



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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May 19, 2020

Dear First Church,

Another week of sheltering in place is in the books and, although we may be feeling a bit stir crazy, I am happy to report to you that Jesus is alive and well and still on the throne. *Can I get an "Amen?!"*

"How great is the love that God has lavished upon us that we should be called, "children of God!" ~1 John 3:1

I am blessed by how so many of you are reaching out by phone (or virtually) to others in our church family and checking in with them. Please keep up that incredible ministry!

Here's your weekly update...

1. As always, please call me or Pastor Wes at any time if you or someone you know has a pressing need, or if you simply want to talk! Although we are physically separated from one another, *we need not feel isolated!* We are, after all, one body, the church of Jesus Christ, and by staying together we will emerge victorious!

2. In the midst of the "re-opening talk" that's in the news, I've been asked some questions regarding when we will be opening our facilities again. Remember, the only acceptable gatherings in New Jersey are 10 or fewer. Presently, we have no date to re-open. I do not see the First Church facility opening for Sunday worship until gatherings of 300+ are permitted.

The following are just a few things to consider when we do eventually open: masks will be required; there will be no bulletins (because of the risk of transmission); the worship will be a shorter length (don't get too excited about that!); most probably, attenders will not be able to sit in their exact favorite seat or pew...and they will be sitting faaaaaaaar apart. Please take some time to absorb this information in order to prepare for worship under very different circumstances. As I said, these are just a few of the considerations.

3. In a few weeks, the church council will need to have a meeting via Zoom technology to establish a practical policy regarding re-opening worship. This policy will not set a date to re-open. Details will follow next week.

4. Thank you so much for forwarding our worship videos! Make sure you like us on FB and keep sharing with everyone you know. We have made it over to England now.

5. You have always been so supportive of your church family - generously giving of your time, wisdom, experience, passion, and financial resources to sustain and grow our work and ministries. As we continue bravely on through uncharted territory, it is my most sincere hope and prayer that First Church can count on your ongoing support.

Still love you,

Pastor Ed

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ATTN: Financial Secretary, First UMC

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