

The Connection

12 JUNE 2020 NEWSLETTER

WHY WE GATHER

WRITTEN BY KEVIN WILLIAMS

The last several weeks have been a hardship for believers around the world, as God intends His people to regularly gather. Although online services have facilitated a way for us to worship while apart, it is a poor substitute for gathering together in person.

Most Christians are familiar with the words of Hebrews 10:25 —“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.” Although assembling together is important, that is not the main point of the passage. This command to assemble comes immediately after the command in Hebrews 10:24—“And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works.” You see, warming a seat in a church building is not what we are called to. **The reason God’s people gather is to “stir up love and good works” in each other.** In addition, Hebrews 10:25 goes on to urge us to “encourage one another.”

I am very excited to return to our Sunday morning gatherings, beginning June 21. This week Premier Kenney announced the guidelines and restrictions for phase 2 of reopening. There is no limit to the number of people allowed for a worship service, as long as physical distancing requirements are met. These new guidelines allow us to resume our responsibility to “stir up love and good works” and “encourage one another.”

Due to the size of our auditorium and the physical distancing of two metres between households, our seating capacity will be limited to approximately 100 people. Therefore, the

overflow will need to go the gym to watch the service on a screen. We will sing with moderation in the auditorium, but we will refrain from singing (humming allowed) in the gym, as some members of our church family need to be more cautious.

Our government leaders have encouraged greater caution for those who are older or have health problems. We want to protect anyone who may be vulnerable. We will live-stream the Sunday worship service and post the recording online afterwards. We will also continue to offer the prayer and Bible study group on Wednesdays at 7 pm in-person in the auditorium or via Zoom throughout the summer. Part of loving and encouraging each other is serving and deferring to the needs and preferences of others. These unique times give us many opportunities to “look out for the interests of others” and “esteem others as better than yourself” (Phil 2:3-4).

“

I love the church, my family o'er the earth--
Sinners estranged, made one through
second birth.
In selfless love Christ claimed us as His own,
And that same love from each to each
is shown.

—Chris Anderson

”

Re-opening plans available on page 3

FAMILIES REDEEM THE TIME

WRITTEN BY PASTOR MARK RICHMOND

Have you ever stopped to consider how your family makes decisions? By what process do you say "yes" or "no" to a particular activity? Some choices are obvious, like rejecting something that is clearly sinful. However, it is much more difficult to choose between good, better, and best.

As Christians, we are called to be whole-hearted followers of Jesus (Luke 14:25-33). This means that we must evaluate everything to ensure our activities align with Christ's priorities. And where do we find His priorities? In His Word. Every decision requires careful consideration of the commands and principles from Scripture. Take some time this week to evaluate how you are investing your time, energy, finances, and talents. Will any of these investments last for eternity? Each of us has 168 hours a week. Are you redeeming these hours by making decisions that are most pleasing to the Lord?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/WEDNESDAY PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY

We invite you to attend an in-person Prayer & Bible Study group in the gym this Wednesday at 7 pm. No registration is necessary. In addition, you may also participate in a Zoom group that will follow the same format at the same time (Please email kwilliams@meadowlandsbaptist.com for a Zoom invitation). For our Bible study we will discuss the following questions in the newsletter that relate to the Sunday morning sermon:



John 5:31-47

1. Which three words in this passage do you think are most significant?
2. What is being said about those three important words?
3. What does this passage say about Jesus?
4. How do people in this passage respond to Jesus?
5. How does this passage challenge or encourage you?
6. What from this passage can you share to encourage a fellow Christian?
7. What from this passage can you share with an unbeliever?

WORSHIP SERVICE BROADCAST & CHILDREN'S STORY

You can find the video and audio of the sermon and children's story broadcasts on our [sermon audio page](#).

