

“In humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. In your relationships with each other, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus.”
(Philippians 2:3-5)

August 17, 2020

Dear Corinth family,

Nothing’s been the same in our church family since March 15, the first Sunday of exclusively livestream worship. We’re not ready for “return to normal,” but ready to take some new steps.

In a recent survey, I heard from 362 of you, seeing again the breadth of our viewpoints on the pandemic, as well as our thoughts on next steps. Our Consistory has the same diversity of opinion, yet we were able last week to unanimously approve a plan for moving forward this fall.

Details follow on page 2 of this letter, but here are the highlights:

- Our focus is on reconnecting, which doesn’t necessarily mean regathering.
- No one considered at risk for any reason should feel pressured to attend any in-person event. Options for livestream worship and virtual groups will remain available.
- We ask everyone to self-check for symptoms prior to attending church events, and to inform the church office if you test positive for COVID-19 and have attended any church event in person.
- For any indoor service or activity, our decision is to urge social distancing and require a mask (with the same medical exceptions issued by the governor). This isn’t because everyone on Consistory likes this requirement, but we know many cannot or will not attend indoors if others are not wearing masks. (For my perspective on masks, see the August 15 *Coronian* email.)
- Because many people in our church family do not wear masks by necessity or preference, we will expand the opportunities to reconnect online or outdoors, where our medical experts tell us face coverings are less important as long as we practice social distancing.

The Consistory will meet again August 25, reviewing again our plans and timeline. If anything changes, I will let you know!

Meanwhile, I want you to know that I love being your pastor. Yes, even now. We are family because of our common bond in Jesus Christ. To the extent that we follow the Apostle Paul’s instruction to “look to the interests of others,” because that is “the mindset of Jesus,” we’ll be fine.

We must keep our focus where it belongs. The *reason* we connect for worship, prayer, fellowship, learning, service, and mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

In his name and for his glory,

Pastor Bob

Fall 2020 Plans for Reconnecting at Corinth

(Subject to Consistory review August 25, 2020 based on unfolding conditions)

1. Worship – bob@corinthtoday.org

- NEW: Outdoor Traditional Worship, West Campus, 5:00 PM Saturdays (Sunday if it rains)
- Outdoor Contemporary Worship, Front Lawn, 7:30 PM Saturdays (Sunday if it rains)
- Sundays – 8:30 Blended and 11:00 Traditional, Sanctuary

2. Wednesday Night Dinners

- We are not yet ready to return to Wednesday dinners
- Our kitchen staff will be redeployed to serve community needs

3. Childcare and Children’s Ministries (through Grade 5) – sharon@corinthtoday.org

- Wednesdays only beginning September 16, 6:00 -7:00 PM
- Masks required for Grade 2 and up
- Sign-up will be required to limit class size
- Temperature checks and screening for exposure each week
- No childcare or children’s programming yet for Saturdays or Sundays
- First Communion Schedule – To Be Announced
- Weekday Preschool – tentatively scheduled to open September 28

4. Student Ministries (Grades 6-12) –

paul@corinthtoday.org

- Outdoors in the courtyard beginning September 16
- Rain alternative: Bost Memorial Hall
- Signup not required
- Middle School: 6:00-7:00 PM
- Senior High: 7:00-8:00 PM
- Confirmation Schedule – To Be Announced

“I don’t wear a mask because a politician or scientist tells me to. I don’t wear a mask because I feel weak. I wear a mask because I feel strong. I wear a mask *for* the weak.”

Pastor Bob in *The Coronian*
August 15, 2020

5. Adult Ministries – linda@corinthtoday.org

- Signup (online) begins August 23 for options indoors, outdoors, Zoom, and hybrid
- Sunday School: some already meeting; others will start or restart September 5
- Wednesday Nights: most groups will meet 6:00-7:00 PM; other options available
- Other: Bible studies, support groups, life groups, focus groups

6. Ministry Teams – patter@corinthtoday.org

- Some opportunities are available now – worship greeters, educator support, and more
- Additional ways to serve in the church and community will be announced the week of August 24