

First News

March 3, 2021



The Post-Pandemic Road (part 1)

by Randy Shepley

I want to thank you, church family, for the speed and generosity you have shown in collecting 2 ounce bottles of hand sanitizer at the request of Yates Elementary School. Our goal was to collect 375 bottles of sanitizer and as of Tuesday, March 2, we have collected 499 bottles! We made our goal in less than nine days! If you have already ordered hand sanitizer or are planning to do so, do not worry! We will give the extra bottles to another NNPS school. Thank you for being a statement of loving generosity as teachers, students, and parents start facing the post-pandemic future.

Speaking of the post-pandemic future, I am excited we are returning to in-person worship this Sunday. We will wear masks, practice physical distancing, hum rather than sing, and follow the rest of our COVID 19 protocols, but this first stage of return to in-person worship has me hopeful for new in-person phases in the near future. Keep a watch on First News as our FBCNN post-pandemic road unfolds and join us this Sunday in-person or online as Pastor Michael Adams brings our message.

Our staff and lay leaders are putting significant time into what the post-pandemic future of the church looks like. We are not alone. Pastors, denominational leaders, strategists, religious educators, seminary professors, and church leadership consultants are spending considerable energy researching what the post-pandemic road will look like for churches. Of course, no one knows exactly, and every church



Lenten Journeys

During the season of Lent we remember the hopelessness and futility of life without Christ. Truly, "we are dust and to dust we shall return."

Lent is often known as a time of fasting in which we give up something good to taste life's bitterness. Yet Lent is also a journey as we see Jesus demonstrate true faithfulness on the road to Jerusalem and the cross. This journey is one in which we are all invited into. It is only in this journey to the cross will we find the life and redemption of Easter.

For the six weeks of Lent, join our ministers each Wednesday at 7 PM as we discuss a spiritual practice for the week. Meeting on Zoom, we will spend 30 minutes learning a new practice and sharing our stories and experiences from the previous session. Together we will explore what it means to be faithful and human during these times. Just follow the Zoom link below. I hope you will join us on the road.

is different. However, there are trends emerging across the research that I would like to share with you over my next couple of articles.

This week, I will reference the article Five Ways the Church Will Look Different after COVID by Thom Rainer. For years, Rainer was the president of Lifeway Christian Resources and has spent decades as a church consultant. In this article, Rainer talks about a "post-place" world after COVID, a world where people spend less time in the office, theaters, gyms, and even stores as we do more things at home and online. As you would expect, this shift has serious implications for congregations and church buildings. Among other ideas, Rainer suggests the following:

1. The church will become a destination place for many for gathering: In other words, persons comfortable going to church will be eager to get back into buildings and onto church property. In fact, our staff and leaders are already preparing for how we can take advantage of the coming Spring weather to get back and gather safely for re-connection!
2. Neighborhood churches will become more important: Since home has become even more central to our identity, churches will meet more in homes and people interested in church will be more apt to go to churches close to home.
3. Fewer small groups will meet in church facilities in the future: This had already started before COVID, increased during COVID, and will accelerate post-COVID. People will meet in classes and small groups outside of church buildings more and more. One of the biggest reasons is that unchurched people are not comfortable in church buildings!
4. Churches have the chance to be a post-place option in the community: Rainer writes: "Really, most churches have too much space." We like many other churches, will have the opportunity to share our facilities with the community, for the good of the kingdom of God.
5. Churches will be built dramatically different [sic] in the future: "Worship centers will be smaller. Some churches will build a facility specifically designed to be shared with members of the community. Education buildings will almost disappear."

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94585114534?pwd=Tnc3QnFIV3pyL1BTRTdNejVrODVUUT09>

Meeting ID: 945 8511 4534

Passcode: 252385

Thank you!



We have collected over 499 bottles of hand sanitizer for Yates Elementary School. Thank you so much for your generosity and helping the children and school staff in our community stay safe as they have returned to the school building.

Weekly Worship Opportunities

Join us for worship in person or online March 7 at 8:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.! Michael Adams will be preaching. If you have any technical difficulties watching the service on Facebook Live, please send us a direct message on Facebook so we can help troubleshoot the issue.

The following is a list of weekly events that can be accessed on the First Baptist Church of Newport News Facebook page, youth events that can be accessed on their Instagram page-@fbcnnyouth, and young adult events that meet using Zoom. The 8:30 and 10:30 Sunday worship services are uploaded to our [website](#) each Monday, and can be accessed by clicking on the Resources tab.

Sundays

8:30 a.m. Traditional Worship

9:30 a.m. Youth Sunday Bible Study

Rainer makes the point that in the post-pandemic world, people will want to re-gather but the church building will not house as many gatherings unless the church opens itself to the community. Interesting and enlightening thoughts.... I am reminded of a dream from our Vision Discernment Report from October 2017:

We share our facilities generously with the community and position hosts at these community events in our space who radiate the hospitality of Christ. Policies, procedures and costs are developed to encourage community use of our facilities (30).

Could it be that God has been making our church ready for such a time as this? Can our post-pandemic road lead us to greater participation in the transformation of our city under the love and grace of God? I am praying so! Please join me!

Pastor Randy

Outside Work Day

March 20

9 AM



Join us for a fun day of spreading mulch! OK, spreading mulch might not be so fun, but we can use your help in freshening up our flower beds with a new layer of mulch.

Please bring a wheelbarrow, pitchfork, shovel, gloves and whatever else you can use to help. We hope to get this done in one day, so please mark your calendar and come out to help!

Rain date: March 27

9:30 a.m. Children's Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Pre-K & Kindergarten S.S.
10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship
12:30 p.m. Hispanic Worship

Mondays

7:00 p.m. Young Single Adults

Tuesdays

7:30 p.m. Young Adult Couples

[FBCNN Facebook Live Videos](#)

If you missed Sunday's service and do not have a Facebook account, you can click [here for 8:30](#) or [here for 10:30](#) to watch it on our Vimeo page.

Red Cross Blood Drive

April 15 1:30-6PM

Payne Fellowship Hall

Thank you to everyone who helped out with today's blood drive by praying, donating, and volunteering. Mark your calendars for our next blood drive! Help the Red Cross help others by supporting in one of three ways:

1-Donate blood. You can sign up online by clicking [here](#) or calling 1-800-Red-Cross and let them know you would like to donate at First Baptist Church Newport News on April 15. All donors will receive a COVID antibody test and the results will be emailed to them within 2 days.

2-Be one of two volunteers needed from our church to sign in and register donors as they arrive. You can sign up to volunteer by clicking the link above or calling 1-800-Red-Cross.

3-Pray for those volunteering, donating, and receiving.

Their goal is to receive 30 successful collections. Let's help them reach that goal!

With Heartfelt *Sympathy*

Sympathy is extended to the family of Phyllis Walton who passed away February 20. Please keep her grandson, Jerry Lee Walton, and their family in your prayers.

Sympathy is extended to the family of Bob Porterfield who passed away February 24. Please keep his wife, Julia, daughter, Nikki Reid, and their family in your prayers.

Make a financial contribution to FBCNN today by clicking on the link below.

DONATE

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