



November 17, 2020

To the church scattered in their homes around the Kitsap County,

By this point, most of you have likely seen Governor Inslee's [newest restrictions](#) banning congregational singing, and are wondering what it means for CKPC. I'd like to say how thankful I am for the Session our church has elected to lead and guide us in this season. Today I moderated an emergency meeting and witnessed elders with strong opinions and widely differing viewpoints speak honestly and with conviction to one another, all whilst holding and committing to one another in love. How refreshing! How... *Christ-ian!*

There are undoubtedly so many viewpoints because the issues facing our church (and *the* Church) are so unique and complex, and must be recognized as such. Some expressed the view that a government—even if well-intentioned—should not feel it has the authority to tell the church what it can or cannot do within the confines of its worship service; constitutionally or theologically. Others expressed the opinion that churches ought to be less focused on their own rights, and more on the “shalom of the city,” and follow all precautions given by the government as part of neighboring well, not to mention the safety of our own church members. Still others stressed the need to recognize the nonviral pandemics of loneliness, depression, abuse and anxiety that are plaguing us all, and the power worshiping together in person has in combating that. *All* agreed that singing is what the people of God do; it's in our DNA and corporate worship without it could barely be called corporate worship.

Session voted, in the end, to take a two-week hiatus from in-person worship and have livestream only, in order to further pray, as well as pay attention to what happens in the news (“the Christian,” to paraphrase Karl Barth, “should have the newspaper in one hand and the Bible in the other”). I know that this decision will certainly be disappointing or even frustrating for many—I know I've already had feelings of fear and disappointment of “here we go again.” But, to quote C.S. Lewis' Aslan: “things never happen the same way twice.” Please know this decision was not made simply, and that it was made with thought, prayer and discussion. We have a group of elders that really love this church and, more than that, love God deeply and are humbly and earnestly seeking to guide us in wisdom and do God's will. Agree or disagree, disappointed or relieved, I hope you'll remember Paul's words (and Ty's fantastic sermon) from this past Sunday: “Love puts up with all things, trusts in all things, hopes for all things, endures all things.” We commit to one another because *this* is the core of our DNA: a community brought forth and bound together by the tie that binds: the love of Christ.

*When we asunder part // It gives us inward pain;  
But we shall still be joined in heart, // And hope to meet again.*

Grace and peace,

Pastor Tyler