Dear Faith Family,

The daylight hours are growing shorter, the temperatures are dropping, the Santa Ana winds are coming, and rain is on the way. The change of the season will impact our Sunday morning worship gatherings. We are so thankful for a completed patio where we have been able to accommodate all who desire to gather on Sunday mornings, but it does not provide a suitable environment for worship when the elements are extreme.

Meeting outdoors has allowed us to honor our governing authorities (Romans 13:1) while also fulfilling our God-given mandate to gather together for worship (Hebrews 10:24-25). But what are we to do when the weather does not allow us to meet outdoors? The Elders have determined that under such circumstances we will go inside for our Worship Gathering.

Here are the details of our plan:

Our default position, weather permitting, is to continue our outdoor services at 10am on the patio.

We will shift to meet inside the sanctuary if one or more of the following is true:

- The forecasted temperature during our regularly-scheduled Sunday Worship Gathering is below 55 degrees,
- Winds are gusting at more than 20 mph,
- The chance of rain is 75% or more likely during our regularly-scheduled Sunday Worship Gathering as of Saturday evening, or
- Rain is actively falling before or during our regularly-scheduled Sunday Worship Gathering.

Indoor Gathering expectations will include:
- Online Pre-registration,
- Face Coverings for ages 2 and over (unless medically-directed otherwise), and
- Physical Distancing.
- If a shift to meeting inside the Sanctuary occurs, we will post the details on the front page of our website by Saturday at 7pm and send out a church-wide e-mail.
- Please note that this plan is only applicable to our Sunday Worship Gatherings.
The Elders have arrived at this position because we believe in the importance of meeting together. It grieved us to offer only online streaming services back in the Spring when COVID-19 restrictions began, but we were given a timeframe for the Order (4 weeks) and a reason for the Order (to flatten the curve). None of us knew much about the Coronavirus at that point, and it seemed wise to follow the guidelines. Yet much has changed since that time. The virus, while deadly (we don’t want to make light of the many who have passed away), has not been as rampant in its effects as was originally thought. We are in a current pattern where there is no end date in sight to our current restrictions. We have grown to appreciate just how essential it is that we gather together each week, especially during challenging times such as these. So, while following the guidelines will be our default, if weather makes it impossible to effectively gather together on Sunday morning, we feel compelled to meet together, nonetheless, in order to stir one another up to love and good works and encourage one another (cf. Heb 10:24).

We understand that not all will agree with our decision. We are not making these decisions lightly; we know we will give an account before the Lord for each one of them. We make this decision because we believe it is the best balance between the commands of Scripture (Hebrews 10:25 & Romans 13:1) and best for our church family. Yet, we also know that we are not infallible.

We welcome your questions and feedback. We also welcome you to use our live-stream service if your conscience does not allow you to join us indoors. There will be no judgment from us.

This has been a crazy year. We are seeking to be both faithful and flexible. We sure covet your prayers. The line between faithful and flexible can often be unclear. But we believe that our God freely gives wisdom to those who ask (James 1:5). We need His wisdom more than ever!

May we all take comfort from these words of Jesus, “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20b).

Counting it all joy,
Your Elder Team