

Pastor Letter 5/19/21

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he encourages them to refrain from engaging in certain activities for the sake of their brother or sister in Christ, whose views on a particular subject may differ. This is because Paul, in many of his letters, places the importance of Christian unity. I remind us of this because I recognize there is much debate and different comfort levels surrounding the reopening of our communities. Our leadership, keeping this in mind, has made decisions regarding the continued way forward with worship services. They prayerfully considered, and agreed upon, a phase 3 for worship. We continue with our hybrid model, which will continue beyond the final phase. If you would like to attend in person, we will continue to remain socially distanced. However, we will continue increasing the numbers in the sanctuary so that those who feel comfortable coming in person can be seated in the sanctuary. Keep in mind though, that this means you will be directed by an usher on where to sit to ensure we can fit the max amount of people and keep social distanced. Additionally, we will remain wearing masks until we have clearer guidance from our state officials who at the time of the meeting were still deciding the way forward. The session's hope is that we create an environment that Paul speaks of where those who are still afraid even if they are vaccinated can feel just as comfortable returning as those who are comfortable with having all guidance lifted.

I know this church community knows how to love each other differences and all. I know that even the outdoor hybrid worship is not loved by all, but we gather to worship God which unifies us. This Sunday we celebrate Pentecost with an outdoor parking lot service. Pentecost is a holiday in the church when we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. As part of this service, we will be celebrating the Lord's Supper. I would invite you to do as we have been doing and bring along your communion elements. Of course, for guests and those who may forget we will have individually packaged elements available. I would invite all of us to come together this Sunday as we worship in differing ways and celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit given to us. May we remember in all times of worship the words of Paul to be a place where we are willing to put aside our personal beliefs for the sake of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

In His Peace,

Pastor Nicki

\*If you are worshipping from home, I would encourage you to use the YouTube platform for optimal streaming quality. Additionally, feel free to sign on early no need to wait right until 10am anymore. \*

**YouTube:** live stream and recording can be found

at <https://www.espresbyterian.com/worship/> or <https://www.youtube.com/user/ESPresbyterian>

**Facebook:** click on the link below near the time the service begins at 10:00am to watch the live stream <https://www.facebook.com/espresbyterian/>

Additionally, bulletins and an online hymnal have been put on the website and can be found

at <https://www.espresbyterian.com/worship/sunday-bulletin/>

Ways to give- mail or drop of check/cash through no contact mail slot in office window. Drop off envelope in offering plates before or after worship services. Donate on our website by going to the home page at <https://www.espresbyterian.com/> and clicking on the Donate button in the upper right corner. Designate where you would like the money to go by using the note section.