



July 16, 2020

Dear Church Family –

In response to new government parameters, **Redemption Hill Church is suspending indoor worship services for an indefinite season and we are shifting our focus to “Worship Outside the Walls.”** We will continue to gather weekly on campus for outdoor services (beginning July 19) and on-line for live-stream services.

Right after Peter reaffirms his commitment, Jesus warns him that disciples don’t just sign up for the easy stuff—sometimes following Jesus takes us where we wouldn’t choose.

“...you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.” (This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.)

John 21:18

When Governor Newsom called for indoor worship to be suspended it was natural to respond, “Ugh! I didn’t sign up for this! Let me off the roller-coaster.” But if we take God’s sovereignty seriously we need to realign our hearts for a different response, something like, “Ugh! This is hard God—but I did sign up for it. Help me respond so that you will be glorified.”

After time for prayer, our overseers met on Monday to discern what God wants for Redemption Hill Church. The primary question was, “Can we follow the State and honor God, or are these in conflict?” This new parameter is different than the last one. It does not seek to restrict any form of worship—it just asks us to move outside. Seeing no conflict between obeying God and government, we agreed to suspend indoor services and focus on worship outside the walls.

Beginning this Sunday, July 19, we will have a service at 9:00 a.m. on our lawn. We will also continue our live-streamed service from the worship center at 10:00 a.m. The live streamed service will include our regular worship teams and preaching, but **the only audience will be on-line.** Both services will have the same preaching. The other elements will be similar, but

adjusted for their setting. Please participate in the service that is most appropriate for you and your family.

A link for the online service is included [HERE](#).

On the lawn, we will continue to observe safety protocols. Please be sure to wear your mask whenever you are unable to maintain proper social distancing. Because we are singing, please keep increased social distancing of 12' during the service. There is no attendance restriction so you do not need to sign up in advance. A small number of chairs will be set up on the patio adjacent to the lawn in case you have mobility challenges. **Everyone else should bring their own chairs or blankets to sit on. Be sure to arrive a few minutes early, dress comfortably for outdoors, and bring whatever else is helpful for your family (sunscreen, hats, water bottles, etc.).** If you want shade, come early and sit under the trees along Bogardus. If you bring a pop-up or beach umbrella please sit in the back (along Russell) and be careful not to block anyone's view.

We are a gathering, worshipping community on a mission with Jesus. Comfortable seats and climate controlled rooms are nice, but are not essential. Giving up a little comfort can sometimes open new doors. Many will rightly continue to worship online. However, our new outdoor service allows for more of our family to gather at once. Because of this we will observe **communion at 9:00 a.m., Sunday, July 26**—the first time we have been able to do so in months! Also, as we gather weekly with obvious joy in worship and obvious care for health, our neighbors may recognize our love for God and our community and be open in new ways.

Several years ago, I worshipped with a vibrant group of Masai believers in Kenya. Outside their worship center was a tree they spoke of with holy reverence. About 20 years prior, a few people began to gather for worship under that tree. From that humble outdoor worship service, God did a mighty work that launched some 30 churches filled with thousands of new believers! God does not need a building to do his work. By his grace, this Sunday, we will worship outside the walls as we gather online, and at least some of us under the trees on campus. We do not know all that he intends, but we are praying that he will use these unprecedented times to do something great for his name. Please join us in this prayer!

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out to any of your overseers.

For the leadership team,

Pastor Robert