



The Chimes

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Modesto Church of the Brethren

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Continuing the work of Jesus. Peacefully. Simply. Together.



Sanctuary Re-opened After COVID-19

Example of how the sanctuary could look with social distancing guidelines in place. Chairs and pews in the first two rows being 6' apart. Podium moved to same level as worship center.

What is required at this time for “in person” church attendance under the State of California Guidelines for Places of Worship* if we were to hold services in-church:

1. Self-standing hand sanitizer outside for use before congregants come inside.
2. All congregants to wear a mask (3 years of age and older).
3. Doors to be left open so no touching of doors is needed, going in or out.
4. Temperature check upon entry.
5. Lots of signage to inform congregants what we want and need from them.
6. Social distance seating in sanctuary (see picture and caption).
7. No use of self-service coffee machine; Gathering Place to be closed off.
8. No public water fountains (water to be turned off).
9. No pamphlets to be on display.
10. No child care.
11. Children to stay with households.

12. No singing/no public recitations.
13. Drop box for offerings upon exit from service (no passing of offering baskets).
14. No visitor sign-in booklets.
15. At the end of the service, congregants are urged to go directly home. Social gathering without social distancing is discouraged.

At this time online church is to be strongly recommended. For now those over 65 are urged to participate in online church vs in person church attendance.

*The complete Guidelines can be found at <https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-places-of-worship.pdf>

On Tuesday afternoon, May 26, I met with several representatives of the Church Board – Karen Cosner, Bill Johnson, Linda Hunter, and Marye Martinez as well as two healthcare professionals from the congregation – Jim Costello and Allison Sampson – to continue the conversation about whether or not to resume in-person worship. Our conversation was based upon the following questions:

1. Should we at some point resume our in-person worship? If yes, then,
 2. We agreed to make the decision to resume in-person worship with guidance from the county health officer, state recommendation, and CDC guidelines; what is the most current information from these three sources?
 3. Do these sources recommend that we resume in-person worship? If yes, then,
 4. How do we go about resuming in-person worship? Or, what steps do we need to take to safely worship together?
 5. How do we communicate this to the church?

We all readily agreed that at some point, when it is safe to do so, we would like to resume in-person worship, and then proceeded to discuss #2. It was recommended that we focus on the resource provided by the state of California - a link which is included above and summarized for your information. However, none of the three sources which we had used to further our conversation recommended the resumption of in-person worship. We discussed at length the fifteen steps that were summarized above and recognized the need to share our recommendation to the congregation.

After much discussion we thought it best to not resume in-person worship until the vast majority of the congregation could safely attend services if they so choose. We recognized it as our responsibility to look out for the health and well-being of each person – spiritually, physically, emotionally, socially, and mentally. We concluded that at this time we cannot resume in-person worship. We based this upon the following:

- We have not received notice from the state that Stanislaus County has moved into stage 3 and thus we cannot legally resume in-person worship services.
- After we receive notice that the county has moved into stage 3, there are many steps that need to be taken before we can safely resume in-person worship.
- The guidelines listed above would hinder more than enhance our worship and sense of community among those in attendance.
- Nearly 70% of our current congregation is at risk and we would highly encourage them to stay at home and join us with online worship.
- The pandemic has enriched our sense of community whether it be through cards and letters, phone calls, Zoom gatherings, and various other means. Our online worship service is also a regular, consistent way for the church to come together, engage with one another, and will continue even as we move forward.

We appreciate and value the opinions, feelings, and comments that we have received from many about this topic and always welcome your input. We also recognize the need to continue the conversation, will do so throughout this time, and strive to follow the situation and most recent information. Lastly, if you would like to discuss this further, please contact any of us, and we will give you and the congregation plenty of notice as to when we will resume our in-person worship.

Many blessings,
Pastor Andrew

Invitation to Worship

May 31 - Pentecost

Scripture: Acts 2:1-4 ; 1 Corinthians 12:1-12 -
"The Church's Birth-day"

(To join, if you don't have a Facebook account, type this into the address bar of your browser: [Facebook.com/modcob](https://www.facebook.com/modcob) On the left, click Videos)



On May 27, we as a country reached the tragic number of 100,000 deaths from COVID-19. We grieve the loss of so many precious lives, and pray for their loved ones.

Jolinda Reddy continues to recuperate at home.

Please continue to keep the Chimes aware of your joys and concerns!



