



FIRST BAPTIST JENKS

“Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.” – 1 Peter 5:7

Church Family,

We truly are in the midst of unprecedented times for our church, our community, our state, our nation and our world. Never before have we seen the levels of safety being urged by the CDC and government, the panic and chaos at supermarkets and stores and the precautions being taken by schools and our community. It is because of this I am reminded about the vision God gave me when I first became the pastor at First Baptist Jenks. I wanted to create a safe place for people to belong to a family who worships together, learns together and grows together to become more like Christ. We do this through living out our mission statement, “Connecting people to God, others, and God’s mission.” I believe to do that requires me to be the shepherd God has called me to be.

“The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.” – 1 Peter 5:1-4.

A shepherd must make the wisest possible decisions for his sheep. Shepherds must act with wisdom in the midst of fear and uncertainty, be willing to make decisions that affect more than just themselves and they must be willing to lay their lives down for their sheep. This means laying aside even the things they may want to see happen. They become the voice of peace when everything around screams fear.

Through much prayer and seeking God’s wisdom, it is in peace (not fear) I have made the decision to cancel all events church wide *effective immediately*. This includes ALL our worship services this coming Sunday, small groups, classes, Wednesday night activities, Community Preschool and any and all use of the gym, fellowship hall and our facility. We will evaluate this situation on a week to week basis, listen to the governing authorities that have been placed above us (Romans 13) and will resume activities as soon as we feel we can do so in wisdom and safety for our church family.

I know this may come as a shock to some and a comfort to others, but I want to write about that last part for just a moment. Family. One of the things we are known for is how relational our church is. How it feels like home when you walk into our gatherings and how we are a church family not just a group of people who attend church together. We are a family. We will continue to be a family through this time and here is how:

Starting this Sunday at 10:00 a.m., you can watch our Sunday morning worship service on [Facebook.com/FBCJenks](https://www.facebook.com/FBCJenks) with a time of worship and a message from Pastor Nate as we continue in 1 Peter. Please note this is a public page and you do not need to have a Facebook account to watch. Additionally, our staff is also working diligently to provide resources to supplement at home discipleship for all ages, birth-high school, as well as deepening personal study time and even working on a small group model if needed for a longer time frame.

Our church office will continue to remain open to offer help, support and encouragement to our church family. We will increase our focus on our benevolence ministries and our partnerships with the Jenks Food Bank, Jenks Care Point, Isaiah 58, etc. We want to encourage our members to help out our Primetimers, especially widows and widowers, who may need assistance getting groceries, prescriptions, etc. If you have a need, contact our church office or our staff, we are here to help.

It is because of those ministries we encourage you to continue to give. We encourage you to continue to be faithful in this way as you have been for so long. If you have not set up online giving, please visit <https://www.fbcjenks.org/giving-options/>

This is an opportunity to make an impact for the Kingdom like none we have ever had before. We can show the world we live in hope, peace, and trust in God. We have been called to steward our lives well. Jesus in Matthew 25:29 says this, *"To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away."* This comes from the parable of the talents. We have all been given a life. To some we have been given more, more money, more resources, more energy, more health. The question is, what will we do with what we have been given? Will we be like the servant who worked diligently and multiplied his master's investment or out of fear and trembling will we be like the servant who buried his talent in the sand?

Church family, we are not called to live in fear but in faith. We live in wisdom. We live in peace in the midst of fear. This is a time of prayer. Pray that God would guide us, our church, our community, our nation and our world through this unknown. We need to step into moments where we can be light in the darkness and peace in the midst of chaos. We won't stop being relational just because we can't meet together for our gathering on Sunday. We don't stop being a church just because those meetings cease. Our church isn't just about those gatherings. Our church is a family. We are a family and will continue to be a family.

Holding the Rope Together,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick & Sue".

Pastor Rick