

RE-OPENING UPDATE

First Baptist Church Olympia

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JUNE BIRTHDAYS

On Wednesday, May 27th, Governor Inslee laid out a four-page guide for “Phase 1 and 2 Religious and Faith-based Organizations.” It outlines and details requirements for faith communities to adopt and/or adapt to. Thurston County was also announced, on the 27th, to now be in Phase 2. Our Executive Council, coincidentally, also meet that night on Zoom. After much discussion the following decision(s) were made:

1.) Pastor Mark will convene a Task Force to put into place our own guidelines, protocols and practices based upon the Governor’s document as well as information we have received from Church Mutual, our insurance provider.

(As of this writing, three individuals were in the process of deciding if they can give of their time)

2.) The Task Force will provide an action plan for the Executive Council to review, discuss and hopefully, approve, by the next scheduled Council meeting on June 24th.

3.) If the plan is adopted at that time, we would be looking at a “soft” re-opening sometime the middle of July. We use this target date with some hesitancy since information, models, etc., change with this virus, constantly.

4.) Whatever plans are adopted by church leadership, know that we respect the decisions you may make for yourself regarding coming back, potentially, when we do re-open. Each of us has our own health issues, concerns, challenges and we will respect whatever decision you and other loved ones make regarding your physical presence when the doors are open once again.

Just so we are clear. Phase 2 allows religious and faith-based organizations to:

Hold indoor services at a place of worship with up to 25% capacity or 50 individuals, whichever is less, (excluding organization staff).

If you have any questions, based upon this information, please contact Pastor Mark Rambo. Thank you!

Mark's Meanderings

The Last time we met for corporate worship, face-to-face, was Sunday, March 15th. We are now entering the 11th week of our "stay-in-place" world of Covid-19. The good news is that we have flattened the curve here in Washington state based upon the sacrifices we all have made. We are slowly re-opening parts of our world up again but with an eye on this silent virus that shifts and changes as we learn more about it. For us as a congregation I feel strongly that God is calling us to be about:

Patience, Prayer and Concern for Neighbor.

It is also important that you know that church leadership tries never to make decisions based on *fear*. We prayerfully and respectfully try to make the best decisions for the congregation, as a whole, based upon the information at our disposal as well as the wisdom and insight of those who have much more knowledge and experience than just one or two people.

For the curious...I'd like to share what your church staff is up to during this time of Covid-19:

Nick Carlson is presently serving us from Lindsborg, Kansas, where he is helping his brother with the family farm, since it is wheat season. He will be working from there, practicing, recording, sending, mixing and resending music. The added bonus is his access to an organ! At Nick's request, to help with the logistics and recording process, I've worked out a preaching-series-schedule that will give Nick some direction about music choices and options.

Darrell Born continues to lend his musical leadership and giftedness with Sunday worship. Working in tandem with Nick, remotely, their back and forth partnership, has allowed us to maintain a high level of musicality in our worship services on Facebook Live. Additionally, Darrell has been keeping myself and the Music Committee up-to-date on the latest research and conversations amongst national music directors and health officials about the role of singing, choirs, etc., in this time of Covid-19. His knowledge and insights will be helpful as we put together guidelines on re-opening for worship down the road.

Gary Rogers, our Custodian/Caretaker, continues to work behind the scenes, cleaning, sanitizing and preparing for the time when we will be re-opening our doors. I take great comfort when I walk into the building each morning and smell the antiseptic he uses as part of the sanitizing process that is in place! I know that sounds funny, but it puts my mind at ease. Sometimes it's the little things that remind us how much we appreciate another person!

Lela Depaolo, our Secretary, continues to work from home, coming into the office only when necessary. With her husband Michael's cancer treatments, it's important that she limit her exposure by being here in the church office. She and I check in with each other at least once a day by phone, text and/or email. She can handle correspondence and check/return messages as well as coordinate the publication and mailing of the Windows, remotely, to name just a few of her responsibilities.

Continued on page 7...

Pastor Dave's Ponderings

Dave's Thoughts Along The WAY ...

There are a lot of ways to say "goodbye". A hug; a kiss, turn your back, a shrug. You can probably think of more defiant or vulgar expressions. Some goodbyes are more conducive to ongoing positive relations than others.

