

**Pastor Rev. Dr. John
Carroll Travis**

Assoc. Ministers:

Rev. Michael T. Carter
Rev. Charles M. Walker -

Preaching Assistant

Deacons:

Charles Combs, Chmn.
William Holland
Louis McDowell, Sr.
Tijuan Neal
Moe Ware

Trustees:

Aric Owens, Chairman.
Eugene Carter, III
Dwayne Holland
Forty Jackson
Henry Shelby
Derek Talbert, Sr.
Mary L. Talbert
Lane Thomas
Clementine Walters

Church Clerk:

Jessie Shelby

**Pastoral
Administrative
Assistant:**

Mary L. Talbert

**Church Corresponding
Secretary:**

Rhonda Turley

Ministries Manager:

Dana Carter

Minister of Music:

Alfred Jetoh

**Superintendent of
Sunday School**

Wayne Richardson

**Asst. Superintendent
of Sunday School**

Tijuan Neal, II



First Baptist Church Maddoxtown

Rev. Dr. John Carroll Travis, Pastor

3439 Huffman Mill Pike, Lexington, KY 40511

(859) 299-4953

May 18, 2020

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen!

I trust and pray that all is well with everyone and want to take this opportunity to bring everyone up to speed considering the pandemic situation we are facing. It seems we are coming to the point in time where the anxiety, anxiousness, and restlessness of many people who are applying pressure on governmental officials to re-open the country to free movement, assembly, and business as usual. Many church pastors have jumped on the bandwagon as well because of the fear of membership abandonment, and the possibility and probability of their defection to other churches who have decided to re-open their doors for services. However, we are still not in usual times, and any premature assessments and assignments could be critical to the safety of everyone. It is, therefore, necessary that we all as disciples of Christ understand where I am as pastor in handling this issue.

In this matter, let us remember and abide by the biblical approach in thought and actions. The context is found in **1 Peter 2:13-25 (NET) (verses 13-17)**
¹³ Be subject to every human institution for the Lord's sake, whether to a king as supreme ¹⁴ or to governors as those he commissions to punish wrongdoers and praise those who do good. ¹⁵ For God wants you to silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good. ¹⁶ Live as free people, not using your freedom as a pretext for evil, but as God's slaves. ¹⁷ Honor all people, love your fellow Christians, fear God, honor the king.

Our governor, who truly has typified his Christian leadership as a testament to his faith, and is providing outstanding leadership during this pandemic, which is unrivaled in this country. Therefore, I am **NOT** in favor of re-opening our church for worship services of any kind until we see the pandemic numbers have declined and we are given a unanimous OK by our governor and the medical experts. There are many reasons why but most importantly, it is for our health. We have several members who have certain medical and

physical conditions, whom we will not put in jeopardy or harm's way just so we can re-enter for services just to satisfy our desires and suppress our fears.

Here is one of the main underlying issues, it is that of an ***asymptomatic carrier*** (healthy carrier or just carrier), which is a person or other organism that has become infected with a pathogen, but that displays no signs or symptoms. Although unaffected by the pathogen, carriers can transmit it to others or develop symptoms in later stages of the disease.

Yes, we know God can and will take care of us, however, God has also given us brains to use for the common good of all mankind. This pandemic has inconvenienced and disrupted the lives of everyone of us, however, it has also caused us all to reexamine our priorities and plans as Saints of God.

Therefore, I have formed a group of officers and members to have meetings to discuss our situation and make plans for re-entry in the church for services. Here are some questions we are discussing:

- "How will we do it?"
- "What will services look like?"
- "Since there will be a limited number of persons permitted to begin returning for service, who will that be, and how do we seat them according to CDC guidelines?"
- "Do we have one or multiply services during the day because of participant limitations?"
- "Will we be taking the temperature of everyone who enters the building before they will be allowed in?"
- "Since there can be no congregational singing, what will we do for music?"
- "How do we limit or keep people from gathering, touching, socializing while they are at church?"
- "How do we manage to clean the facility between and after services?"

