



First Presbyterian Church, Union MO

Letter from Pastor Bill Vincent

A new chapter.

It may look different. It may sound different. It may even feel different.

But God is still with us, even *in* the difference.

So, with grace and compassion and courage – trusting in the trust-worthiness of God – here we go into another chapter of life, seeking *always* to live faithfully before God.

Amen!

In Christ,
Bill Vincent
Pastor

As a reminder of something of the difference of this new chapter, here is a summary of the letter that went out recently regarding Session's action for *our initial return to in-person worship, starting Sunday May 31st*:

Seeking to minimize the risk of COVID-19 for all involved, and in light of the best information available, we want to reduce the spread, increase the distance, and reduce the time.

REDUCE THE SPREAD

*We strongly encourage everyone to wear a mask, remembering its primary purpose is to prevent you from spreading the virus (which you may not even know you have); so a mask is a sign I care enough about you to do what I can to avoid sharing the virus with you. You can bring your own, or we will have a limited supply of masks available at the church.

INCREASE THE DISTANCE

*We want to share our love, but we do *not* want to share airborne droplets that transmit the virus. So we need to maintain the recommended 6-foot distance from each other. To aid in this, the sanctuary has been marked showing the appropriate spots (6 feet apart) for individuals and family units to sit (even if you don't get 'your spot'!).

REDUCE THE TIME

Since *prolonged* exposure increases the risk of severity of infection, worship will be somewhat abbreviated, including in the following ways:

*We will not be singing, especially since singing spreads the virus further than regular talking. We'll share in music and hymns in a variety of ways other than singing.

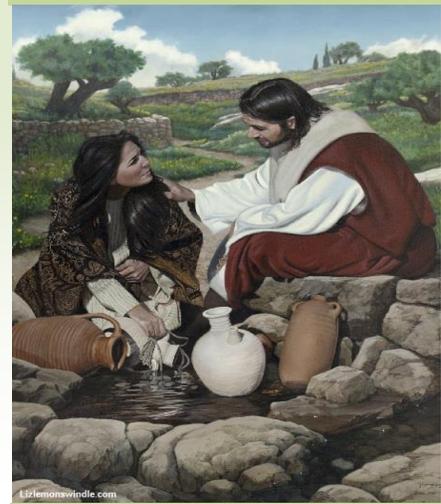
*Passing the Peace will be brief and done from the spots where we are sitting.

*Offering plates will not be passed. Instead, an offering plate will be placed near the entrance to the sanctuary (or you can continue to mail your checks to the church).

*Prayer concerns can be emailed (pastorbillv@gmail.com) or phoned in to me prior to Sunday; or you can write them down and place them in the basket located near the sanctuary entrance.

In addition, sanitizer will be available as needed; and, during the week, the church will be disinfected, especially the hard, smooth surfaces upon which the virus survives longer.

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If you have questions or comments about any of this, please feel free to contact me or any Session member (listed below). Even as this can be a highly emotional time, we ask that you share your comments calmly and respectfully. You may disagree (which is fine), but please remember this is new territory for *all* of us, and we are seeking to chart a course into this new chapter with faith in God and love for one another.

Finally,...

*If you are uncomfortable with this set-up, we encourage you to stay at home until you're ready. Worship resources will continue to be available on-line (after Sunday morning's service) or by mail (per your request).

*If you feel sick or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, please stay at home, for your sake and the sake of others. Contact your doctor as you need, take care of yourself, and please let me or one of the elders know what we can do to help and to care for you.

Bill Vincent, Pastor 573-576-6088

Elders:

Karen Calvin 314-269-7126

Dorothy Clarkson 636-388-9330

Carol Gruber (Clerk) 636-667-3568

Lee Hinson 314-808-0361

Mike Murray 636-290-0145

Worshiping and serving God, loving and accepting all



Second Blessings Food Pantry received \$5,000 assistance from Presbyterian Disaster Assistance. PDA made helping food pantries a priority in this time of COVID 19, Second Blessings annual fund raiser was canceled due to the pandemic. They will be using the additional funding as needed throughout the upcoming year.

Second Blessings Food pantry will continue to be open as long as possible. Premade bags of food will be available on Tuesdays from 10am -1:00pm and Thursdays from 12:30 – 2:30pm. Everything will be done outside.

By following the Social Distancing guidelines, we ask that you, please wait in your car away from others until you see a volunteer come outside. Then you may start a line on the sidewalk next to the church (with at least 6 feet between you and the next person). One person per household may stand in line. Someone will be outside to guide you through the process. All must still be registered with us to receive food, but registration is easy. If you would like to make a donation, monetary or in food items call 636-649-4545 or email at secondblessingspantry@yahoo.com.



Save the Date: Giddings-Lovejoy Presbyterian Women

Summer ZOOM Gathering

Saturday, August 1, 2020 at 10 a.m.

More Information on how to join the ZOOM Gathering will be forthcoming when we are closer to the date.