



Irvington Presbyterian Church

Fremont, CA

June, 2020

Preparation for In Person Worship

The following reasons delineated in a letter to the congregation on June 5, outline why we are not yet returning to in person worship in the sanctuary.

First, our motivation for this decision is based on LOVE and FAITH.

1 Corinthians 16:14, "Do everything out of love!"

We ask "What is best for the people we love and serve?"

Psalms 31:15, "You are my God and my times are in your hands!"

We trust God's timing is perfect and patiently wait on him.

Second, IPC has never been "closed" during these past 11 weeks! We have regular weekly on line worship, we continue to serve our guests a hot breakfast Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. We stay in touch with one another regularly. The church is a *family*. We are a *people*, not a building!

Third, over the years IPC has created a culture of generosity that gives our church financial stability and strength. Our healthy savings will help us through this pandemic. Your extraordinary generosity in giving while we shelter in place not only shows the maturity of your discipleship and your strong loyalty to our fellowship, it allows us to care for some who have lost their jobs, and it allows us to wait patiently for the right time to reopen Sunday services.

Fourth, we have already decided that our FIRST STEP back to reopening worship services will be on a gradual and limited scale. This is done so that we observe all the protocols we have put in place, in preparation for a return to gathering for service and activities.

Fifth, the Mandarin Ministry continues to support the Mandarin speaking community. This is a new Worshiping Community that serves the local Mandarin speaking. Their online service is reaching Christians and non-Christians including several in Mainland China.

Sixth, Farmington, our community garden, and the Labyrinth give others an opportunity to go outside and participate in activities that help them focus and relax. Practicing social distancing, and wearing masks, we have created a safe place outdoors where we can be apart but together.

Seventh, there is no doubt that some small churches with 50 or so people attending will be able to open sooner than IPC. We do not resent this. In fact, we will rejoice that sister churches will be able to open even while we wait for our time!. These other churches do not have all of the advantages that we have for weathering this pandemic; our capabilities for online services; our financial strength that support a staff to keep serving you; and our ongoing ministries that continue serving many in the community.

Eight, there are three other churches and several community groups that use the facilities throughout the week, and we must plan for their safe return as well. IPC is home to over 250 Christians worshipping on a Sunday. We want a safe environment for these worshipers. During the week, several groups use the buildings for activities. We want theirs to be safe as well!

We pray that our Town Hall Meeting on July 12, will provide clarity on how we proceed.

WORSHIP MINISTRY

Virtual worship continues to be a blessing to our congregation as Worship Ministry looks for more innovative ways to continually improve our Sunday presentation. God has provided additional resources to us. We welcomed Elder Elaine to the audio/visual team. She volunteered her video making, filming and other technical skills in helping to prepare the virtual presentation each Sunday. We have also been blessed with the preaching talents of Pastor Ken Jacobsen who provides varying perspectives of Sunday sermon subjects. On Pentecost he preached: "Are we just studying Christianity or are we practicing it?" He challenged us to practice what we read and study in the Bible. Pastor Ken is scheduled to preach again on June 28.

Most importantly, our congregation continues to be grateful for a chance to worship together as a family. In addition, Sunday virtual worship offers us the opportunity to share the word of Christ in our community and also around the world. God has blessed us with an average of 45 worshipers and visitors who attend our virtual worship each Sunday.

After overwhelming requests, announcements in worship resumed. Elder Mustapha is once again keeping us informed weekly on what is happening in the church, community and ministries. Elders Kelvin and Kamron are working with the young families to encourage participation of the youth in worship including video scripture reading and participation in special celebrations for Mother's Day, Father's Day and July Fourth. Pastor Ed is also working to help our singers overcome the technical and practice challenges. The goal is to get a maximum of our volunteer singers to participate in preparation for a virtual worship choir.

To honor and express our love for Mothers, each of the ladies in the congregation received a bag containing a corsage to wear during Sunday worship and beyond, a greeting card and sweet treats. Masks donated by the Fule Church were also included in the gift bag. Family Ministries presented video performances by the youth and children. On the Sunday before Memorial Day, the men, sung in harmony, a medley sing-along of patriotic songs with the congregation joining in. We are especially thankful for the spirit and energy God provided these volunteer singers and Judy, who provided piano accompaniment. They worked together to keep this IPC tradition alive, even during the restrictions of social distancing and sheltering in place.

