

As I write this letter, I find myself in a quiet Church Office, in a quiet Church building with an empty parking lot. It has been four weeks since we gathered for worship. A month of Sundays have passed since we have greeted one another with the love Christ, discussed the Scriptures in Sunday School or had the joy of Bible Study.

Usually, the Monday after Palm Sunday, I'm excited. Usually the Church building is still spiritually charged with the joy of Palm Sunday Worship. Usually, there are still Palms setting around the Sanctuary. Usually, I can almost here the sounds of "Hosanna" echoing in the Sanctuary and feel the excitement of our past worship. Usually I am busy with the rest of our Holy Week services. But today all is quiet, and there is a strange peacefulness that surrounds me. Like you, I find myself in the strangest of times. As a Church we have plans. Plans for what to do if we have snow or ice that prevents us from holding worship one Sunday. Plans for high water. Plans for threatening weather. But we have never made or thought of plan for a Pandemic that makes it unsafe to meet. Indeed, we are in the strangest of times.

It's for times like this, strange times, uncertain times, frightening times that God sent his Only Son into our world, to die for our sins, to rise from the grave and to give us hope. These are the moments we need Jesus the most. We need Jesus to give us hope. We need Jesus to give us faith. We need Jesus to help us see beyond the troubles of the moment. We need Jesus to remind us that it may feel like the world has gone crazy, as if no one is in control; but God is still on the throne and God is still in control. It is in this time and these moments that we see the Church is not a building, the Church is people, you and me we are the Church. The Church building is just that a building, and a good building. But we are the Church. Jesus did not die for a building or an address. Jesus died to redeem our souls, to cleans our hearts and to make us the people of God; the Church.

Rejoice! We are the Church, this is still Holy Week and Jesus Christ still suffered, died and rose from the grave for us. Our sins are still forgiven and we still have an eternal Heavenly home. All the promises of God are still ours in Jesus Christ. This Sunday is still Easter Sunday, we may not be able to gather in worship with a record crowd, but we can still worship and celebrate Jesus where it matters the most, in our hearts.

The good news I want to share with you is: Until we can gather in worship again, I will be sending out letters like this one. I invite you to share with me any prayer concerns you may have, I will include them in future letters. Please call or text me with any concerns you may have. We will be holding services on Easter Sunday. Not the type of services we are accustomed to but services celebrating Jesus' resurrection and reminding us that in Jesus Christ we are forgiven and redeemed people of faith. On Easter Sunday from 10:30 am through 11:30 am, I will be serving Holy Communion in our parking lot. Everyone will stay in their vehicles and drive up to be served. The greatest of efforts will be taken for your safety. Holy Communion will be in individual cups and the bread broken into servings. Each vehicle will get its own serving and no hands will touch the elements in preparations. There will be a box for any offering you wish to make to the Church. These are trying times, uncertain times, worrisome times and a great time to be a child of God! Be safe, be well and always remember you are most highly loved and blessed.

In Christ's love,

Pastor Paul