



UNIVERSITY REFORMED CHURCH
Glorifying Christ. Growing in Grace

June 11, 2020

Dear URC Family,

As your pastor, and at the risk of sounding paternalistic, I could not be prouder of you than I am. It has been a long stretch. Yet your patience, love for one another, continued support of URC, ardent faithfulness to Christ in your homes, and the honor you have shown to the elders over these past months has shown brightly. With Paul, I can say, "I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers" (Eph. 1:16).

I am delighted that this Sunday we return to in-person corporate worship services! As you know, we will host five services spread throughout the day to minimize the number of individuals in the sanctuary. We believe it is time to gather back together and that we can do so with reasonable safety, neighborly love, and honorably.

Why is this important? Because Christians worship. That is what we do. It is on the Lord's Day, in the Lord's house, with the Lord's people, as we meet with the Lord, that we find our greatest delight. This serves as the high-point of each week. That is why, for many of us (if not all of us), the great personal loss over these past weeks has been our inability to meet together. But we return this week.

For those returning this week, our fellowship promises to be sweet with one another and the Lord. What a delight it will be to greet friends again, hear familiar voices lifted up in song, see covenant children sitting in the pews, and enjoy godly conversations after the services. Of course, not all will be identical to what we experienced before the pandemic. We will need continued patience but much, if not most things, will remain the same. We will hear the Word, preach the Word, sing the Word, confess the Word, and see the Word (next week). My prayer and expectation is that the Lord will minister in and through us in such a way that any anxieties or distractions in the present will quickly fade. It will be good to be back together as a local church family! That may be the understatement of the season.

For those unable to return this week or possibly for some time to come, you will be missed. We will continue to stream the 10:00 a.m. service, so all can participate in worship. I once again want to communicate that it is understandable why some can't come right now and even wise for some of our members not to do so. If you fall into that category, please know that your brothers and sisters grieve with you, because there is loss. Our fellowship will remain incomplete until we are all back together; and we look forward to that day with great anticipation. But let us also make it clear, in another sense our fellowship can never be disrupted. We remain united at all times by the same Spirit, under the same Lord, and by our common commitment and vows to one another. So, though you will be missed, you remain united with your church family.

For the entire body of URC, keep loving one another well. In these tense societal times, fuses can be too short, opinions too quick, voices too strong, and motives too readily judged. Let's keep loving one another well by extending grace and the benefit of the doubt as we consider others better than ourselves and keep our eyes fixed upon Jesus.

He is what we need. We all need Christ, His Word, His Spirit, and not least of all, His bride. Let's keep seeking Him and loving one another as we go prayerfully forward "glorifying Christ and growing in grace."

By His Grace,

Pastor Jason Helopoulos