"We recognize **Juneteenth**, the anniversary of the end of slavery on June 19, 1865. Our church family stands with our black brothers and sisters in solemnly remembering the racial injustices of our country's past and the injustices that still exist today. As Christ followers, God commands us to seek justice for every human being, as we are all created in his image. We invite you to continue praying with us for justice, reconciliation, and healing across our nation." Worship Ministry will explore ways to make our Sunday service more inclusive and reflective of our diverse community"..

There are two easy ways to join us for worship

On Line Services 10:30 am on Sunday

<https://zoom.us/j/9970411553>

<https://irvingtonpres.org/sermons/>

<https://www.facebook.com/irvingtonpres>

Service on Demand

Watch anytime:

<https://irvingtonpres.org/sermons/>

SESSION NEWS & NOTES

Pastor Ed opened the May meeting praying for God to illuminate our hearts and minds as we come together to work and address issues in His name during this uncertain and difficult period.

In his report Pastor indicated that Pastor's fund received \$1K from Presbytery to support congregants in need. On line worship is time consuming and most of the "kinks" are now worked out. There is good support from the AV team and the Communications Elder that helps to get everything ready for Sunday morning.

With the minutes of the April meeting approved, Clerk provided a short summary of the 1st Presbytery zoom meeting on May 12. There were over 170 attendees. With the number of churches experiencing financial difficulties during this pandemic, Presbytery has stepped in to provide financial assistance. More than \$1.4M have been earmarked for church support.

Fule Church received \$25K from the NWC and is expecting another \$25K as a matching grant from the Presbytery. Because of COVID-19, their plans to begin an after school program is now on hold. With the funding that Fule Church received, a motion from Finance to end financial support to this ministry was approved.

Buildings and Grounds presented a concept of a multiple use building on campus for which there was no support. With the number of vehicles parked on campus overnight, Finance requested B&G come up with a plan to address. Although the churches are not using the campus they continue to help by paying one-half of their lease obligations for April and May and is expected to continue through June. A specific question about Child Leap payments showed that they paid \$1050 in May and we expect another two months of rent in June. The total of these payments will cover the period from October to December of 2019.

Finance reported that donations were returning to normal and because of a one time donation in March, the operating fund donation is ahead of plan. Donating on line will change from "We Pay" to the Presbyterian Foundation that is easier to manage and the fee charges are minimal.

Communications Elder Elaine reiterated that she is available to help the ministries. She will address Elder Ron's request to update the staff and add a short introduction to the session members on the website.

Elder Kelvin indicated that Family Ministry is looking into having support/resources for church families during this time. The kids are being included in worship so as to maintain their interest in the church.

Pastor reminded everyone that we each have a finite group of members we need to keep in contact with and pray for. Elder Kamron suggested that when we contact members, we inquire if they need help in any way. In addition, there are resources like the City of Fremont five dinners for \$20, Gurdwara Sahib Temple would bring a bag of food to the elderly; and Outreach Ministries would also deliver weekly brown bag with food.

Pastor indicated that the information he sent on returning to the sanctuary is very crude and he will filter it down to something more cohesive. B&G Elder volunteered to help with the return to sanctuary worship plan.

Finance believed that the Presbytery's proposed COVID funding may not be applicable because IPC is financially sound. We are not yet using reserves and, therefore, may not qualify based on the guidelines that were sent with the application. Clerk mentioned that it is still appropriate to apply because he feels that the churches in the Presbytery that have saved for a rainy day, should not be penalized. Finance would prepare a January-April finance summary that will be submitted to the grant committee.

Pastor Ed introduced the Team to the concept of "[Pray for the People](#)". Session members were encouraged to lift up those in the congregation who needed help and support. There is a great need to care and comfort members of the congregation and the community during the current pandemic and shelter in place.

As he closed the meeting, Pastor Ed prayed that God would continue to lead us in these times of uncertainty, continue to guide us, be our shepherd and lead us to green pastures.

News from the Field

During this pandemic we asked you to write and let us know how you were doing. Your responses were overwhelmingly heartwarming. Your church family who prays for you and with you were thankful to hear that you are coping and safe. Here are more excerpts, printed with your permission.

Thank you so much for sending Cornerstone each month. I so much enjoy keeping up on the goings on at IPC and you make that possible for me. Thank you, thank you and thank you again! Things are continuing on just fine here. I continue to be well, content and happy here, although we are right now under some restrictions because of the pandemic but we know that will eventually pass and things we will be back to normal eventually. It's that old thing called Patience that is always needed!