So this is one of my "goodbyes". By the time you read this it will be June and my time with you all, at least on a regular basis, will have come to an end.

It's been an honor and privilege to serve with you in the ministry of FBC Olympia. This has been a good time for both Merletta and me. You did a good job of helping us feel welcome and included and we appreciate that.

Every pastor, and particularly every interim pastor, enters the flow of the life of a congregation at a particular point or place in time. On the continuum that is First Baptist, you can now put me at 2019 and part of 2020. But there was a whole lot of story before this small slice of history and there is more to come.

Next year you will celebrate 150 years of ministry in the name of Jesus. That's more time than any of us have. Some of you can look back to Dr. Rahn, who served here from 1946 to 1974, and that's a good piece of time.

Like every organization made up of human beings, there have been good times and hard times here. People have gotten angry or frustrated and have chosen to leave the congregation. People have found love and grace and hope here and have chosen to join the congregation.

All of those things contribute to the shape of the congregation, the patterns or networks of relationships and leadership and how things are done or not done, and what things are done or not done.

How the priorities and decisions are made as to how and what gets done constitute the living breath of the congregation. This "life" seldom gets written up in a formal history. It's easier to write about facts that can be documented rather than processes which ebb and flow. "We painted the church in such and such a

year." "A new pastor came in ____." Seldom do you read "so and so took control of such and such and wouldn't get go".

And there is more story to come. You all have a part in the telling of it. Relationships will be formed and unformed. Decisions made will be affected by relationships and will affect relationships.

It's easy to point to three new elements entering the story line. Mark Rambo moving into the role of solo senior pastor, 2020 quickly becoming the year of the coronavirus and the expanded use of technologies aiding our ministries. New elements laid over old patterns.

This reminds me of Jesus talking about new wine in old wine skins. (Matt. 9:14-17). He implies that for the old skins to have continued life and usefulness there needs to be some accommodations made.

Entering a new era, I think, requires some reflection on your core values, so that in the midst of creating new history, you don't wander away from the Christ that has brought you this far. That, and opening yourselves to the calling of the Spirit, will bring a future full of hope.

Walk humbly. Love completely.

Live differently.

See you in the meeting place where we celebrate God's love together.

Entering a new era, I think, requires some reflection on your core values

A Fond Farewell 

TO PASTOR DAVE &
MERLETTA

YOU HAVE RICHLY
BLESSED US!

YOU WILL BE
GREATLY MISSED!

At our March meeting we would have made a distribution of funds to ministries and missions which we support. Since we did not meet, Helen Pothier, Julie Comstock and I, with input from others in the group, made the following donations:

- \$1500. Camp Bethel
- \$350. Bolivia (Sarah Jean Nash)
- \$150. Crow Indian Church Lodge Grass, MT

Locally, we donated \$200 to SafePlace, to help the agency with victims of domestic violence. The SafePlace leadership responded with a heartfelt "thank you" for our donation.

We will not be able to have our June salad luncheon at the home of Carolyn Adams, but maybe later in the summer we can meet!

Remember the wedding shower for Sarah Jean Nash on August 8th. This will be an all church shower for women of the church.

We have a request for face masks from Sarah Jean. Wheaton College needs 10,000 face masks for their students when they return to campus this fall. They are willing to donate \$10,000 to a non-profit international ministry group for these masks. House of Hope, where Sarah Jean ministers in Bolivia, has taken on the task of providing the masks. \$10,000 would be a huge help to their financial needs right now. Sarah Jean has the patterns to use for the masks and other specifics.

The other news is that we (ABW) have a stache of cotton material that can be used for the masks. Julie Comstock can meet with you to select material. If you can help in this way, contact Sarah Jean first for the patterns and then Julie for the material! Sarah and her Bolivia team mates are contacting other supporting churches to help as well.

We have other projects that can be done as well. Slings are needed for mission hospitals and baby nightgowns are another need.

Even though we are sidelined from meeting we are still involved in ministry!

Thank you for all you do!

