

We are treating the threat of Covid-19 with respect. Thank the Lord the original estimates were way off and that the death rate is much lower than projected. Plus we understand more about how the virus spreads. While there is still danger we are in a better position to manage distancing and sanitization. But that is not the only reason I believe it is time.

In our absence, the world is collapsing. Friendships are fracturing. Civility and decency are giving way to bitterness and anger. There is an onslaught of depression and loneliness. Businesses have gone under. People have lost incomes. Domestic violence is up. Child abuse is up. Pornography is on the rise. Burglaries are happening all around. There are still daily casualties from Covid-19. News feeds are blowing up with negative report after negative report. Cities are literally on fire. On fire! You know me. Things get to me and my eyes are frequently filled with tears. These last two weeks have been hard, haven't they? The death of George Floyd was horrific. I wept buckets. The rioting, looting and destruction in the aftermath is hard to fathom. I'm still crying.

I don't believe there is any coincidence between the atrocities in the world and the "closing" of the church. By design, Jesus is the answer for every wrong in this world. That was planned from the very beginning (Gen. 3:15). He came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). He alone can free us from sin. He alone can change the heart away from service to sin (Rom. 6:1-18). And He does this through the church. We were not created to be a people hidden inside of homes. We were created for good works (Titus 2:11-14). His truth is supposed to penetrate the world through our actions in the world (Matt. 5:13-16). Light can't shine in the darkness if it is hidden. Salt can't season food if it's never applied. When we remove "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15) from mankind, what do we expect except what we are witnessing now?

I'm not saying that we are personally guilty of putting a knee on George Floyd's neck. We didn't light the fires or steal from stores. But the world is lost without a voice of clarity. The church cannot wait any longer to come back. The world is dying without us. We also cannot afford to come back unchanged. If anything is clear, we must rid ourselves of all the things hindering our message. Apathy cannot exist in the church. Racism cannot exist in the church. Condoning violence has no place in the church. Maybe we are learning that we have to both "do and teach" what we ask of the world (Acts 1:1). Maybe we are learning that politics can't solve our real problems and that only a risen Savior can. Maybe we are learning that we must apply the same patience with each other and the world that our God does with us (2 Pet. 3:9). I believe with all my heart that it's time. It's time!

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### **"It's Time"**

**David B. Smith**

I'm so glad that we are resuming our services as a congregation today. I've been saying since the beginning how much I missed everyone. I've been hearing from you how much you miss everyone too. Life just isn't the same without the saints being together. Even with the same pattern of worship the atmosphere is different without the rest of you. God in His infinite wisdom knew how much we need the atmosphere. Maybe we all appreciate that more now. So my heart is full of joy today. Honestly though, I'm not sure we could've waited any longer. We all understand the reason for our absence. We accepted that.

### Prayer List

James Anderson	Danny Curvin	Judy Lusk
Patricia Anthony	Tommie Grandfield	Tony Miller
Jim Bethune	Bill Greer	Lexi Owens
Nancy Birch	Fred Hafley	Carlos Shannon
Mike Bouldin	Kathy Hamilton	Janice Smith
Jennifer Bradford	Susie Hargis	Bessie Smithson
Marjorie Cagle	Grayson Ledbetter	Diane Stacy
Isaac Cooper	Loretta Leffew	John Webster

### Our Sick and Recovering

- **Debbie Cooper** is recovering from successful carpal tunnel surgery on Friday.
- **Tommie Grandfield** wishes all to know that her son Dan has recovered from the Covid-19 virus and is now back at work. She thanks all for the prayers offered on Dan's behalf.
- **Carol Fox**, Boodie Fox's wife and the sister-in-law to Joan Holloway and Johnnie Perry, fell earlier this week and was admitted to the hospital in a non-responsive condition and placed on a ventilator. As of Friday afternoon, she is somewhat responsive and physicians are considering removing the ventilator.

### This Week's Birthdays and Anniversaries

#### Birthdays

11 – Eddie Tumblin  
14 – Lisa Bolus  
16 – David Griffith  
17 – Kali Laster

#### Anniversaries

18 – Gene & Sue Grindstaff  
Curt & Jessica Stewart

### Announcements

- **Eddie Tumblin**, as a member of the National Guard, was deployed to Washington, DC earlier this week. We pray for his safety and quick return home.
- **Polishing the Pulpit:** Several of our members were planning on attending this year's Polishing the Pulpit in August. While most are already aware, this year's event has been canceled due to Covid-19 restricting the number the convention center in Sevierville would host. Look forward to PTP returning next year. There will be a virtual PTP held at the same time in August. Information on this will come soon.
- **Fellowship Building:** Just as it has affected so many things, the virus has also temporarily interfered with progress toward constructing the new facility. We hope to get back on track in the very near future.

### Sympathy

**Sarah Grasham**, a long-time member of North Hamilton who has been homebound for many years, passed away last Sunday. A private burial service was on Tuesday.