

## NOTES FROM THE ARLINGTON DS – 6/9/2020

*<sup>9</sup> Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; <sup>10</sup> love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. <sup>11</sup> Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord.<sup>12</sup> Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. <sup>13</sup> Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.*

*(Romans 12:9-13, NRSV)*

### **1. NEW UPDATES:**

- a. **June 28<sup>th</sup> sermon:** In hopes that it gives you a rest of some kind, we will do a **second District-led worship service**, minus the music, for June 28<sup>th</sup> or later. Here are the details:
  - i. Scripture: John 21:15-19 (note, not the lectionary for that day)
  - ii. Title: “Barbecue Redemption” – focus will be on Jesus’ redemption of Peter’s denial and note that I will be touching on redemption around the issue of racism as an example, in hopes that this too will be helpful to you.
  - iii. Elements will be provided in a DropBox, as we did last time:
    1. Opening/Call to Worship combination
    2. Stewardship moment
    3. Scripture reading
    4. Sermon
    5. Benediction
    6. Transcript of all for those who worship in a different language and need to translate
- b. **Handbook Changes: Let’s be honest – at this point, it’s almost impossible to keep up.** As churches in less viral areas open for in-person worship, they are changing the handbook because of what they are learning, and it is happening almost daily. Let’s try and make this easier for all:
  - i. IF you **desire to pioneer worship 25 people or less indoors, or do a drive-in**, let’s talk, and look at those portions of the book only.
  - ii. **We hope to be in Stage 2 around June 21<sup>st</sup>** with the rest of the conference, but we may be delayed – be patient! (see Romans 12:12 above!) The virus, as we have said a few times, is not on any known timeline. (see my notes below on current new infection status)
  - iii. **This week watch for a new outdoor worship (not cars!)** that may work for many of our churches – maybe for a one-off service this summer? It will come with Stage 2, but it will allow ½ of the capacity of your indoor sanctuary to be involved – separated, masked, etc. but that’s potentially a lot of people. Remember – NOT YET – Stage 2, wait for the specifics.
  - iv. **Weddings, funerals, missional projects, food ministry, Bible studies:** These are, right now, Stage 1, so - indoors less than 10 people, outdoors less than 10 people, all safety precautions, but no age limits. **Use your Healthy Church Team** to set your context’s boundaries and safety needs – not much is mentioned in the handbook of non-worship groups.

1. Stage 2 –moves to 25 people. All precautions, no limits on age groups.
  - v. **Daycare/Child care:** First – check with me before anything opens. DSS has just issued new guidelines allowing larger groups of children in a room, so this may appeal to ministries and renters who couldn't make it work at 2/8 ratio's. Safe sanctuaries still apply! And PRESCHOOLS – limited age groups, limited hours – are not to open, even if renters, until Stage 2.
  - vi. **Marches/Prayer Vigils, etc.:** We are encouraging these to be online, because when we tell people that they should join us, and a group grows larger than the 10 person limit, or 25 at Stage 2 – then what do we do? Do we tell them to go home? Marches especially are increasing the number of new infections across the US; we will be keeping an eye on this as it develops.
  - vii. **The first rule of thumb before you do any of this – Check in with me and your HCT.** Let's talk it through.
  - c. **Change in the average number of newly reported cases over the past 14 days:** Fairfax is showing signs of good decreases, and Arlington even more days of decrease. Loudoun is lagging – still showing some increases. **We are looking for solid decreases to move into Stage 2.**
  - d. **Questions about any of this? Send me an email, ask me, I'll do the best I can to get you a quick answer.**
2. **REMINDERS:**
- a. **A continued thanks to those who are continuing to pay their apportionments.** If your church has received PPP, and if your giving continues online at a good pace, **it would be appreciated if you could restart your apportionment giving if it has lagged.** When we each pay our apportioned share of connectional ministries, we remain vital as a District, Conference, and Denomination, continuing to serve each other in so many ways!
  - b. Get your **clergy evaluations and parsonage reviews in by June 20<sup>th</sup>!**
  - c. The clergy ZOOM call continues –Please join us at 3:00 p.m. on Thursday!
    - i. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/434526053?pwd=WTlyMDFlaHlreVRwelpyR1dRRnM0dz09>
    - ii. Password: ARClergy
3. **Resources:**
- a. Cynthia Lopynski from our office is offering mystery worshipers for your online services – contact her at [CynthiaLopynski@vaumc.org](mailto:CynthiaLopynski@vaumc.org)
  - b. Kim Johnson continues to do digital communications consultations – <https://calendly.com/kimjohnson-vaumc/church-communications-consultation>
  - c. <https://novaumc.org/covid-19/>
  - d. <https://vaumc.org/>

***Stay Calm, Stay Connected, Stay the Course!***

***Sarah***