

Skyline Family,

The Skyline Pandemic Team met this past Tuesday and, as we promised, we're keeping you up to date on where we are. I'll simply read the statement.

We have been meeting regularly to mainly discuss the "reopening" of our facility for worship here at Skyline. We maintained that worshiping in an environment that required certain levels of social distancing and keeping the environment as sterile as possible was not conducive for our church family and the way we worship. We love each other. We love seeing each other. We love being together. We love singing and praying together. The original guidelines for reopening church buildings did not fit our worship style and preference. As a group, we 100% felt that encouraging our family to meet in small groups was more beneficial than coming to a facility where we could not hug or talk or congregate. When we thought of what we missed about worship, the social aspect was number one on everyone's list. That's who we are.

As a team, we have recognized all along that we have family members who fall on both sides of certain issues the pandemic has created, and there are those who fall everywhere along the line. We are aware that there are those of our number who do not feel safe coming back to worship here and may not for quite some time. We have family members who are on the most at-risk spectrum who, quite honestly, should not return to corporate worship just yet. And on the other side of the coin, we have family members who question if the quarantine was ever really even necessary. We've had the task of taking all those opinions and doing what we felt was best at the time, with the information we had available. We want to respect where everyone is on the issue. We did not want to shame anyone or make anyone feel slighted. We did not want to rush back to corporate worship just to be back in a building. We are not united by a building. We are a family. We are Skyline Church of Christ, and we are Spirit-led, Spirit-driven and Spirit-filled. We are bonded as sons and daughters of the King not by proximity, as Cory mentioned last week, but by the Spirit of the Living God. It's this God we worship, whether we're in the same room or not.

Having said that, we have all been longing for the time when we would reunite as a family in worship together. The team made a recommendation to the eldership to meet back together beginning Sunday, July 5, and that recommendation was approved. Right now, we are focused on Sunday morning worship, and being back in our facility together. This will not happen all at once. This is going to be a process. We are sensitive to those who don't feel safe coming back, and those who just choose to remain doing what we're currently doing. We will continue to stream our worship online. In fact, Sam and Cory are putting together a better way to do that. Our streaming worship will be a higher quality, so as to best serve those who either don't feel safe or simply just cannot return to worship right now. If you are in the high at-risk group, we ask that you exercise excellent judgment. That's the key to all of this. We are leaving it up to you as adults to make the decision that's best for you and your family. We trust your judgment.

So, let me reiterate. Our plan is to return to live corporate worship right here in the Skyline worship center, on July 5. We will have a section in the worship center designated for those who want to return to worship, but do not feel safe doing so without socially distancing and wearing a mask. We are asking families to sit together and observe and respect everyone's wishes in regard to social distancing. As for the worship itself, we're not requiring masks. We are not mandating social distancing, except for the designated section. We will have protocol in place for those who want to be here and take those precautions, and we will honor your request. We will have signage and ushers directing traffic, and plenty of hand sanitizer available. We have discussed at great length the idea of socially distancing and requiring everyone to wear masks, and we have felt all along that we were better off doing small groups

and worshiping at home than sitting in a room with no social interaction before, after or during service. So, this is where we are.

Keep in mind that this is a fluid situation, and we will continue monitoring and meeting. We will continue to update you on where we are. We hope you understand the difficulty in making and prolonging this decision and hope you will pray for God's wisdom in making all decisions. We are in a situation we never imagined and simply cannot navigate through our human wisdom. We have relied on God and His Spirit to lead us to make the best decisions for this family as we take initial steps to reunite. Please continue to pray for your elders and the pandemic team, and if you have any questions or concerns, please contact leadership directly. We will be more than happy to discuss. We love you, Skyline Family, and we will continue to listen to God's voice as He directs us.

Eric Petty
Lead Minister
Skyline Church of Christ