

Brothers and Sisters of Church of the Resurrection,

We understand that some of our members and visitors may be wrestling with the decision whether to return to corporate worship on May 17 or remain at home. We know you *want* to be with your brothers and sisters in the assembly, but there are good reasons some of you should consider remaining at home. We wanted to share three points that may be helpful in your deliberations.

**First, the Session will not make this decision for you.** We are not limiting attendance based on age or even personal health factors. That does *not* mean, however, we think all of you should come. It simply means we think it is *your* decision whether to attend or not. We would highly *recommend* that if you or someone in your family is at high risk during this time that you would not attend the service physically but would join us virtually until such time that it is prudent for you to attend.

**Second, the Session encourages you not to be distressed, burdened with guilt, or reluctant to remain at home for now if it is advisable to do so based on health, age, or counsel from your doctor and family.** You are not being disobedient to the Lord by staying at home under such circumstances, just as if you were ill. Obviously, we want to see you back in the worship assemblies, and we long for the day when all of us can be together as one physical body. We do not want to encourage you to be careless in your faith or attendance. If you are able to come, please, do so. But if it is advisable for you to remain at home until this virus is better understood and under control, then we concur with your decision and will do our best to support you in the meantime.

**Third, the Session is putting in place a number of measures to promote health and safety based on a careful review of recommendations by the CDC and public health authorities.** More than half of the chairs in the building have been removed, and the seating has been rearranged to create sections of chairs for individual households with six feet between. We will be making certain requests of those who attend and respectfully but firmly ask you to abide by these policies during the early stages of our return. Even if you do not agree with their necessity or value, these are measures to protect and comfort our vulnerable members while providing a good witness to our civil magistrates and neighbors. These include:

- **Maintain physical distancing and limit physical contact with those outside of your immediate household while you are at the church building.** This means no hugging for now, no fist bumps or elbow touching. We ask you to keep a respectful distance from those outside your immediate family who attend as best as you are able.
- **Arrive about 5 minutes before worship and leave shortly after.** If you wish to visit with those who attend, it would be preferable to do so outside in the fresh air, at another location, or over phone or video.
- **Everyone ought to wear a face covering while in the church building.** Since I will be standing far back from the congregation, I will remove mine for the sake of audio while leading worship, but the rest of the time in the building, all of us should have our noses and mouths covered.

- **Keep your kids with you and sit with members of your immediate household.** We will be arranging seats in the sanctuary to ensure everyone has a place to sit while following social distancing guidelines.
- **If you or your family members are sick, please, stay at home.**
- **No physical bulletins.** In order to avoid physical contact, we will not be providing physical bulletins. Instead, we will email out a digital bulletin a few days before the service.
- **Giving.** So that everyone does not touch the offering plate, the plates will be placed in the back of the sanctuary and your offering may be placed there. Or, you may give through the mail or digitally on our church's website (<https://cor-pca.org/>).
- **Communion.** The way we do communion will be altered slightly to avoid touching others bread and wine cup. One of the elders up front, with a glove on, will hand you a piece of bread and your communion cup. Further, to avoid congregating up front, we will be doing communion row-by-row within the family unit.

We know that this is not ideal and is not what we long for as the body of Christ. At this time, however, this seems to be the best way for us to join together again *and* for us to be a good witness to our civil magistrates and neighbors. Please, if you have any questions let one of the elders know so we can help address them.