

July 8, 2020

Dear Friends,

Enclosed please find copies of last weekend's sermon and this week's devotion. Here's the latest.

Maximum Cap Raised: In a recent meeting, the elders decided we can raise the maximum number of people in our sanctuary from 50 to 65, and still maintain social distancing. To do this, however, we'll have to make better use of those seating areas to the left of the pulpit, and also near the organ. This maximum cap, of course, applies also to funerals, weddings, concerts, etc. You can sign up here or by calling the church office.

Stained Glass Windows: Like so many sanctuaries across the land today, Good Shepherd's sanctuary is empty and quiet most of the time. And yet, new things are happening behind the scenes. Most churches are not installing stained glass windows these days, but because of your generosity we are able to do so. We are anticipating the installation of the two remaining windows in the sanctuary. Paul Phelps of Oakbrook Esser wrote me saying, "We are slowly returning to the studio with limited staff and hours. Your project will be one of the first that goes back into production. We currently have the last two windows dismantled and they are ready for the glazing process . . . We will be in touch with an estimated installation date. That will be something to celebrate!"

Sanctuary Acoustics: Also, most churches are not looking into improving the acoustics of their sanctuaries during this time, but we continue to look ahead to Phase II of the Sanctuary Project. We have contracted with Scott R. Riedel & Associates for advice on how we might improve the acoustics in our sanctuary for worship. This, in turn, will inform some of our choices about flooring, upholstery, and the like. It's a science I don't pretend to understand, but on May 20, the Riedel company ran a series of acoustical tests in our sanctuary. Using these tests, they have since created a 3D acoustical model of our sanctuary. This last week we heard from the lead acoustical engineer. "I will soon have your on-site testing results organized on paper, but we're only a little more than a third of the way into our process and there is much more information to come! At this time, I am estimating that we will have your report to you around the end of July/early August 2020."

Installing stained glass windows and improving the acoustics of our sanctuary are perhaps the furthest things from your mind. But let them stand in as a symbol. Even when our sanctuaries are empty, God is at work, doing something new.

Live-Stream Services and Hymnals in the House: A number of folks have mentioned they miss having the hymn texts on the screen for recent services. The reason for this is we've moved from recording to live-streaming the services. To add hymn texts would require more resources than we have. Here are a couple of solutions. It would be good to have one of our hymnals in


your home. We are heirs of an astonishingly rich tradition. Our hymnal is a treasure of psalms, prayers, hymns, and worship services. It retains the best of the past, but also offers contemporary expressions of word and song. It is a handbook of the faith; it says back to him what he has said to us. In short, it's worth having one in your home! Ordering a new edition hymnal from CPH would cost about \$27 plus shipping. If that's too steep, you would be welcome to check out one of ours. Of course, we wouldn't want you to use it as a coaster for your morning coffee, but they are free for you to use for now until that time when we'll need them back in the sanctuary. You can pick one up in the church office.

Memory Verse Challenge: This week's memory verse is from Romans 6:3-4, *"Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."* Last week's verse was from Matthew 11:28, *"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

Prayers: Please pray for Marge Goecke, Wendy Wilson, Agnes Thurow, John Block, Jim Strege, Patricia Fox, Art Melcher, and Robert Wheeler (hospitalized with heart issues). Also, we give thanks that, following surgery earlier this year, Rae Ann Wegner is now finished with chemotherapy and radiation!

Thank you: Finally, thank you to all who have been so faithful about sending in their offerings, even when unable to attend. The last few weeks there has been a noticeable and unsettling decrease in offerings. I'll learn at next week's Board of Directors meeting where we stand. Every day, however, I see a small pile of hand addressed envelopes coming into Good Shepherd, many of them in beautiful cursive handwriting. It's heartwarming to see, and I'm grateful to you!

That's all for now. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David K. Groth". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a light gray rectangular box.

Pastor Groth