

Morning Church,

As I sit here listening to the thunder and rain, I'm reminded how the Lord cares for his people. "He sends the rain..." Not sure how long the rain will last, but I'm also certain, "The warm sun will rise with healing in its rays..." The ground will dry out and farmers will continue their spring work. God is so good to all he has made!

Many are asking, "When will we be able to gather again like before?" The answer to that question... "It won't be like before." But, we will gather again!

The church board met Tuesday evening, and began planning and setting some things in motion for when we are allowed to gather. First, please understand; 'why' we do what we do has not changed. The 'why' is Jesus Christ! However, the 'way' and 'how' we do things has changed. And that's where we find ourselves. God is working in this time and we will always do our best to honor and glorify the name of Jesus. That will always be front and center. With that being said, we've a responsibility to make sure our people are safe and protected when we do gather again.

**At this time, a date has not been set.** That date depends on what our governor comes out with at the end of this current stay at home order. We have no idea if there will be a set number of how many will be able to gather at a time. If a set number is put forth and the only way to meet those guidelines is to have multiple services, we will do that. I understand there are many opinions out there about this current stay at home order. However, Tecumseh Church of the Nazarene will abide by what's set forth and follow guidelines when we are allowed to begin gathering again.

Please keep your church board in prayer as we move forward...

**We have not set a date yet,** but some things are in motion... some things that each one of us need to keep in mind... if you or your children are running a fever, please stay home. If you or your child has a cold, please stay home. If you or your child hasn't been feeling well, please stay home. We all need to proceed with much caution in this area.

The building will be cleaned before each service. Every handle, door, counter top, tables, and chairs will have been wiped down before each gathering.

We have ordered touch-less hand sanitizing stations for the entry doors into the building and into the sanctuary. For everyone's safety and health, let's make sure we use those. The coffee area will be taken down and stored in the kitchen. If you want to bring your own coffee, that's fine. But we won't be using the area nor will we be making coffee in the kitchen for now.

We will have someone at the door as you arrive to open the door so no one will have to touch the door handles. (or the doors will be propped open)

The sanctuary will be arranged to handle social distancing as set forth in governmental guidelines. We ask that everyone please abide. We will arrange the sanctuary with tables and chairs. Please keep these tables and chairs where they are set. Families will need to sit together. Children will need to sit with their parents and not be allowed to run around and play with each other. For the time being, there will be no Sunday school or children's church. We will not be staffing the nursery, however, that room will be open for diaper changing and such. All the toys in the nursery will be stored away for the time being.

We have ordered Communion supplies that come individually packaged. I'm still working on how those will be handed out when we celebrate the Lord's Supper each month. We will not pass an offering plate each week. We will have two spots where your tithes and offerings can be placed. Or the on-line giving platform can be used on the web-site or from the free app download on your phone.

We also understand that some may not want to come out yet. That's perfectly fine. We will continue to live stream the best we know how. In order to enhance that live stream, we are purchasing a professional

grade video camera to make our live stream much better. Please continue to be patient with us as we get this in place.

Will we be required to wear masks while worshipping? Masks will not be required, however, if someone wants to wear a mask, they certainly can and should. Let's all be respectful and honor that. When the worship service is over, what then? We ask that everyone follow the social distancing guidelines, make your way to your vehicles and head home.

Pastor what's happening with Waters Edge Camp; children's camps and Family Camp? EMD district officials are meeting Monday, May 18th, to decide those things. I've a good idea, but I'm not going to speculate. Once those decisions are made, we will put the information out.

Pastor, why are we doing all this? Where's your faith? COVID 19 is real and I don't want anyone to get it. These decisions are not based on fear. They are based on our responsibility for the safety and health of all who come through the doors of Tecumseh Church of the Nazarene. Pastor, will it ever be like it was before? No it won't. Did you know that worship attendance has tripled throughout the evangelical church since this began? God is at work in the middle of this! The Holy Spirit is all over this live streaming stuff! God is doing a new and mighty work in the midst of this!

I know there may be some who are just fearful to come out. That's ok! There may be some who want to just keep watching on-line for now. That's ok! For those who fall into the groups that are highly susceptible for the coronavirus, we will honor and support your decision.

I know this is long. I know there's much here. I know there's probably something I missed. Be patient with us and let's all pray for God to continue to do a new and fresh work here at TCON! There's a 75 year old pastor in the Nazarene Church who shares this story. He's pastoring a very small rural church way out in the country. On a good Sunday he may have 15 or 20 people. He admits he's not real good with technology. But each week, he sets on his couch, sets up his phone, learned how to connect to facebook, and does his live stream. His worship attendance has went from 15 or 20, to right around 100 people each week! Don't know about you, but that brings tears to my eyes. God is God and we are not. He's a good good Father that way!

Be encouraged, I am!

Pastor Gary

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