



Shepherd of the Valley United Methodist Church

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Dear Members and Friends,

I hope this finds you well and that your faith in Christ is helping you to manage life in 2020.

We are excited to move forward with our plan to offer outdoor worship beginning Sunday November 1st. Please note, however, that we are carefully monitoring the recent uprise in the number of COVID-19 cases in our area. If this trend becomes problematic, we may have to reconsider. Please watch your email for any last-minute changes.

Attached is an updated covenant. It contains important information and lists the precautions that we are all being asked to take so that we can gather as safely as possible. Please review it carefully. Our insurance carrier is asking us to utilize this signed covenant to ensure that individuals understand and accept the risks. You only need to sign this once. You may mail it to the office or bring it with you to church. We will have copies at the door as well.

We pride ourselves on being a caring congregation, therefore, one of the hardest things will be to keep our distance. In Ecclesiastes it says, "There is... a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing." This is one of those times when we must refrain. It is also important if you are not feeling well to please stay home.

We estimate that fewer than half of our congregants will feel safe worshipping in person outdoors. Therefore, we continue to make our online worship service our top priority. The outdoor service at 10:30 on Sunday will be casual and will have the same music and message as the prerecorded service. We hope that providing both will meet a majority of people's needs. We know that some things will work well, and others won't work at all. We ask for your grace as we discern how best to offer meaningful worship.

There are no age restrictions for worship. It will be up to you as individuals to assess the risks and make decisions that will best meet your own physical and spiritual needs.

As always, I welcome your feedback and input. Please feel free to contact me if you'd like to discuss any of this information or the covenant.

Blessings of Peace and Good Health to You,
Pastor Janet

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