CAMP BETHEL 2020

Seeing Clearly

Senior High (Grades 9 - Graduate) July 12 - 18

Junior High (Grades 6 - 8) July 19 - 25

Elementary (Grades 3 - 5) July 26 - 30

For more information and to Register visit www.campbethel.net



I heard that we are all in the same boat, but it's not like that. We are in the same storm, but not in the same boat. Your ship could be shipwrecked and mine might not be. Or vice versa.

For some quarantine is optimal. A moment of reflection, of re-connection, easy wearing flip flops, with a cocktail or coffee. For others, this is a desperate financial and family crisis.

For some that live alone they're facing endless loneliness. While for others it is peace, rest and time with their mother, father, sons and daughters.

With the \$600 weekly increase in unemployment some are bringing in more money to their households than they were while working. Others are working more hours for less money due to pay cuts or loss of sales.

Some families of four just received \$3,400 from the stimulus while others families of four saw \$0.

Some were concerned about getting a certain candy for a holiday, while others were concerned if there would be enough bread, milk and eggs for the weekend.

Some want to go back to work because they don't qualify for unemployment and are running out of money. Others want to hurt those who break the quarantine.

Some are home spending 2-3 hours per day helping their child with online schooling while others are spending 2-3 hours per day to educate their children on top of a 10-12 hour workday.

Some have experienced near death from the virus, some have already lost someone from it and some are not sure if their loved ones are going to make it. Others don't believe this is a big deal.

Some have faith in God and expect miracles during this 2020. Others say the worst is yet to come.

Some are positive that what they believe is the truth. Others aren't sure what to believe.

So, friends, we are not in the same boat. We are going through a time when our perceptions and needs are completely different.

Each of us will emerge, in our own way, from this storm. It is very important to see beyond what is seen at first glance. Not just looking, actually seeing.

We are all on different ships during this storm experiencing a very different journey. (Thus the need for constant prayer and care for one another as we are able to reach from ship to ship. —ed.)



Meaderings cont...

Pastor Caroline, is also quite active behind the scenes. She checks in with me by phone at least once a week and/or whenever a need, health concern, etc., presents itself within the congregation. Pastor Caroline also continues to check-in on people, delivering flowers, joy, prayers and encouragement as needed. She is a blessing to so many!

Pastor Dave—For those of you who may not know or remember, Pastor Dave's time with us as our Interim Pastor has officially concluded as of May 31st. He and Merletta have been a wonderful addition to our community life. They have both served us well and faithfully. Personally, I have benefited from Pastor Dave's friendship, collegial spirit and bond; his mentorship, humor, creativity and wisdom. We will miss him. I will miss him. Our plan, going forward, is that when it is deemed safe and appropriate, we will throw he and Merletta a proper good-bye and thank you party! Until that time, I hope you will shower them with notes, cards, prayers and well-wishes. His leadership has been invaluable!

Remember, you are a beloved child of God. Made in the image God.
You are loved and gifted for God's good purposes!

As a congregation, at this time in our history, we are called to:
Patience, Prayer and Concern for Neighbor.

Blessings and Joy! Pastor Mark

Moderator Jean Heidal

I have missed a couple of months of articles -- I'm sorry about that. However, whether I report to you on a monthly basis or not, First Baptist has continued to be of service in our local community and around the world.

Committees/Boards may not have met in person but they have continued to work and make plans for when we can meet together again. The Council held a Zoom meeting the end of April and we will meet again the end of May. It's different, but we were still able to have good discussions and conduct our business.

The end of May will mean that Pastor Dave Roberts is completing his Interim Ministry with us. When he started in January, 2019 we had no idea that his Interim would last 17 months! Pastor Dave has been patient, kind, giving and done more than we ever asked. His daily "Thoughts and Things" is just one example. Although his "contract" is just two days a week and Sunday, Pastor Dave has been here many more days than that. He has come to celebrate our church dinners and events and the passing of members in our church family.

Pastor Dave has been a great help to me personally, as we have navigated the change of region representation and through the pastor selection process. To be clear, his help has been in an advisory manner only. He has been clear that the changes made need to be our decisions. I have appreciated his manner of helping especially the Council, during these times of change.

Pastor Dave has tried to retire 3 times since his "formal" retirement several years ago. Hopefully, he can get a good rest, spend more time with Merletta and try retirement again! Thank you, some much, Pastor Dave! From a grateful congregation -- God bless you!

