



Staying Connected and Growing Stronger

by Pastor Bill

Recently I read a comment from someone who was, as many of us are, upset that the churches couldn't meet for worship. In her frustration, she wrote something that saddened me. She said that, as a result of the churches being closed, "Christians are wilting." While I know that not being able to meet together as a church is not ideal, it also shouldn't have that strong of an effect on our personal relationship with God. Attending church can help us grow in Christ (and it should), but it must not become our only source of growth.

Throughout history, God's people have experienced political mandates to cease meeting together, or worse. Daniel couldn't even pray in his own home without the authorities being. The disciples and the early Christians were kicked out of their churches (the synagogues) and persecuted for their beliefs. Even in modern times, there are countries in which people cannot openly worship God and are imprisoned if caught! Yet, none of these circumstances weakened their faith, it made it *stronger*.

Yes, we are living in some crazy times. Most of us have never experienced anything like this. And it is easy to become discouraged and even fearful as we experience the strange events happening all around us. But we cannot let this make us wilt. Let us pray more, read our Bibles more, share Jesus with others even more (from a safe distance, of course). Besides, what if this is a practice round for the End Times? Can our relationship with God survive without going church? It has to! The church will not always be here for us. It is my prayer that not only can our relationship with God survive, but that during these times, it will grow even stronger!

Still, it will be a wonderful day when we are able to meet together again in one place to worship God. Until social distancing restrictions are lessened, we will have to wait. In the meantime, we are using online platforms to stay connected. Here are a few things we are doing.

We are streaming an abbreviated church service at

10:50 am, Sabbath mornings, through our church website: www.abqcentral.org/abq-central-live. If by some chance, you are not able to watch the service at that time, a recording of the service will be saved online at www.vimeo.com/abqcentral

We are also holding our regularly scheduled prayer meetings on Wednesday (at 11:30 am and 7 pm) through a program called **Zoom**. These meetings require a code and a password to get into though, so if you would like to join us, send a request to our church secretary at abqcentral@gmail.com.

If you are wondering what to do with your tithes and offerings, here are a few ways you can continue to give. You can pay online, through our church website (www.abqcentral.org – click on "Online Giving"). You can also drop off your tithe envelopes at the church on Wednesdays or you can mail them to the church: 2201 Estancia Dr NW, Albuquerque, NM, 87120.

Throughout these difficult times, we want to stay connected and continue to minister to each one of you. We also know that some of these things do not meet your needs. **So if there is another way in which we may be able to help you, please email our communications secretary at abqcentral_communications@outlook.com**, and let us know how we can serve you.

– Pastor Bill



Online Worship Service: Saturdays@ 11:00am

Please join us!! abqcentral.org

24 Hour Prayer Line: (505) 836-1480

Bible Verses for Comfort and Peace ~ Study at Home Opportunity



Psalm 37:3

John 14:27



Psalm 121:7

Proverbs 3:6



Hello Central Church Family!

May God continue to bless you as we learn how to remain connected during this time of social distancing. Times may be challenging for you and your friends/family, but remember it's all about perspective. As Ramesses knows all too well, things could be far worse. 😊

And while I am in no way trying to make light of anyone's situation who might be dealing with COVID-19, it is a reminder that our Lord, who loves us so much that He sent His Son to die for us, has seen humanity endure much, much worse, and He will see us through this difficult time as well.

I pray that you and yours are well and happy. And I also hope that you enjoy this newsletter. Above all, we can be confident that our Loving Father is always faithful to stay beside us and carry us through the most difficult of times. "So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic... For the LORD your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you." (Deuteronomy 31:6) Amen!

And one of the best ways to experience God's Love for each of us is to see/feel it through interactions with our church family. So this newsletter is part of a larger effort by the church leadership to help maintain/re-establish connections among the Central congregation. It is meant to be both informational and inspirational. Another way to experience God's Love is to reach out and do something for others. It does not have to be a huge effort or big project, but just doing something opens the way for God's Love to flow to us and through us. And so, the leaders at Central want you to know that we are still fulfilling our roles and participating in our designated ministries. If you have any questions regarding a specific ministry, please contact that leader directly.

Finally, we want to be sure that everyone in the Central family has a handy resource for questions and needs you may have, and we hope this newsletter helps to do that. As the Sabbath School Superintendent, I want all members to be aware of the resources available to you to continue your Sabbath School studies at home. The good news is that many of our quarterlies and other resources are available through the internet.

Sabbath school resources for Adults, Youth, and Cradle Roll, including the Adult and Youth Mission Stories, are available online. Links to all of them can be found on our church website. Look under the Ministries pull-down tab, and go to Adult Sabbath School for links to the Adult and Youth resources.

Go to the Children's Ministries page, and find links to the Cradle Roll And Children's Mission Stories. In addition, there is also a link to an online lesson and activity page called "A Place To Do Something," sponsored by My Bible First.

For Kindergarten, Primary, and Junior/Earliten, we mailed complete sets of lessons for the next quarter to parents.

If you have any questions about Sabbath School, please contact me via email (stevecinnm@gmail.com) or call my cell (505.321.6377).

God Bless You, and stay safe!
Steve Conyne

Ramesses watching you complain about just one plague:



ONE VERY RECENT SABBATH AFTERNOON I WAS VISITED BY A CHURCH MEMBER AND TWO OF HER GRANDCHILDREN. THEY BROUGHT ME OVER SOME SUGAR COOKIES AND MUFFINS. WE PRACTICED SOCIAL DISTANCING THEY STAYED BY THEIR CAR AND LEFT THE GOODIES BY MY DOOR. ONE OF THE GRANDCHILDREN HAD A SIGN THAT SAID **ISAIAH 41:10** ON IT: *SO DO NOT FEAR, FOR I AM WITH YOU, DO NOT BE DISMAYED, FOR I AM YOUR GOD, I WILL STRENGTHEN YOU AND HELP YOU; I WILL UPHOLD YOU WITH MY RIGHTEOUS RIGHT HAND.* THE OTHER GRANDCHILD HAD A SIGN THAT SAID "**HAPPY SABBATH**" ON IT.

SUCH A SIMPLE GESTURE, IT MADE MY DAY! I KNOW THAT THIS CHURCH MEMBER WAS GOING TO GO TO SOME OTHER CHURCH MEMBERS AND GIVE THEM THE SAME GIFT-LOVE. WE MIGHT NOT LIKE WHAT IS HAPPENING MUCH, BUT IT IS GIVING US AN OPPORTUNITY TO CARE FOR PEOPLE, TO TELL THEM WE ARE THINKING ABOUT THEM, AND GET A CHANCE TO SEE THEM IN A SAFE WAY. TRY TO FIND A WAY YOU CAN DO THAT TOO. GOD IS REACHING DOWN AND HOLDING OUR HAND, LETS DO THE SAME.

GOD BLESS,
JOHNNY
MATA

