

March 17, 2020



8320 5 Mile Rd, Mecosta, MI 49332

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Dear friend,

You are receiving this letter to give you a heads up in case you have not already heard of the response of Sylvester Community Church to this unprecedented season we are presently in. You are a part of our precious church family and we love you!

As concerns increase this week surrounding the Coronavirus (COVID-19), we are committed to doing whatever we can to provide a safe environment for you and your family. While we live in a rural setting and do not have the same issues that the cities have the hard reality is that there is the potential spread of COVID-19 in our area. We love our community and we want to help keep everyone safe. While God has not given us a spirit of fear, He has called us to love our neighbors and to contribute to the welfare of our community. Exercising caution is not merely wise, but is a tangible way of expressing love toward others. To that end, in an attempt to help with slowing down the spread of the Coronavirus within our own community, Sylvester Community Church will be supporting online live streaming of our church services in the season ahead with church members worshipping online. While our church building will be closed our hearts will not. While we do *not* want to spread the virus, we *do* want to spread hope, peace and joy!

You are welcome to join us in this virtual church which we hope will be temporary. We encourage you to worship at home with your family, and, if you choose to invite or join with a friend, or a neighbor exercise social distancing cautions. In a time of uncertainty and fear, we can be a light of gospel hope. For those of you needing help to connect to our website and watch a service, please call or email us to let us know and we will help you!

Moving in this direction has been a difficult decision for us, but we have been guided by two principles: (1) honoring our governing officials, who have urged extreme caution, and (2) loving our neighbors, many of whom, like the elderly or those with prior medical conditions, are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. We will continue to assess the situation and update you via the church website accordingly.

Other gatherings and events outside of Sunday morning services have all been postponed or canceled for the present. This does not stop you from calling each other on the phone and reaching out to fellowship in other ways! Please continue to exercise common sense health hygiene and social distancing as prescribed by CDC and which can be found on our website and as follows:

- Wash your hands often by washing them with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60%–95% alcohol immediately after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- Sneeze or cough into the crook of your elbow or a tissue, not your hand. Wash immediately after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose.
- Avoid touching your face, especially your mouth, nose and eyes, with unwashed hands.
- Regularly disinfect surfaces frequently touched e.g. keyboards, and door knobs.
- Avoid close contact with someone who is sick and stay home if you are sick.
- Practice these precautionary measures at home and pass this information along to family and friends.
- Limit movement within the community and travel.

We have a special responsibility to care for our fellow church family and neighbors in the community. When we are prepared, we are in a better position to help others. Get the facts and restate them accurately. Our greatest enemy right now is not the virus itself, but fear, rumors and stigma. We encourage you to take this unprecedented season as a time of opportunity from the Lord to love one another in new ways, to reach out to those in fear and bring them peace and hope. Pray for each other and please do pray for the leadership of Sylvester of Community Church – we love you and want to help you navigate through this season with wisdom and peace only found in the Lord Jesus Christ. None of this took God by surprise and He is allowing it to help us both grow in Him and help others.

If you have any prayer needs or would like to join us online on a Sunday morning 10am, please visit us at [www.sylvestercommunitychurch.com](http://www.sylvestercommunitychurch.com). Communication is challenging and knowing what is really happening is equally challenging. We encourage you to visit this website often to get updates as needed but more importantly please let us know if you have a personal need such as groceries, or prayer support. We care deeply for each of our church family and do not want anyone falling through the cracks in what has become a challenging time of need. We are here to help!

This is our opportunity to shine with the love and hope only found in Jesus Christ and together we will!

*“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”*

~ Romans 5:13 ~

Pastor Simon Endacott

and the leadership of Sylvester Community Church