I trust you have stayed well and away from the pandemic bugs. So far in the facility here where I live we have no ill people for which we are very grateful. In an advanced age facility like this one, one sick person could cause a real disaster. Confinement to our rooms is a real pain but we endure and will survive! At least we are allowed to go outside for a walk if we wish. I've been managing both a morning and an afternoon walk and find that very satisfying. I've been attending and have joined a small Presbyterian Church in Aptos. It is very much like IPC but with a bit more age discrepancy than IPC. It is a very nice group of people, friendly and kind and who love the Lord. We have a female pastor whom I like a lot. She's very down to earth, friendly, well trained in the Scriptures and a better than average preacher. So I'm a happy camper! I haven't participated in anything other than Sunday Worship simply because of the transportation problem. I will be happy when we can get back to corporate Worship again.

Mary Ellen McKowen

Greetings to all,

I am thankful to God that both my family is safe. Because of the online technology, I am able to keep up some of my engagement and commitment. But more importantly, while I am "keeping busy", God has allowed me to reflect upon Him.

Show Time

Much of what I do is to teach and prepare students for an eventual performance. Lesson plans, rehearsal scheduling, backstage and front stage detail are part of my routines and usually well under control. I strive to achieve the desired expressive execution at the precise measures. But with COVID-19, my routines most likely will not result as planned. Just now I was replying an email from a student questioning about the practical value of continuous practice and asking for my lead. My reply? It's God's turn, He will lead and we will improvise. To improvise, we have to know the rules from the teachings well. The key ingredients are preparedness, alertness, stay in harmony with God and to His tempo. We will see greatness beyond our expectation. Yes, it is God's show time now!

Judy Lam

*News from the Field***THE FLASH: RANCHO SANTA MARTA UPDATE**

Worship together during Easter service at the ranch.

**Happy Easter He is Risen!**

Happy Easter! One of the benefits of living at the ranch during this pandemic is that we are all quarantining together and so we can also still gather and worship together. We had our Easter service yesterday and it was nice! We do miss the visitors from town and of course the work groups that come in to join us in our worship, but we are thankful that we are still able to sing and listen to His word together on Sundays. Cariño, Julia and Rocio organized our annual Easter egg hunt with our kids. Anytime candy is involved the kids are raring to go and this was the case as they raced off to look for the hidden eggs. Enjoy the videos and pictures!

We have not experienced any virus cases in our area, but we continue to be vigilant and careful. Looks like the school systems in our area will be closed until the beginning of May and possibly longer depending how the virus spreads in Baja California.

Thank you for your prayers. Rod and Tina

We are all well at this time and grateful. So far the virus hasn't hit our small town and is just beginning to come alive in the city of Ensenada 75 miles North of us. We continue to pray for the Angel's hedge around the home to protect the staff and children. We are on lockdown right now, so our school has moved to on-line education. This way helps to keep the illness outside of the home.

We appreciate your prayers for two things:

1. Health and safety for our 80 residents in the ranch.
2. Finances.

Blessings,

Bill and Kaye Lawrence

Thanks everyone for the Easter eggs. Carol and I have been joining you for sermons. I deleted Zoom after reading two articles reporting that Zoom had, by mistake, been routing traffic through their BigcountryC servers. There are things going on in countryC as you know.

David Chow

I am doing good. Enjoy watching church services on you tube but I miss my church family. Thanks for God's blessings. I am ok.

Jean 🌹

Thank you.
Trust that you are safe and well.

Grace and peace,
Sung Kim

CONGREGATION NEWS

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Kamroon Baksh	Peggy Handono
Betty Berger	Carole Ann Kinslow
Harry Berkheimer	Prem Neerukonda
Alexis DiMaggio	Theo Pex
Theodore Fong	Shannon Sandy
Nicholas Fong	Judith Solomon

TOWN HALL MEETING

Mark you calendars!

There will be a Town Hall Meeting via zoom on **Sunday July 12**, immediately after worship.

This meeting will be in place of the weekly fellowship hour. The main discussion topic will be IPC returning to in person worship.

Many of you have responded to the plan that was distributed on June 6. If you have not already responded, we need to hear from you. Your input is significant as we discern how and when we return to sanctuary worship.

You may access the meeting via:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9970411553>

Your Input is Needed

Many of you have responded to the information "Preparation for In Person Worship at IPC", thank you.

