

Dear Mount Vernon Family,

Sometimes when people ask me what my favorite passage is, I'll reply, "Whatever I'm preaching that coming Sunday." Well the week I have been tasked to write this coincides with the following words penned by Paul to the church in Rome, "Owe no one anything, except to love one another." As the Worship Committee and I have gathered these past several months trying to even get to this point, I believe I must heed those words, and I invite you to heed them as well. Love one another.

I offer this plea because your Church Session and I believe it is a privilege and a joy to come together in community to glorify and worship God, and we want to share a couple of ways we can do that.

Outdoor Worship

We welcome you, if you are comfortable, to join us on the courtyard on the Mount Vernon Church campus for outdoor worship on October 4th and 18th and November 1st and 15th. Weather permitting, we will worship in this manner at 11am under the following regulations:

1. You must have a reservation, which you can make via sign-up genius on our website, or by calling the church office. You will need to specify how many people from your family will be attending so we can guarantee them a seat.
2. Chairs will be set up by the church (you don't need to bring your own) at a minimum of 6 feet apart and the capacity of the service will be 75 people.
3. We will have a limited number of parking spots available for church members who want to stay in their car and worship.
4. Once you arrive, the courtyard will be roped off and you will stand socially distanced while greeters welcome you.
5. On Sundays that Holy Communion is observed, you will receive prepackaged communion kits upon entry.
6. Masks are required at all times during worship and must cover your mouth and nose.
7. The bulletin will be posted to the website and social media, there will be no paper bulletins.
8. During worship, there will be no congregational singing, and no passing of the peace. We will have an offering plate at the exit for you to give your tithe or offering otherwise we encourage you to continue mailing your checks or simply give through our website.
9. Congregants are welcome to recite the Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, and Prayer of Confession.
10. You will have access to a restroom should you need it, however, restrooms will be limited to one person at a time.
11. Be on the lookout for ways you can support the Outreach Team.

If you are not ready to worship in person at this time. We understand. We will continue our online services on the Sundays that we do not have in-person gatherings and we will livestream the outdoor service much like we did prior to the pandemic.

Prayer in Sanctuary

We also want to let you know that starting September 28th the sanctuary will be open on Mondays from 10am-Noon and Wednesdays from Noon-2pm for individual or family prayer. Like the outdoor service, you and/or your family must make a reservation by calling the church office or through sign-up genius on our website. Once you arrive, you must have a mask on covering your mouth and nose while inside the church and sanctuary. Reservations will be set on the half hour, but each prayer session will last a maximum of 20 minutes so you may leave before the next person/family arrives.

Following the final scheduled outdoor service on November 15th, we will reassess the situation to further determine what type of worshipping offerings we can provide in December and beyond. We thank you for your continued support during these trying times, and we look forward to seeing you whether that continues to be in a virtual setting or in-person. Wherever we meet, I know it will be in a spirit of love for one another.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Barrett Abernethy