Spiritual Direction and Pathways: Congregational Spiritual Formation

Part of my responsibility as your Pastor is to lay out a spiritual direction for us as a congregation. This requires a combination of vision casting, interpreting the faith and spiritual life development. Each is unique unto itself but not always easy to achieve as a whole. Especially during this time where we are limited in our face-to-face gatherings, person-to-person interactions, the challenge and need feels to be great. So where do we go from here as a community of faith, spiritually?

First, a reminder of things already in place:

Olympia First Baptist Church seeks to be a spiritual home where one can experience Good News, Community and Hope, in and through Jesus Christ.

Reminder #2:

Our challenge, each and every day, as followers of Christ is to
Walk Humbly, Love Completely, Live Differently!

These are good foundational pieces to work from as we move forward, together as a community of faith. On Sunday, May 31st, we recognized and celebrated Pentecost! It is the Sunday we welcome God's gift of the Holy Spirit as well as the beginning/birthday of the Church. Using Pentecost as our springboard, I am planning to focus our preaching/teaching time in worship on:

"Christian Community & Its Counter-Intuitive Calling"

Since Pentecost is marked within our faith tradition as the beginning of the church, I believe it is an ideal time to look at early church communities from the New Testament and how they can teach us to live counter-intuitively in a world that sometimes pushes against the life and teachings of Jesus. This will include their struggles, the problems they faced from within their communities and how to live with one another and neighbor that reflect the values and spirit of Christ.

We will begin this series on Sunday, June 7 and will start in the book of Acts.

The following are the sermons for the month of June:

June 7th – Acts 2:37 – 47 – *What does Community Look like?*

June 14th – Acts 8 – 10 – *A Eunuch, a Pharisee & a Roman Officer*

June 21st – Acts 16:11 – 15 – *A Businesswoman Completes the Set*

June 28th – Romans 12:1 – 8 – *Community, Part 1*

Thursday Morning Bible Study will continue into the first week of July and then we will evaluate whether or not to continue or take a break until September. In the meantime, our study will continue to focus on the stories of the Patriarchs and Matriarchs of Genesis as they:

Journey into the Unknown
Promise – Problem – Provision

Finally, as we continue to wander faithfully and prayerfully through the desert of Covid – 19, you will hear me talk about our need to focus on three things as a church community:

Flexibility
Creativity
Adaptability

I think we are all in agreement that these are unique times. That what we have experienced and are going through right now is something none of us could have envisioned. Our willingness and openness to the Holy Spirit in our midst can help us look at ministry and mission through the lenses of flexibility, creativity and adaptability. How might our different ministry groups create new opportunities that reflect these times? Are willing to adapt from how we always have done something, to doing it now differently and creatively? Time will tell, but I believe God is in the midst of it all, walking with us, encouraging us, whispering ideas to spur us on as a community grounded in the Holy One, Jesus, the Christ. Keep praying! Keep growing!

Blessings and Joy!

Camp Bethel Update:

Summer camps are registering people but it is a fluid situation. Phase 3 is needed for camp to run its summer programs. Questions? Pastor Mark or Bob Holcomb.

WE ARE HERE FOR YOU...

If you have any questions, concerns
and/or needs during this time
of social distancing,
please contact us!

Pastor Mark Rambo	360-970-0218
Pastor Dave Roberts	509-949-8807
Pastor Caroline Lehman	360-459-8126
Jean Heidal—Moderator	360-754-4499
Pat DeNeui—Deacons	360-701-9448



JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Mary Chavez	4
Leonard Brunken	10
Rachel Alexanian	20
Pat Luhr	28
Cheryl Sievers	29

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OLYMPIA

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Church Staff

Mark Rambo, Senior Pastor
Pastor Dave Roberts, Interim Pastor
Caroline Lehman, Visitation Pastor
Nick Carlson, Organist
Darrell Born, Choir Director
Lela DePaolo, Secretary
Gary Rogers, Caretaker

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May the God of hope fill you

WITH ALL JOY AND
PEACE IN BELIEVING,

SO THAT BY THE POWER OF THE

HOLY SPIRIT

YOU MAY ABOUND IN

HOPE.

ROMANS 15:13

NEVER LOSE

HOPE