



First Presbyterian
CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO

LOVING CHRIST. LOVING ONE ANOTHER. LOVING THE CITY.

May 13, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

For the last two months you have received communications from me and the leadership of the church encouraging you, asking for your prayers and describing FPC's operations in response to the "Stay Home, Work Safe" orders issued by the civil authorities. Today it is my pleasure to inform you that our current season of dispersal is quickly coming to an end.

We will hold our first public worship service at Fourth and Alamo on Pentecost **Sunday, May 31**. Pentecost Sunday was the day that the church, newly empowered by the Holy Spirit, took the Lord's mission into the world. We believe that this is a perfect Sunday for us to renew our public worship together.

The Session has adopted a staged plan allowing us to resume worshipping together while remaining safely distanced within the building. On May 31, we will hold **two services (one traditional and one contemporary)**. In addition to our on-site services, we will continue to offer live-streamed and recorded services so that all of our congregation will have access to worship.

To love one another and to protect the health of our congregation, it is important that our services comply with public health and social distancing recommendations of both the CDC and the state of Texas. We will observe the following

- **Social Distancing**—In the services, it will be necessary for us to spread out to maintain social distancing within the sanctuary and Westminster Hall. As families and individuals arrive, they will be seated by ushers to ensure proper spacing. Families living in the same home may sit together in worship and will be appropriately spaced from other congregants. Unfortunately, we cannot offer childcare during the worship services and children will sit with their families.
- **Face Masks**—The Session is strongly recommending that we adhere to the governor's guidelines to wear facemasks in public. We ask that everyone please bring your own facemask to use while on campus.
- **Pre-Notification**—To prepare our facility for worship, we will be asking you to fill out an online Attendance Planning Form designed to let us know if you will attend worship, and if so, which service and how many will be joining you from your immediate family. This is not a reservation. All seating will be first-come, first-served, in the Sanctuary, Westminster Hall or in our overflow room.
- **At-Risk Worshippers**—In consideration of the health of our members, we recommend that the most vulnerable in our congregation please wait for overall conditions to improve. The state and CDC recommend that those 65 and older and those at high risk u refrain from returning to on-site worship until public health

conditions are more stable. We encourage all who are unable or uncomfortable to join us in-person to join us for worship online.

Although we are moving toward gathering for worship, we are not yet ready to resume our regular Sunday school and Christian education programs. Those ministries will be phased in as restrictions ease and as we adapt to new short-term health practices. We encourage all of our small groups and Sunday school classes to continue meeting remotely.

The reopening of our daily Children's Center will be coordinated with the staff, leadership and families of the center. Children's Center operations will be coordinated with the ministries of the church but will follow a customized timeline.

During the week, the church facilities will remain closed to the public. Covenant partners wishing to meet with staff or to enter the church facilities should contact the church so that accommodations can be made. Group meetings will continue to be held remotely.

This reopening plan was adopted after long discussion and consultation with our covenant partners, committee leaders and staff. We have also consulted a number of other churches in our area and have borrowed heavily from their wisdom. There is more information yet to come and we will continue to update you with additional details as our procedures are refined. I ask you to remember that these provisions are for the short term and not forever. The more safely and wisely we act in the short term, the sooner we will return to more open conditions for the long term.

Please join me in celebrating our homecoming. Our services will necessarily adapt to accommodate the best practices available so that we can join together while we protect one another. Thank you for your faithfulness and patience in yet another season of transition. As we move forward, we want to make sure that we are wise, compassionate and courageous in our reopening so that our coming together demonstrates our deep love for Jesus Christ, for one another and for the city.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Bob Fuller,
Sr. Pastor, FPC San Antonio

iii "At-Risk" is defined as those who are 65 or older, especially those with chronic lung disease, moderate to severe asthma; chronic heart disease; severe obesity; diabetes; chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis; liver disease; or weakened immune system.