

Dear Bethel Family,

On May 16th, Bishop Lewis released guidelines for churches to follow during the phases of reopening put out by the Governor. Staying in line with their response from the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis, the Conference guidelines are more stringent than those put out by the Governor.

The Conference is taking a staged approach to reopening our doors. We are currently in the Preparation Stage. During this stage we have been tasked with creating a Healthy Church Team (HCT). The Healthy Church Team will be formed with at least the following members: Senior Clergy, Lead Laity member, a member of the Board of Trustees, a member of Church Council, a medical professional (if available in the membership), an attorney (if available in the membership), and a member from the usher/greeter team.

Bethel's HCT Team

Senior Clergy - Pastor Shoop & Pastor Benton

Lead Laity - Sheri Goad

Board of Trustees - Judy Newell (Not in Attendance)

Church Council - George Gero

Medical Professional - Nancy Gero

Attorney - Joe Swetnam

Usher/Greeter team - Peggy Walsh; Judy LaPorte (Not in Attendance)

Additional Members Include: Karen Johnston, Susan Turner, Rob Williams, Brian Lewis, Terese Smith, Kevin and Susan McNamara. Debbie Kimberlin (Not in Attendance) and Audrey Lewis (Not in Attendance)

The HCT met on Saturday May 16th and discussed ways of moving forward for Bethel. After evaluating the requirements put forward in the Handbook for Local Churches, we unanimously and prayerfully, decided that it is in the best interest of our church family to keep our doors closed until we reach Stage Three of the

plan set forth by the Conference. This decision will be assessed again when we get closer to Stage Three. The complete details of each stage, including what is and is not allowed can be found at the Conference website. <https://vaumc.org/return/>

This decision was not made lightly, it is our intent to remain all inclusive of our family. The current guidelines for re-opening in Stage One and Stage Two, limited not only how many, but who could attend, to include excluding children under the age of 12. We look forward to the time when we can open our doors and welcome back all who desire to worship with us.

Please reach out to someone today, let's all stay connected however we can. Make a phone call, send a letter, is there someone from church you haven't heard from? Check in with them.

Is there someone you know who doesn't receive correspondence by email? Please share, or share their contact information with us, so we can reach out to them if we haven't already.

Until we are able to all be together, please continue to worship with us online through our YouTube channel: [Bethel Live 4 Christ](#) ← Click Here OR

Put this into your web browser:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC51gYrC-R6t3qmQx-QQSKw/featured>

We are continually trying to come up with ways to stay connected until we can once again gather in person. Please share any ideas you might have!

Peace and Grace to you all! You are loved!

"I hereby command you: Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

Joshua 1:9