

A Pastoral Letter

Reopening St. Andrews Note from Pastor Connie May 31, 2020

Governor Gavin Newsome announced that religious services are now eligible to reopen under strict regulations. This sounds like such good news for us as we work toward enabling us as a congregation to gather. I, like you, am happy that we are moving in a direction to be able to gather in small groups and return to prayer and worship. I know that we will be planning on gathering in the future in ways that keeps our staff safe and parishioners safe.

I want to be in our sanctuary and hear the Bell choir and hear Linda Underwood play piano and organ. I want to hear the lessons read and to preach a sermon with people present. These are wants for many of us, but is it safe?

As your pastor, my highest value is to keep you safe. We want to gather in community and at the same time be safe – these values can clash. This is hard because we need connection with one another to be mentally and spiritual healthy and at the same time gathering physically can spread a virus that is powerful and lethal.

Our State and County have provided us guidelines and restrictions for when we gather. Our Council, staff and parishioners have been working hard to figure out if, when and how we will be able to gather. I cannot tell you a date for reopening right now.

We will be having further discussions about this with staff, council and parishioners in the coming weeks. We will be developing a reopening plan so that we can safely transition to doing all of our ministry online to having a presence in our church building. If you have any medical, occupational health & safety, or facilities experience that would help inform our plan, please email, text or call me. Please know that this decision will be made with the desire for the safety of our staff and parishioners. We are also planning for continued connections online.

Jesus told us to love our neighbor as ourselves. When we gather together we will do so with love for ourselves and our neighbor.

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