

Elders discussed the possibility of returning to live services at the church when the Province relaxes the indoor meeting limit on June 26 (at that time 50 people will be allowed to gather indoors). After looking at all the protocols we would need to have in place, we realized two things. First, we would not be able to engage in two important aspects of worship—singing our praises (no singing will be allowed), and fellowshiping with one another (no movement would be allowed around the sanctuary; you would have to come in the front door, sit in your seat, then after some announcements and a message you would leave immediately through the gym or office side doors). The second thing we realized is that we would need a crew of at least 10 people for each service to "police" the protocols (making sure household groups stay 6 feet apart as they entered the building, screening people for symptoms at the door, making sure people sanitize in the foyer, and making sure they sit 6 feet apart), not to mention the sanitizing work that would need to be done in the building before and after each service. We concluded that it isn't possible for us to manage this properly. Not only that, but I personally realized after our meeting that the focus would become rules and prohibitions, and would force some people to be the "protocol police," which would undermine our unity, and may cause resentment, and that would interfere with what worship we might have.

Given all of that, we've decided to delay resuming worship services until 1) we find out what the outcome of Dr. Morrison's meeting with church leaders is this week, and 2) we fully consider other options at our next Elders' meeting in late July or early August. At that time, if the protocols haven't changed, we may consider organizing house church meetings on Sundays.

On the positive side, I will continue to produce worship service videos each week, so that we can continue worshipping as households. Again, I encourage you, if you can, to invite others in to worship with you from time to time, to extend your fellowship beyond your family unit.

Also, in the next few weeks, we will be making some necessary modifications to the church building (installing signage, setting up cleaning supply stations, etc.) to allow smaller groups to use the building. **So in a few weeks, prayer groups, committees and Bible study groups will be able to start using the building again.** We'll be sending out some simple instructions at that time for your individual and small group use of the building. Meeting in small groups in different ways is going to become more important than ever, and we'll be encouraging you not to completely limit your fellowship to your family unit. I foresee the church being used more now for small group meetings.

Let's keep a positive attitude, and realize that these are strange times, and that the positive action required is trust in the Lord, prayer to God for mercy and then **adapting to the circumstance.** This is not a time to bemoan what we used to have, because we may never completely have that again for a long time, at least until there is a vaccine.

I was speaking to someone who used to enjoy listening to jazz each week at a venue downtown, and she said their venue is under the same restrictions. I mention that,

because we have to be careful not to think that churches are being persecuted. I believe Dr. Morrison is doing all she can for the faith community, given the current public health threat. Let's remember that the Lord has put her in place "for such a time as this," and I believe we should pray for her (you can email and tell her you're praying for her), and follow her guidance.

Many blessings to you all,
Pastor Jon