



July 10, 2020

Dear First Baptist Church Family,

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. My purpose is to present the details of our planned return to a limited, in-person worship experience beginning Sunday, July 26<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. We had originally planned to return on the 12<sup>th</sup> but out of an abundance of caution, Pastor Jim and I thought it prudent to wait a couple of more weeks to monitor the situation in Ohio, and more specifically the situation in the Newark and Licking County area. Our plan at this point is to return, on a worship-only basis on 7/26. As I stated in our original letter in June, it is your decision to return or not based on your health situation and based on your comfort level. We will continue to provide the online worship experience for those that choose, while at the same time offering a responsible, safe, in-person experience for those that choose to return. For those choosing to worship in-person I would ask that you adhere to the following guidelines:

- If you are experiencing any symptoms such as a fever, fatigue, cough, etc. please stay home. This is good common sense during a pandemic or at any time.
- Limit contact at church to family members only and please maintain a responsible distance (3-6 feet) from all others. We will prepare the sanctuary in a manner that will allow social distancing with pre-distributed bulletins and every other pew being closed to assist this process. We will have offering collection and communion in a touch-free manner as well.

- All music will be projected on-screen so hymnals will not need to be used. Please also bring your own Bible as well.
- Pastor Jim will not greet post-service in the main hallway.
- Now the big issue...face coverings. I, as the moderator, am asking all of you that choose to worship in-person to bring your own mask and wear it the entire time you are inside the church. Those leading the service (i.e. Pastor Jim, the band, lay leaders, etc.) will be permitted to remove their mask during the service but all others will be expected to wear a face covering while inside the church.

I am well aware that we will have folks think these guidelines do not go far enough and others will think them too restrictive. I have listened to those that chose to provide feedback and I have followed all the directives in place at this time from the local health department as well as many recommended best practices. Trust me there is no shortage of advice or lack of “experts” when it comes to this topic!!! My hope and my prayer is that you choose to return on the 26<sup>th</sup> or you continue to worship online. Should you have questions or concerns you can always reach me at 740-975-1132 or at [beerys@laca.org](mailto:beerys@laca.org). May you stay safe and may you feel the love and safe keeping of our Lord at this time.

Sincerely,

Scott Beery, Moderator