These are just a few questions to address, and we have not even mentioned what it would take to have the building professionally cleaned to insure we have a jump-start on cleanliness.

Information will be forwarded to you before we plan our re-entry, so please be sure to check this information out when you receive it before you return to worship.

Know this as well, ***everyone who enters for worship or meetings must, must, must wear masks and gloves. If you are sick, have been sick, or***

have been exposed to someone who has been sick, you will not be permitted to enter for worship. Please ma'ams and sirs if you are not feeling well, please be respectful and stay home! Also, we will not be permitted to distribute food in the church building at this time.

We will come up with an overall plan to present to the entire membership. Your questions and concerns need to be submitted in writing and signed (so we will know who to speak with for clarification), to Sis. Mary Talbert so we can cover every base and answer every concern as best we can, and as fully as possible. Know this as well, once we as a ministry group makes the final decisions, it will be final, until we learn of new guidelines from the state!

Time will be of the essence, so it is vitally important that we get started on this ASAP, because it will be upon us before we know it. Once we have made the final decisions, it is also vital that we all support our efforts and not openly criticize our intentions to be efficient and safe stewards of the LORD.

Technically and realistically speaking, we will not be able to re-enter prior to July 5, 2020, and the attendance can only be 33% of our designated capacity. (that's about 40 people). That can be our initial target date, but at this point nothing is set in stone, because it will be determined by how this coronavirus pandemic has regressed and we as a ministry group proceeds and accomplishes what needs to be done prior to re-entry.

The bottom line is this, regardless as to what we think, like, or do, we must be ready to be efficient and expeditious in handling church business. One thing is for certain, we will never be able to “*do church*” the way we have always done it in the past! All of us will have to make adjustments for the betterment of our fellow worshippers. We as followers of Christ need to continue digging into the Word of God for His truth to share with His people. My aim is to be able to say that we: *2 Timothy 2:15 (NET) ¹⁵ Make every effort to present yourself before God as a proven worker who does not need to be ashamed, teaching the message of truth accurately.*

This has forced me to make some adjustments in preparation each week to make sound biblical presentations to not only Maddoxtown members, but to other folks as well. We have people watching our services in Georgetown, Louisville, Florence, Elsmere, and Burlington, in Kentucky. We also have person watching in Dallas and Odessa Texas, Maryland, New York, Illinois, Florida, Michigan. Who would have ever thought that would be the case for First Baptist Church Maddoxtown's worship and study of the Bible to be broadcasted throughout this country? *OH, WHAT A MIGHTY GOD WE WORSHIP!* He has placed all pastors, churches, large and small on the same

level in getting His Word out to the world! So, here is where you all as members come in:

- **WE NEED YOU** to continually be faithful in praying for the Word of God, the Worship of God, and the Welfare of God's people!
- **WE NEED YOU** to be watching, participating, supporting, encouraging, giving and when the time is right – attending. God has given us an opportunity to *reevaluate, reticulate, and recalculate* our devotion to Him.
- **WE NEED YOU** to be in prayer for our officers. They had begun some initial structural work in the sanctuary.

Please do not make the same mistake as many will, of not honoring God, and thereby taking Him for granted that He will just overlook how you have or have not been faithful in supporting the church you call your own! For God has commanded us in **Deuteronomy 6:5 (NET1)** ⁵ *You must love the LORD your God with your whole mind, your whole being, and all your strength.* The same is stated in **Mark 12:30 (NET)** ³⁰ *Love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul, with your whole mind, and with your whole strength.'*

Don't ever forget: **Romans 11:36 (NET)** ³⁶ *For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever! Amen.*

Be saved, sanctified, and safe! With much Love for you all,

Soli Deo Gloria!



Rev. Dr. John Carroll Travis, Pastor

First Baptist Church Maddoxtown

