



Sammamish  
Presbyterian  
Church

22522 NE Inglewood Hill Road  
Sammamish, WA 98074  
425.868.5186  
mainoffice@spconline.org  
www.spconline.org

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Dear SPC Family,

*“Rejoice in hope, be patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.” –Romans 12:12*

As many of you have heard, President Trump addressed the nation yesterday deeming churches “essential services” and allowing them to open their doors to services immediately, regardless of state mandates. While we wholeheartedly agree that the church and worship (in particular) are essential in our lives and yearn to be back together again in person, we want you to know some of our guiding principles that we, the Session of SPC, are using to make these important decisions and why we will continue to operate remotely as a church family into the near future.

1. **We believe that while the church building may be closed, the church is never really closed.** God cannot be contained, and the Holy Spirit is alive and well and working through SPC even now. We are so blessed to live in a time where we can gather remotely online. Whether it is worship, Zoom Bible studies, Youth Group Instagram Live events, or small group meet ups and prayer meetings, the Holy Spirit continues to move, join, and link us together, regardless of physical proximity (II Chronicles 2:6).
2. **We believe in protecting the vulnerable.** The top scientists and disease control experts tell us the best way to stop the spread of this virus is to avoid face to face contact with others in close proximity, with the most vulnerable populations (the elderly and immune compromised) being the most at risk. Because we are commanded in Scripture to protect those most vulnerable (see James 1:27) and believe that God gives us collective wisdom for our good, we are cautious in our approach and seek to listen to the experts in their field.
3. **We believe in being good community members and citizens.** Romans 13:1 reminds us of our call as Christians to obey our local government officials. As of now, Governor Inslee has banned the meetings of groups of people, as he reopens Washington State in a slow, phased approach. While we believe that God is our ultimate authority, we believe in being good neighbors, citizens, and team players with our greater community.
4. **We believe in listening to our spiritual leaders and mentors.** While SPC is an individual body of believers, we are part of a much bigger family of faith that includes Christians all over the Sammamish Plateau as well as Presbyterians around the nation. None of these wise, discerning bodies that we are a part of agree that this is the best time to open our doors, for the reasons listed above. We will continue to be in contact with and discern our path forward from like-minded Christians who surround us.

As your Session, we continue to monitor the ever-changing landscape, collect information, and debate on our path forward as a church during this pandemic. As the State relaxes the restrictions, we will continue to discuss, plan, and communicate with our SPC family regarding our way forward to gradually, safely, opening up our doors. We continue to invest in our physical plant, like getting new carpet in our Sanctuary Hall (you will love it!), building a new Get Connected Center for visitors, and upgrading our A/V equipment to enhance both the in-person and virtual worship experience, looking forward to the day when we will joyfully enter it together again. Most of all, we continue to *be the church God created us to be*; A Christ-Centered, Mission Minded Family, serving the Sammamish Plateau and our world with intelligence, imagination and love. That truth and calling will never change.

As your Session, we are praying for you, and promise to keep you posted on our progress. Please join us in praying for wisdom, guidance, safety for the vulnerable, healing, and most of all Christian unity in the midst of this challenging season.

Faithfully,

The Session of SPC

A Christ Centered, Mission Minded Family