

July 1, 2020

A Letter from the Vast Elder Team

Dear Vast Family and Friends,

Thank You Church

We are rapidly closing in on 4 months of life in a Covid 19 and social unrest society. As your elder team, we want to more frequently update you with our ongoing position, words of guidance, and encouragement, as well as the details of where we believe God is leading our little local church.

We are first writing to commend you, church, for the ways you have cared for one another in this challenging time. We have received many reports of your faithfulness. Many of you, having devoted yourself to the fellowship, have reached out to your brothers and sisters, met physical needs, and lifted up those God has placed in your life.

Your hearts are not growing cold, rather, you are walking and thriving in the love of Christ.

Because of your generous giving, the church has been able to meet every benevolent need presented to us. We are caring for our staff and we have given to a number of emergency needs, including Hope Africa, and contributing to the effort to send the wonderful worship team Tusinze back to Uganda.

These are times of trouble, and as Paul tells the Galatians in 6:9, "And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up".

What Are We Doing?

As of July 1, our state is now in a mandatory mask requirement for all indoor public spaces. To say we live in unprecedented times has become a tiring understatement.

We know it is a biblical mandate for us to continue to somehow meet together. It is also practical and necessary. We can't be healthy and be the church if we don't meet. So what is that going to look like for the rest of the summer and even heading into the fall season?

Sisters High School meeting is not an option.

For many, church will continue in smaller home church gatherings for the foreseeable future. We currently have locations and leaders for six of these home churches, and we are actively looking to add to that number.

At least once every month we will be gathering in a larger, corporate context for a worship/prayer service. We just had our first worship service this last Sunday at Kerith Springs site with Hope Africa and Tusinze.

Our contact with Sisters High School has revealed that our meeting there will not be an option anytime soon. In light of this reality we are pursuing other locations for monthly larger corporate gatherings. We have some promising invitations. These gatherings will likely occur on either Saturday, Sunday, or even Wednesday.

Not Everyone is Able to Gather at this time

While our ongoing rhythm as a church is going to focus on smaller home church gatherings, accented with monthly corporate worship gatherings, we are going to continue a YouTube presence. Pastor Ryan and occasional guests will continue to teach, Eric and friends will continue to lead us in worship, praise and song, and Pastor David will continue his delightful kids teaching series.

Our hearts are bound to those of you who are sick, immuno-challenged, and unable to gather. The elder team and other leaders remain available to you for prayer, to meet needs as we are able, and to even meet with you as you are able. Please connect with those you know, and purpose to remain in community and contact as much as you can. You are not alone.

Where from here?

Our firm belief is that Jesus is equipping and strengthening his church to function rightly in the day of trouble. We see him raising up new volunteers, new leaders, and the exercising of dormant gifts.

If this time is challenging to our views of what church looks like and what it should be, remember that we are not alone, God is not surprised or unprepared. Continue to pray for each other and your leaders that the Holy Spirit will move in ways we have not seen before to build Christ's church.

In Closing

Church, do not lose heart, but put on the love of Christ. Persevere, and be joyful in the face of adversity. Give generously, love one another, live victoriously. God is with us. John 16:33 "I have said these things to you that you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble, but take heart for I have overcome the world".

Vast Elder and Leaders Team