"WITNESSES THAT SUPPORT JESUS' CLAIM"

JOHN 5:31-47

PASTOR KEVIN WILLIAMS

WELCOME

OPENING PRAYER

HYMN: "THE CHURCH'S ONE FOUNDATION"

HYMN: "WE WILL GLORIFY"

REVELATION 22

PRAYER

HYMN: "TAKE MY LIFE AND LET IT BE CONSECRATED"

MESSAGE

HYMN: "HOW DEEP THE FATHER'S LOVE FOR US"

CLOSING PRAYER

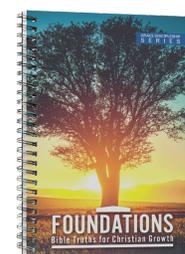
This Sunday's children's story concludes the 8-part reading of *The Big Picture Story Bible* by David Helm. Children of all ages will learn the Bible's message of "God's people in God's place under God's rule."

DISCIPLESHIP TRAINING

We will continue our Sunday evening discipleship training, *Foundations: Bible Truths for Christian Growth*, with the following revised schedule:

- **This Sunday, June 14: 4 PM or 6 PM in gym**
- **Sunday, June 21: No Sunday evening class (Father's Day)**
- **Sunday, June 28: 6 PM in auditorium (Last class for the summer)**

Audio recordings will be posted on our website as usual.



RE-OPENING UPDATE

We desire unity for our church as we move forward with plans to re-gather. We realize there is a range of differing opinions in our congregation on what this looks like; therefore, we want to continue to minister to everyone in a way that matches each one's comfort level. We ask for patience and grace as we make adjustments throughout the summer. With prayerful consideration, the church leadership presents the following for re-opening:

General Guidelines:

- There is no limit to the number of people allowed for a worship service.
- Physical distancing of 2 metres should be maintained between congregants unless members of the same household.
- Congregants must not attend if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (cough, fever, runny nose, sore throat, short of breath).
- Refrain from shaking hands, hugging, touching, passing items between people, using hymnbooks, passing offering plates, etc.
- Nursery is not permitted. Young children should remain with parents.

Our Plan:

- Begin on Father's Day, Sunday, June 21 with only one service: 10:30 am.
- The main service will take place in the auditorium, and overflow will be in the gym.
- The service in the auditorium will be video live streamed for folks at home and in the gym.
- The auditorium and gym chairs will be arranged with rows two metres apart.
- The service in the auditorium will include congregational singing.
- The service in the gym will NOT include congregational singing (humming allowed). Those not wanting to sing or be around singing should go to the gym.
- Children are welcome, but there will be no nursery or children's classes. A children's story will be included as part of the Sunday morning worship service.
- Main doors, school doors, and gym doors will be available for entry and exit.
- Hand sanitation stations will be placed at all entry/exit points.
- Face masks may be worn but will not be required.
- Only the main floor will be accessible; second and third floors will be closed.
- All main floor washrooms will be available.
- A receptacle for giving will be available outside the church office. Giving online will continue to be available.
- We will discontinue the prerecorded service since the Sunday service will be livestreamed. Those who stay home can watch the entire service live or anytime afterwards.
- There will no longer be a need to register ahead of time for services and Bible studies.
- The Wednesday prayer and Bible study will continue in-person and via Zoom throughout the summer at 7 pm.
- The Sunday evening discipleship training will stop at the end of June and resume in September.



Need to contact us?



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GIVING

E-transfer is available. From your bank's website, select the e-transfer feature. The email address to transfer to is donations@meadowlandsbaptist.com. Your donation will be automatically accepted and you will receive a confirmation of the transfer.

2215-17 St. NW, Edmonton, AB T6T 1J1

www.meadowlandsbaptist.com

PRAYER REQUESTS

In the newsletter, we try to include submitted prayer requests from those in our church family who want to share their requests in this format. Requests may be emailed to info@meadowlandsbaptist.com by Thursdays at noon.

- Diane Burdett's son, Steven, is homeless. Pray that he finds the Lord, comes off the streets, and repents of his lifestyle.
- Several of our senior citizens are in assisted living homes and isolated from their friends and families.
- Laura Cook's dad has possible skin cancer on his head and her sister, Lee, is going through chemo treatments for breast cancer.
- Wisdom and discernment for churches and leaders in Alberta trying to re-open through the phases.
- Gospel outreach through these times of world unrest and chaos.