



I don't know about you but I miss my church family. I miss the warm greetings on Sunday mornings, I miss watching the kids running around before the service, I miss welcoming back those that have been ill. I miss celebrating the praises and mourning the losses together.

So, just when can we get back to normal? Good question.

To help answer that question, Pastor Matt has organized a team that has members from both churches to review the mountains of suggestions, mandates and best practices in order to assure that reopening the churches will provide the very safest, low-risk environment possible.

We held our first meeting (virtual) last week and started looking through the best practices which will be necessary in order to provide a safe return. A sampling of these are:

- Removing bibles, hymnals, pens, connect cards, bulletins and prayer request cards
- Refusing entry to anyone who refuses to wear a mask
- Thorough cleaning of the church before and after each use
- No coffee hour
- Social distancing
- Restricted occupancy if only small groups are allowed – who gets in?

And believe me, this only scratches the surface.

Keep in mind these guidelines are for a general congregation with a good mix of families from all age groups. We all realize that our two congregations are probably considerably older than average and therefore have a higher potential for more serious consequences of contracting the virus.

We quickly came to the conclusion that we may be a long way from being able to provide a safe environment for our congregations.

One thing we all agreed on is that we are only comfortable with a scenario that provides the absolute minimal amount of risk to our church family's health and welfare.

In recent days Governor Whitmer has relaxed some restrictions. As of this writing, the Conference still has a prohibition against person to person worship or even meetings at our churches. We have no idea what these relaxations will mean but in many parts of the country we are seeing reckless behavior as a result of fewer rules.

Remember: face-to-face church gatherings of any kind are prohibited until further notice.

The Reopen Team will continue to meet and review all the latest information in order to publish a plan to keep you all safe.

If you have input for our Team please feel free to contact Matt or me at jpjackson5@gmail.com.

For the Reopen Team,

Jim Jackson, chair, Gunnisonville

Janel Ingram, co-chair, Bath