If you have not yet done so we encourage you to read the documents and respond. We will refer to your input during our planned Town Hall Meeting on July 12.

This year's Per Capita amount is \$38.00 per member. This amount goes to help pay for the operations of the Presbyterian Church USA, at our national level (General Assembly), the regional level (Synod of the Pacific) and the area level (Presbytery of San Francisco). We would appreciate your making a contribution in the amount shown for each member of your family.



Please mark your check or envelope "Per Capita" and mail to the church office. Thanks



Please Note: June 27 is the deadline for our July issue.

All articles are to be delivered by email to: kandmbaksh@gmail.com. Cornerstone is the medium to keep your current and past congregation members informed of all the activities and events at IPC. Your timely submissions are important to everyone.

ACTIVITIES UPDATE

R O M E O

Join the men fellowship now on Zoom for open discussions.

Date: Wednesdays

Time: 8:30 am

Location: Via zoom

Bring your coffee and breakfast too.



One Great Hour of Sharing

The One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is an opportunity for us to participate by giving our gifts and supporting the good work that the Offering does. Today, projects supported by OGHS are in more



SHARING RESOURCES CHANGING LIVES www.onegreathourofsharing.org

than 100 countries, including the United States and Canada.

Each gift to One Great Hour of Sharing supports efforts to relieve hunger through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, promote development through the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People, and assist in areas of disaster

through Presbyterian Disaster Assistance.

During this time of crisis, with the COVID-19, we are reminded that the most vulnerable in our midst suffer first, most and longest. One Great Hour of Sharing has, for over 70 years, supported the most vulnerable among us.

Your giving to this ministry will allow IPC to deepen its commitment to serve the community.

Mark your checks One Great Hour of Sharing and mail to the office or go online to give.

Outreach Ministries

Farmington, our Community Garden celebrates its first year in existence. What a journey!

Because of COVID-19 and the many restrictions implemented to prevent the spread of the virus, we got a late start for our planting season. However, our Community Garden is growing with eggplant, corn, tomatoes, peppers, zucchini, cucumbers herbs and first time gardeners. There are seedlings ready for transplanting. Planter boxes filled with soil and with readily available water are available for you to work with your hands and feel physically connected to the earth. A few bean plants planted by Joe DiMaggio have been regularly providing delicious golden wax beans.



Plans for Farmington this year will be to cover the area behind Classroom 8 with wood chips and make the area a place where Farmingtonians can meet. There will be tables and chairs as well as a storage room for Farmington tools.

The Saturday Bible Class that was suspended in March will resume when it is safe for us to do so.

Join in on Saturday mornings and be part of this rewarding ministry.

ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Mother's Day at IPC

In keeping with another one of our traditions, Deacons made corsages that were delivered to all the women in the congregation on Saturday May 9. Included in the delivery were a Mother's Day card, two masks and treats. We trust that all the ladies enjoyed their special delivery.

Thank you for helping to continue traditions during worship service on Sunday May 12.

Fathers Day Celebration

In keeping with another IPC tradition, Worship Ministry prepared and delivered a package of Strawberry Cheesecake cookies, a Father's Day Card and two Fellowship Cups prefilled wafer and juice to all the men in the congregation.

All men are encouraged to wear Hawaiian shirts to worship on Sunday June 21.

Fourth of July Celebration

This year, on **Saturday July 4**, Worship Ministry is planning a Drive Thru Picnic in the IPC parking lot beginning at **11:30 am**. **All are invited**. We will serve hamburgers, hot dogs and corn all prepared by your very own IPC Chefs. Sign up by calling 510 579 3694 or the church office, and let us know how many in your party will attend. We need a count to prepare for everyone. Bottled water will be provided.

The Plan: You will drive into the parking lot and follow the instructions of the volunteers wearing reflective vests. You are requested to wear your masks and stay in your vehicle. The food will be brought to you. There will be a tent where you may receive communion or have one of our Pastors pray for you and with you while you stay in your vehicle. We have painted circles on the lawn where you and your family may enjoy your picnic lunch while observing social distancing.

Drive Thru Food Pantry

Outreach Ministries is sponsoring a Drive Thru Food Pantry and all are invited!

Where: **IPC Parking Lot**

When: **Every Saturday Beginning July 11.**

Time: **9:30 - 11:30 am**

Food items include: Bread, cakes and canned goods