



BFCC e-Caller

August 2020

Reaching Outward to Connect People with God's Abundance

Pastoral Ponderings

I'm not the handiest guy, but in a pinch I can do a thing or two with a drill and a screwdriver. So it was that when Pastor Helen and I were in Nashville last weekend on grandparent duty, I gave my stepdaughter and her husband a hand with a few things around their condo. Several Christmases ago my brother-in-law – who is rather handy – gave me a new set of tools and a nice tool box. Equipped with these gifts, I boldly set out to secure some book cases to the walls and otherwise baby-proof Allison's and Jerrod's home. Meanwhile, Grandmother Helen got to spend time with baby Silas. I tried not to be too jealous.

Well, it's not pretty, but those bookcases aren't going anywhere. Neither are the curtain rods that I put up. And once that work was done, I did get to spend some time with Silas after all.

I got to thinking about this in the context of the challenges that face the Church in these crazy Covid days, and in the days going forward once the pandemic is finally under control. A number of commentators are suggesting that the Church will never be the same again. Already we can see indications of this, as we're figuring out how to worship and hold meetings and attend adult classes without being gathered in the same space. Given the convenience of being able to do these things – and potentially other aspects of ministry – from home, many commentators are assuming that there are people with whom we'll be engaged in ministry who may rarely, if ever, set foot in a church building again.

I think they're right; especially when we're talking about people under the age of 40 or 50. Which raises the question of how do we become a physical church with an online presence, and maybe even an online church with a physical presence? And the short answer is, I don't know. But the longer and more faithful answer is, we'll figure it out. Just like I figured out how to do those repairs around the condo. We've got tools, we've got spiritual gifts, and we'll figure it out. Because failure is not an option. And because we can do all things through the Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13).

And, of course, we are already figuring some of it out. With Jono's help, we're figuring out how to livestream worship. With Chuck and Steve's help, we've created an online presence for the Camp. With Mitzi's help, our church is engaged online in a variety of ways. And with their gifts – and yours – we'll continue to learn what we need to learn, so that – once we're back to worshipping and learning and meeting in the building – we'll be reaching new people online as well.

It has been said that Jesus doesn't call the equipped; he equips the called. We have been called to engage in ministry in new and innovative ways in the 21st century. Jesus will equip us to answer this call. He's already started to do so.

Blessings!

Pastor Bruce

As announced in last week's E-caller, the Church Board has decided that we won't be back in the church building for live worship any time before Sunday, September 6. In preparation for our eventual return to live worship, however, the Board did approve a set of guidelines, which we are now sharing with the congregation. As you read these guidelines, you'll notice that some of them are tied to the idea of resume live worship initially in Fellowship Hall. That remains an option, but it's not a given. Once we have set a date for returning to worship in our building, we will assess whether the most prudent place to worship will be Fellowship Hall or the Sanctuary. So stay tuned. Most of these guidelines are applicable to worship in either location during these crazy Covid days.

**Proposed Guidelines for Reopening the Church Building for Worship
Recommended by the Reopening Task Force to the Church Board of Directors**

Worshiping God with God's people is an integral part of our lives. Not being with our friends and fellow worshippers leaves a hole in our hearts and an empty spot that can only be filled with fellowship. We all are anxious to fill this hole, but realize that meeting without precautions could lead to circumstances that none of us are willing to face. The Church Reopening Task Force has had several Zoom meetings in an attempt to decide when and how we can safely return to weekly services. Safety is our primary concern and everything that we can do to meet safely will be done.

The following guidelines and procedures for reopening the Church are hereby approved by the Board of Directors (July 21,2020), and are subject to revision as circumstances allow:

- 1) Initial return to Sunday services will be conducted in the Fellowship Hall.
 - a. Three people will be seated at each round table maintaining a six foot separation at all times. Family groups may sit together at a table and possibly exceed that limit of 3.
 - b. Additional seating will be available in chairs or at long table as needed.
 - c. There will be no entry into the Kitchen, Sanctuary, Office or Basement.

- 2) Masks will be required when entering the building and must be worn at all times while in the building. Masks and hand sanitizers will be supplied, or you are welcome to provide your own. Gloves will not be supplied.

- 3) The awning entrance will be the only entry point. At the conclusion of services you may exit through the same door or through the K Street door. The handicap accessible restrooms will be available in the classroom hallway, but all are encouraged to make use of the restrooms by the elevator if at all possible.

