

## Letter #17 regarding COVID-19 – Pastor Nate Phillips

June 22, 2020

Dear Kirk family and friends,

Yesterday, our new executive pastor, Rev. Dr. Ed Brandt, continued in our Book of Life sermon series by reflecting on the story of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar and how a 'crisis of faith' is a chapter in almost any life of faith. We are learning more about that every day, aren't we?



It almost feels like the year 2020 was put on the calendar in order to test our faith! Like Pastor Ed notes, this has been a time to echo the words of Jesus on the cross, the ones he recited from Psalm 22, "my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

But then Ed reminded us of what scripture assures us,

"When our world falls apart, God's world is holding us together."

I hope that we are bearing witness to how God's world is holding us together.



God was present with our youth pastor, Rev. Alex Kim, when he delivered care packages to the homes of our confirmands and graduates. By making this effort, Alex was joining God's work of holding our young people together with their church.

God is present with children in Pontiac, holding them together, as they are separated from their schools and friends. Beyond the provision of regular weekly meals organized by our church's outreach efforts, we are helping to make God known to the children by donating 17 refurbished computers to students that did not have one. We were able to partner with Multiply Technology, a tech company based in Indiana, that offered reduced-priced refurbished computers to non-profit organizations.



People continue to respond to the ways that God is holding us together. I have received so many notes of gratitude from all over the world, people thanking us for our dedication to offering online worship. In addition, new members are joining our church! On Sunday, July 12, we will celebrate confirmation Sunday and we are also seeing people join our Kirk FAM (from-home affiliate membership) and traditional membership. We look forward to welcoming eight new members on Sunday, July 26! We are thinking about how to accommodate those who want to be held together in baptism and communion

and we look forward to offering the sacraments in *socially distant* ways in the next month or so.

Finally, God will be holding us together as we add to our Sunday morning worship menu this week, June 28. We are very glad to be able to continue offering our 9:15 a.m. prerecorded service and 11:00 a.m. radio broadcast while also opening the Garden



Service at 10:00 a.m. This service is by registration only and we have a variety of protocols in place in order to keep folks safe while on campus. The Garden Service will also be broadcast via radio on FM 88.7 to cars parked in our lower east lot for those who want to be physically present, but don't feel comfortable with any kind of crowd. Please watch this video to get a taste of how the service will go.

Registration for the Garden Service opens every Monday at 9:00 a.m. and closes every Friday at 5:00 p.m. Please be sure to register ASAP if you would like to attend this Sunday!

Stay warm!

Pastor Nate