David Strohm
June 6, 2019

"Like a bird singing in the rain,
Let grateful memories survive
In time of sorrow."
Robert Louis Stevenson



"Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you..." and you know the rest of the recognizable song sung around the world. Now as you may be humming the tune let me explain why I brought up this popular ditty.

May 31st is the Sunday we celebrate Pentecost which is often recognized as the Church's birth-day. In Acts 2, Luke writes how people from around the known world were gathered, speaking and understanding various languages, and all because of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Later in the chapter Luke writes of how after this happened that the believers were baptized and learned the teachings of Jesus from the apostles which then spread as they returned to their homes. The book of Acts really is an encouraging message of how the emerging Church started!

I believe that the Church, that is, all of Christianity, has entered a time of

[re]emergence as congregations learn how to do and be the church in new ways. The pandemic has done a hard reset on what we were doing and is requiring us to rethink how we do ministry.

It has had and will have its challenges, but we have also been presented with new opportunities, new connections, and new possibilities! For example, our online worship has been reaching an average of 500 people on Facebook each week! The number of views on YouTube is growing each week, too, and the people who are watching what we are doing is increasing. It is humbling and encouraging to see people who are engaged with our community.

Now is the time to prepare ourselves and the church for the new life which has already started and will continue to grow. However, to do so requires resources of time, energy, creativity and assets.

Consider this to be a birthday gift that you would give to someone who is near and dear to you. These gifts are not just for what is happening now but for what is to come. Not only for us but also for the wider Church of the Brethren through One Great Hour of Sharing which supports Church of the Brethren's Global Mission and Service, Discipleship Ministries, Brethren Disaster Ministries, Brethren Volunteer Service, workcamps, and the Global Food Initiative.

In my opinion, when we look back at this time in the future, we will see the amazing and wonderful things that have been birthed from the adversity. As Martin Luther King said, "Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle."

~From the Stewards and Pastor Andrew



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DAMS OF MID & TID ON PEACE/LIFE CENTER'S RADIO, 95.5 FM

Felton is on the air again with a brief history about the dams of the local irrigation districts. This episode is entitled THE DAMS OF THE MODESTO AND TURLOCK IRRIGATION DISTRICTS. It covers all three of the dams on the Tuolumne River. It is his fifth episode under the banner of "Where We Were" which highlights various pieces of interest in and around Stanislaus County.

This brief history about the dams will be broadcast on the Peace/life Center's radio station KCBP 95.5 FM at the following times.

Mondays June 1 and 8 at 9 AM

Thursdays June 4 and 11 at 9 AM

Fridays June 5 and 12 at 8:30 PM

Sundays June 7 and 14 at 11 AM

On Friday, May 22, the Family Unity Night event came "zooming" back into existence after a two-month COVID-19 break. Four of our MCOB families with young children attended virtually by video or by phone. Everyone had fun interacting, giggling, scavenging, snacking, praying, folding paper airplanes, and sending signs of love and care to one another. We are hoping to try it again on June 19.

Tonight's Activities

- Role Call! (your name, other family members with you, and "who will you be sending a picture or note to in our church family?")
- Scavenger Hunt! (scurrying around our houses trying to find everything on the list)
- Stop Scurrying, Giving Thanks
- Breaking bread together - any cracker, crust or chip will do! Juice would be nice, too
- Paper airplanes - demonstrated by Josh and then you, if you have a favorite method. Reminding ourselves that even flat, empty paper can "fly"
- Signs of love and care - we will think of and demonstrate as many ways as we can to "sign" that we had FUN and care about each other before we sign off

Signing Off – gestures to show fun & friendship

We did great!	Praise/Thanks	Friends Forever
Clapping (applause)	Thumbs up	Big Smiles!
High fives (air fives)	I (eye) Love (heart) You (point to others)	"Air" Elbow bumps
Two finger point to eyes & other's eyes	Blow kisses	Peace signs



Friends: We are Looking for Milestones! This includes accomplishments and achievements from members of our church family so that we can celebrate along with you. Please send a photo or two, note the reason, and the person(s) involved, which will be included in a special edition of the Chimes. Some possibilities include: graduations - college, high school, 8th grade, kindergarten; anniversaries - wedding or work; retirements; birthdays; engagements; weddings; first steps; driver's license; first job; new job; promotion at work; honor roll; first tooth; masks made for healthcare workers; and any number of other wonderful events happening. We want to celebrate you!