of sacrificial love, servanthood, and ministry have circulated among the brethren. Meaningful worship has continued and in many cases been propelled into a depth that wouldn't have been known without this experience. Families are bonding closer together and studying God's word together. History has taught and this experience has confirmed that good will always continue among God's people despite the circumstances. Ministry always blossoms amongst the most difficult circumstances. Praise God!

While our knees might grow weary, may our prayers never lighten. We must continue to pray for the destruction of this virus from the earth, the healthcare workers who labor to care for and save lives, as well as the restoration of life around us. Moreover, we need to begin to pray about how we as a church can be transformed through this. We need not only to hope for the restoration of the "way it was", but more importantly, we need to envision how God wants us to adapt as we move forward. Our mission to preach the Gospel to our community must take center stage. The worship of the saints must vibrantly reflect our experience of walking through the darkest place shepherded perfectly by the LORD. Our ministry efforts must be renewed to be and to make more zealous disciples of Christ. This is not a moment to wait, but to move!

Take courage brethren! It is the time for faithful endurance. We will be able to meet together again. That's a promise from God. While we must cope with this trial longer than we prefer, we are filled with comfort knowing that His will is being done. May despair, anger, and grumbling never be a part of our coping strategy. Rather, may God give us solidarity in the Spirit and create in us His fruit as we navigate these waters.

HESED,
Ryan