

Friday, March 19, 2021,

Since COVID-19 has come upon us, we, the Leading Elders, have sought to lead with wisdom and love. We have tried to promote love for neighbor, the comfort of all to attend corporate worship, and honoring Christ by obeying the government who are “ministers of God.” There are many polarizing subjects to consider when leading a congregation, but we hope that you have sensed our desire to love God and love neighbor throughout.

We are blessed to see you, the congregation, submit to our spiritual authority and office as we ask you to take less than preferable precautions. This is God’s grace and Spirit at work in you. We thank you for your sacrifice and patience with us (HC 104). Please know that we also find the precautions less than preferable and hope for God’s mercy and grace soon. We are aware of feelings of disconnectedness among you, and we feel it too. Our intent is to move back toward normal so we can *fully and freely* delight in church life, in fact, increase our connection and fellowship from before COVID-19. We hope governmental and cultural changes come swiftly providing the freedom and environment to do so.

As elders, we are considering several factors as we move and plan ahead for changes in church life: (1) are people from Jerusalem Church still contracting COVID-19; (2) what is vaccination distribution like for those desiring vaccination; (3) are new cases falling in our communities and state; (4) are government orders being lifted; and (5) is society around us loosening up? There seems to be light at the end of the dark tunnel.

As we continue to worship together, we ask that you continue to carefully consider the following:

- Please stay home if you are feeling ill and/or have a *temperature of >100.4*
- Please wear a face covering the entire time you are inside the building and outside when you *cannot remain 6 feet from others (unless you have an exception mentioned in the mask orders).*
- Please practice self-regulated reasonable and responsible social distancing at both services (8:30 am and 10:30 am).
- Please carefully consider the following:

If you have flu like symptoms, are waiting on the results of a COVID test, or have tested positive, it is your responsibility to follow the [CDC Guidelines](#) by advising people you have been in contact with of your

situation (both inside and outside Jerusalem Church). Giving them this information may help them in limiting the spread of the disease.

For example, if you attended worship on Sunday and began having flu like symptoms on Monday or Tuesday (within 48 hours) the people you were close to or those that you interacted with need to be informed that someone near them is currently experiencing symptoms and updates need to be provided as to any test results.

This does not mean that you can't remain anonymous. The first step in such a case is to contact one of the Elders. You can then let the Elder know which of two options you prefer:

- You personally will contact the people you sat near or had extended conversations with
- The Elders will contact those people and let them know (anonymously) that someone they were near is experiencing symptoms

It has been the practice of the congregation to love and serve others through transparency, by alerting the elders to positive tests and approving notifications. We thank and commend you for allowing prayer requests and updates to be emailed out. This has opened up opportunities for you to love and bless each other. Many acts of love have happened during this time. Praise the Lord!

May the Lord show mercy and lift the burdens of COVID-19 from us. Let us therefore fix our eyes on Christ our glorious Prophet, Priest, and King, expecting him to bring good for us out of these hardships. To God be the glory.

The Leading Elders

Steve Bowers • Doug Hall • Tim Nicholls • Jonathan Shirk • Tim Thompson