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**Proposed Guidelines for Reopening the Church Building for Worship
Recommended by the Reopening Task Force to the Church Board of Directors Continued**

- 4) Communion and an offering plate will be placed on each table in the Fellowship Hall for attendees. Attendees will be asked to dispose of their cups when exiting. Trash cans will be placed at both designated exit points.
- 5) Singing will not be a part of the worship service at this time. There will be instrumental music.
- 6) Handshakes, hugging, or other forms of contact greeting will be discouraged and a separation of six feet between worshipers will be requested at all times.
- 7) Two greeter/ushers will be provided at each service to assist and direct worshipers in any way they may be helpful or needed. An announcement will be made by the Pastor encouraging worshipers to exit the building as soon as services are concluded.
- 8) Sweeping and sanitizing of all surfaces in the Fellowship Hall, restrooms and doors will be done following services each Sunday.
- 9) Signage will be placed at key locations reinforcing the safety procedures, including questions regarding Covid symptoms.
- 10) Those with Covid-like symptoms and those deemed to be high risk are urged to stay home.
- 11) Online services will continue until such time as we can safely return to live worship in the Sanctuary with live-streaming of services.
- 12) This return to Sunday Services is contingent upon a two week period immediately before September 6, or the first day of live worship, during which the daily rate of Covid infections in Lawrence County will be flat-lined or decreasing, according to the Lawrence County Positive Cases by Day chart as found in the Indiana Covid-19 Data Report of the Indiana State Department of Health.



Happy Birthday to you,
Happy Birthday to you,
Happy Birthday dear
friends,
Happy Birthday to you.

Please let our office know if
we don't have your birthday.

August

- 8/1 *Marsha Ochs*
- 8/2 *Gary Blackwell*
- 8/2 *Janet Cunningham*
- 8/4 *Sue Pentzer*
- 8/11 *Ginny Jones*
- 8/11 *Bev McFadden*
- 8/13 *Mitzi Flynn*
- 8/14 *Matt Parker*
- 8/14 *Ellie Reynolds*
- 8/18 *Mariah Mills*
- 8/18 *Camron Stewart*
- 8/25 *Stacy Ochs*
- 8/28 *Betty Wagoner*
- 8/28 *John Williams*



I want to send my thanks to my church family for supporting and encouraging me through all of my 18 years. During this time of Covid 19 uncertainty and the interesting end to my Senior year, I have been appreciative of the kind words and support as I embark on a new chapter of my story. Thank you all!

Peace, Love and God Bless You All,
AJ Holbrook

Praise be to God. . . Rejoice and Give Thanks

- ◆ **Pat Bennett** has been undergoing tests and is feeling much better. Lord, hear our praise!
- ◆ **Danny Briscoe** received a successful kidney transplant, is home from the hospital and doing well! Lord, hear our praise!
- ◆ **Stephanie Johnson**, who donated her kidney to Danny Briscoe, is home from the hospital and doing well. Thank you, Stephanie! Lord, hear our praise!
- ◆ **Julie Spicer's** thyroid biopsy turned out all clear! Lord, hear our praise!
- ◆ This praise is a bit belated, but we welcome **Carolyn Tumey** back to Lawrence County, along with her brother and sister-in-law. Welcome back, Carolyn! Lord, hear our praise!
- ◆ We rejoice that **Doris Wykoff** is still with us and doing well, at home, after a frightening trip to the hospital. Lord, hear our praise!



Prayer List

Prayer requests will remain in the e-caller for one month. If an individual for whom prayer has been requested still needs prayer after one month, please contact the church office, or email Bonnie Fye at bonniefye_1@comcast.net. Updates are always appreciated. And please remember those on our Prayer List during your daily prayers.

In Your Mercy, Lord, Hear Our Prayers

Our Friends and Family: Karen Anderson, Bill Bouldin, Bob and June Briscoe, Judy Brooking, Brandy Busz, Jeff Day, Aaron Evans, Danny Gillock, Debbie Grant, Kate and Johnny Henderson, Nell Jones and family, Jean Martin, Carol Mifflin, Steve Mills, Sheila Miskuf, Riley Osmon, John Robbins, Dick Sides, Francis Stone, Greg VanCleave, Emily Wingo

Condolences: Janet Boruff passed away Friday. We offer condolences to her friends and family, especially her daughter Rebecca Steimel.

Those away from home serving: the church, in military, civil service, education and work.

Those unable to be with us in Worship: Barbara Hall, Jacob Householder, Ellie Grissom, Shirley McMunn, Marilyn Olson, Laverne Speer, Carolyn Tumey, Jimmy Waggoner.



First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

1101 15th Street - Bedford, Indiana - 47421 - 812-275-4497

We are Disciples of Christ.

A movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

**Disciples of Christ Statement of Identity*



We are collecting Diapers and Baby Food for L.I.F.E Pantry during the month of August. Please place all packages in the baskets located in the foyer. Any food you wish to donate is welcome any month.

CHURCH STAFF:

Pastor:

Rev. Bruce Ervin

E-Mail:

pastor@firstccbedford.org

Music Ministry:

Choir Director:

Jono Palmer

E-Mail:

music@firstccbedford.org

Organist:

Mary Ruth Yates

Administrative Assistant:

Mitzi Flynn

E-Mail:

office@firstccbedford.org

Custodian:

Steve Harrell

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Wednesday:

11:00 am - 1:00 pm

CUSTODIAN'S HOURS:

Monday - Friday:

8:00 am - 12:00 pm

SOCIAL MEDIA

Web Page: www.firstccbedford.org

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