

Madison Heights Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)
149 Main Street
Madison Heights, VA 24572



MADISON HEIGHTS MESSENGER

No. 9

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God's Sanctuary

Some see government guidelines as an infringement on religious liberty. I am not in that camp. I am thankful that we have a governor that is a medically trained doctor at a time like this. The following are guidelines from the governor of Virginia are for our safety and well being. We can have up to 50% occupancy. No problem for us there. We have to stay at least six feet apart. This is also not a problem. We cannot pass items to each other. We will now come forward to get the sacrament and leave our offerings as we exit. Items used to distribute the sacraments must be disposable, used only once, and discarded. This is something that we do anyway and those that prepare communion will wear mask and gloves. Thorough cleaning and disinfection of frequently-contacted surfaces must be conducted prior to and following any religious service. This is handled by the custodian in consultation with the property ministry. Post signage at the entrance that states that no one with a fever or symptoms of COVID-19 is permitted in the establishment. This has been done. Post signage to provide public health reminders regarding social distancing, gatherings, options for high risk individuals, and staying home if sick. This was also done. So, according to government safety guidelines we are good to go.

I am excited about this ministry here. I am excited that we are now able to engage in a modified worship service. Sanctuary worship is so very important. I cannot emphasize enough how important sanctuary worship is. The sanctuary is a physical place that is desired by God that is specifically built for people to worship God. It starts way back in **Exodus 25:8** have them make for me a sanctuary, so that I may dwell among them (NRSV). This is God giving instructions to Moses. God desires a special meeting place that is specifically built for God to dwell among the people. So you see, worshiping in the sanctuary isn't just something that we do out of habit, or something that we do because we are supposed to, or something that we do when we feel like it. Worshiping in the sanctuary has been very important to God ever since the nation of Israel finally had an opportunity to worship God. During the plagues when Moses pleaded to Pharaoh to let the people go it was so that they could worship God. It is when they first have a chance to formally worship God that God desires a sanctuary. The sanctuary and the altar were so important to God that specific details, including dimensions and material, were given as to how they would be constructed. The people were so excited! They were eager to please God because God cared for them throughout the Exodus. They were happy to do the work and happy give the very best of their offerings to God.

I am also excited that we are continuing to do the Facebook live portion of the worship experience because we reach beyond these walls to people that we would not reach otherwise. I am excited that you have stepped up to the plate and continued your tithes. I am very proud of you. I feel a very sentimental heartfelt emotion. Your continued outreach ministry is evidence of your love and care. Even though we have been hit by the pandemic you have stepped up to your commitment and devotion to this ministry. This is a ministry that we believe in and are passionate about. Your Christian stewardship is a spiritual discipline. It is a grateful response of giving to God as you have been blessed. This is a ministry that we all believe in that has a positive impact on our community, represents Christ in the world around us, and makes an important change in the lives of others. We don't have to be in the sanctuary to worship God. We come to worship in the sanctuary because it is a very important and special place that is specifically designated by Godself to be with us. Therefore, as children of God it is also very important to us. Please come join us in worship on Sunday mornings according to however you feel comfortable regarding your own safety during this pandemic.

George