

April 28, 2020

Dear FPC Family and Friends,

With Governor Abbott's announcement of a plan to reopen Texas, we now know that returning to church will happen in phases. In phase 1, gatherings of 25 percent of a building's capacity can occur. As much as we may have envisioned the "reopening" of church with a big celebration and all of us together, it will be a more gradual process.

The way forward depends not only on the behavior of the virus, but on the actions of people – on individuals, churches, and communities. Here at FPC, we are eager to gather again, but we do not want this to be a matter of following a timetable as much as a matter of discernment, wisdom, and patience.

At the session meeting on Monday evening, we discussed the many aspects and concerns of gathering for worship and using our building: What social distancing precautions are wise? What about those within our church who are still at high risk? What about children and the capacity allowed in the nursery? Our session agreed that it is best to delay the resumption of Sunday services until our state and local governments announce phase 2 of reopening which will allow for 50 percent capacity. Governor Abbott hopes to announce this on May 18, though of course that depends on how phase 1 progresses.

For now, we will continue our [online worship services](#). The staff and leadership of our congregation are discussing plans and considering adjustments for worship together which involves everything from how many services we'll offer, to marking pews and chairs for proper distancing, to cleaning between services, to adjustments in the way we conduct baptisms, serve communion, take up the offering and greet one another. There's a lot to consider! In the meantime, we are also considering smaller, prayer focused gatherings that we could have during the week, although we would not offer childcare. Please join us on our [Altogether Sent](#) journey through Acts.

We are grateful for the efforts our city and this community have made to "flatten the curve" of the virus. We are grateful for the stories we hear of generosity and kindness – many involving folks of our congregation. You continue to offer hope and bring the light of Christ into your families, neighborhoods, businesses and beyond. We serve a great Lord who is active and doing many great things during this difficult time! Continue to live in faith, grow in love and walk in hope!

Grace and Peace,
Steve

Steve Schorr | *Pastor*



800 W. Texas Ave.
Midland, Texas 79701
(432) 684-7821
sschorr@fpcmid.org