

BETHEL BIBLE CHURCH

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THE BETHEL CONNECTION

July 29, 2020

Obeying God Rather Than Man

One of the helpful conversations that the COVID 19 crisis and guidelines has generated has to do with the lines of authority involving the church and the state. Has there been government overreach and are we facing a time when we should obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29)? The thinking makes sense at first glance – Hebrews 10:25 teaches us to not stop meeting together. The government says that in the interest of public health, do not meet or only have meetings with significant limitations. Therefore, should we obey God and not man by continuing to meet for worship – without regard for the limitations imposed by the government?

Peter and the apostles are one example of appropriate civil disobedience – it was against the law to preach about Jesus, they obeyed God by continuing to preach (Acts 5:29). The Hebrew midwives refused to kill babies (Ex. 1), Daniel continued to pray (Dan. 6), his 3 friends refused to worship an idol (Dan. 3) and Esther walked into the presence of the King (Esther 5) – all in clear disobedience to civil authorities. Many believe the time is drawing closer in our country when civil disobedience will be far more common. Already the issues of sexual orientation, family and marriage definition and sanctity of human life are genuine concerns for Bible believing churches.

As real as these issues are and as prepared to stand for God and truth that we must be, the issue of gathering for worship here in Pulaski County is not (as of yet) a matter worthy of invoking the civil disobedience teaching of scripture. It may be the case in other States, it certainly is in many countries around the world, but in our area no government official has made it illegal for churches to meet. The shutdown order was clearly temporary and not aimed at or motivated by getting churches to stop proclaiming the gospel, praying or singing.

Regarding our County and State specifically, the latest face covering order signed by the Governor last weekend includes certain exemptions. One exemption from having to wear a mask reads:

Any person attending or engaged in a religious service as he or she must already maintain six feet of social distancing from another person not in the same household.

For the sake of public health and safety, as well as our own, can we obey God and man at this time and at this place? We can. Wearing masks in and out of the building, distancing, sanitizing, holding 2 services so we can accommodate more attenders while distancing, temporarily limiting some kinds of meetings – all fit within the framework of doing what churches do for God while lovingly being good citizens.

Why are we not resisting authorities and standing for our rights? I think it is because we want to grow in obedience to God. Such as talking more about the hope we have in Jesus, joining together in focused and fervent prayer and seeking to know above all else what is God's purpose for sending this crisis. No one is telling us to not do those. The ways to do them are countless. Let's continue to pray for and encourage each other to obey God in these ways so He is seen and known as the God who saves.

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What about the offering?

We encourage you to continue giving generously to the Lord's work here at Bethel. Here are some different options available :

- Mail
- Bank bill pay
- Online giving through the website
- Offering box is available at the back of the sanctuary.

Office Hours:

We will be in the office Monday ~ Wednesday from 10am-3pm, while still working hours from home.

HAPPENING THIS WEEK:

- **Wednesday, July 29, Bethel Restart Meeting @ 6:30 pm**
- **Sunday, August 2 service at 9:15 am, including Junior Church, Nursery will also be available**
- **Sunday, August 2 service at 11:15 am, Nursery will be available**
- **Drive-in option will be available at BOTH services**
- **Sermon audio available on website by noon on Sunday**
- **Monday, August 3, Men's Meeting @ 8:30 pm**
- **Sunday, August 9, Baby Dedication**

~~~~~Please note, we will be serving Communion this Sunday, August 2, during both services. While we will be offering our pre-packaged goodness for Communion, please feel free to bring your own elements for the Lord's Table if you prefer. ~~~~~

**Concerning the worship service this week:** No sign-ups are necessary as we will be offering the Drive-in option at both services. If seating is not available, you can participate in your vehicle by radio. We are still asking that you wear your mask into the service and mask when you are leaving the service, when social distancing is not attainable. Also, please consider wearing a mask when singing; this is recommended but not required.



Looking for an opportunity to serve?

We are searching for folks/families to serve in these areas over the next couple of months:

- ❖ Greeters~no hand shaking, but are asking for help in cleaning between services
- ❖ Ushers~no passing out of materials, but helping folks to find seating
- ❖ Parking Lot Attendants~to greet those worshipping in their cars & hand out sermon notes

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SERVING IN ANY OF THESE ROLES, PLEASE CONTACT MELODY. THANKS FOR SERVING!

### PRAYER

Please be in prayer for Curt Kramer. He is scheduled for knee replacement surgery the first week of August. Please pray for he and Phyllis to remain healthy, so that he will be able to keep the surgery date.

Tony & Kathy Pepe are anticipating a trip to the States this week. Please pray for protection for them during their travels. While in the States, they will be visiting and encouraging their family. Please also pray for their church in France while they are gone.

Pray for Justin & Sarah Hutts as they prepare to lead the Chad area beginning August 1. Pray also for good health for their kids, as they have some rainy season sicknesses.