

August 18, 2020

Dear Friends in Christ,

I bring you some good news today. The Bishop has given us permission to move forward with the next phase of reopening our church; which he is calling “Phase 2b: A Modified Return to Congregational Life.” Continuing to worship through all of this has been our focus over these last six months. Now that we have done such an excellent job of executing our plan safely, we are moving forward with limited in-person gatherings.

Phase 2b won't begin until September 14<sup>th</sup> and will be limited to Adult Bible Study, Sunday School for all ages, Youth Group, and Childcare. These will be our next focus. We are developing a detailed plan for each class and meeting space that will include wearing facial masks, maintaining social distance, and regular sanitation. So, there will be a maximum occupancy for each space depending on the size. This new plan will need to be carefully considered, communicated, and sent to the Diocese before we can begin this next phase.

Additionally, we will resume the 5:30 Service on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, as well as the Wednesday evening healing service on September 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. If you have been waiting to have someone baptized, please call the church office so that we can move forward with planning that baptism. Also, the clergy are available for pastoral visits over the phone or in-person. Please let us know how we can support you.

All of this is very exciting news as it gives us hope for the future. We are moving forward, and we need to do this next phase in a safe way. Unfortunately, we can't do everything at once. So, we appreciate your patience and understanding as we try to do the next thing; which is Bible Study. We need to get this right before we do more and remember that it is all dependent upon our local health conditions.

We are so excited to have Bishop Reed with us on Sunday, August 30, at 8:00, and at 10:30 for Confirmation. Also, we begin again with our Rally Day Picnic outdoors, September 13<sup>th</sup> following the 10:30 service. Come casual. We are celebrating our 160<sup>th</sup> Birthday! And be on the look-out for new and updated information regarding the calendar.

We need to take the next step in getting our lives back. Take care of yourselves and take care of one another. We need each other and will get through this together. We are looking forward to seeing you soon. Keep the faith. “Be of good courage. Hold fast to that which is good! Render to no one evil for evil. Support the weak, help the afflicted, honor all persons; love and serve the Lord,” and may the peace of Christ rule in your hearts always.

Yours in Christ,

Milton+