

Gathering with Believers ... Why? Romans 15:1-7

I am SO EXCITED about us resuming our gathering together NEXT SUNDAY!

Let me tell you that temporarily suspending our services was a difficult choice...

But choosing who, when, and how we resume our gathering together has been equally difficult!

Without making any excuses, let me show you a picture of a facebook post a friend of mine posted recently...

→ CV-19 Pic 1



→ CV-19 Pic 2



We need to open the church building! I need to be there and see everyone! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR!?!

→ CV-19 Pic 3



You can't open the church building yet! It is a huge health risk!! You are wrong if you do!

→ CV-19 Pic 4



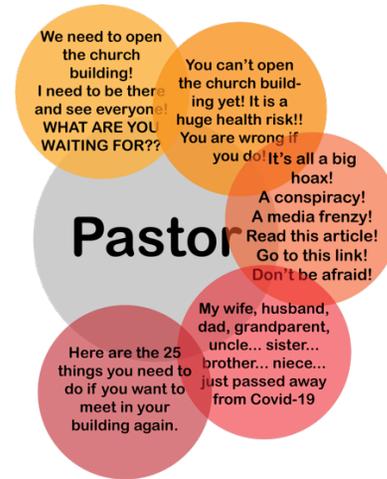
It's all a big hoax! A conspiracy! A media frenzy! Read this article! Go to this link! Don't be afraid!

→ CV-19 Pic 5



My wife, husband, dad, grandparent, uncle... sister... brother... niece... just passed away from Covid-19

→ CV-19 Pic 6



Here are the 25 things you need to do if you want to meet in your building

→ CV-19 Pic 7



My family is going to stay home for awhile before coming back. Sorry we just can't be there

→ CV-19 Pic 8



Don't ever open the building again! Home is so much better!

NOTE: Everyone has an opinion and that's good!

So, WHO, WHEN, & HOW are we going to resume our gatherings...

So, first of all, WHO should attend when we resume next week?

→ The WHO

For those who are high risk, sick, have had a fever in the past 48 hours, or are caring for a COVID-19 person, we ask you to PLEASE STAY AT HOME!

→ The WHEN

We are adjusting our service times to 9:00 & 11:00 in order to allow us enough time between services to deep clean

Beginning next Sunday, June 7th we will be offering four different worship opportunities at TWO TIMES

- 1. We are going to continue offering all our online worship***
- 2. Worship in the Worship Center (with physical distancing between family units)***
- 3. Family-friendly worship in the Venue***

Because we are not having preschool or children's activities beginning at this time we wanted to offer a place for families to worship together...

There will be live worship along with a message from one of our pastors that will be similar to the message in the Worship Center

This service will be 45 minutes in length...

- 4. Mask only designated area where the service will be projected on a large screen***

→ The HOW

With SOCIAL DISTANCING because of continued health precautions still in effect, there are TWO additional adjustments we are making in order to resume our gatherings...

Go to our website – Crossgates.org...

→ NOTE – Registration opens TOMORROW, Monday, June 1st at 12:00 NOON...

SUNDAY MORNING ENCOUNTER FOR 6/7/20

9 AM ON-CAMPUS FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORSHIP ENCOUNTER | THE VENUE
 We will begin our first, family-friendly service on Sunday at 9 AM instead of 9:30 AM in order to give us plenty of time to clean and sanitize each seat that someone sat in during the previous service. Thanks for your understanding and patients during this Re-Start Phase of returning for On-Campus Services. Reservations Left: 100 [SELECT](#)

11 AM ON-CAMPUS FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORSHIP ENCOUNTER | THE VENUE
 We will begin our second, family-friendly service on Sunday at 11 AM instead of 10:30 AM in order to give us plenty of time to clean and sanitize each seat that someone sat in during the previous service. Thanks for your understanding and patients during this Re-Start Phase of returning for On-Campus Services. Reservations Left: 100 [SELECT](#)

9 AM ON-CAMPUS MASK-REQUIRED WORSHIP ENCOUNTER | FELLOWSHIP HALL
 We will begin our first, mask-required service on Sunday at 9 AM in order to give us plenty of time to clean and sanitize each seat that someone sat in during the previous service. Thanks for your understanding and patients during this Re-Start Phase of returning for On-Campus Services. Reservations Left: 40 [SELECT](#)

11 AM ON-CAMPUS MASK-REQUIRED WORSHIP ENCOUNTER | FELLOWSHIP HALL
 We will begin our second, mask-required service on Sunday at 11 AM instead of 10:30 AM in order to give us plenty of time to clean and sanitize each seat that someone sat in during the previous service. Thanks for your understanding and patients during this Re-Start Phase of returning for On-Campus Services. Reservations Left: 40 [SELECT](#)

9 AM ON-CAMPUS WORSHIP ENCOUNTER | WORSHIP CENTER
 We will begin our first service on Sunday at 9 AM instead of 9:30 AM in order to give us plenty of time to clean and sanitize each seat that someone sat in during the previous service. Thanks for your understanding and patients during this Re-Start Phase of returning for On-Campus Services. Reservations Left: 300 [SELECT](#)

11 AM ON-CAMPUS WORSHIP ENCOUNTER | WORSHIP CENTER
 We will begin our second service on Sunday at 11 AM instead of 10:30 AM in order to give us plenty of time to clean and sanitize each seat that someone sat in during the previous service. Thanks for your understanding and patients during this Re-Start Phase of returning for On-Campus Services. Reservations Left: 300 [SELECT](#)



SAVE-A-SEAT
 Locations >> Events >> Save-A-Seat >> Reservation

CROSSGATES BAPTIST CHURCH
 9 AM ON-CAMPUS FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORSHIP ENCOUNTER | THE VENUE
 SUNDAY MORNING ENCOUNTER FOR 6/7/20
 Reservations Left: 100

First Name: Last Name:

Email Address:

How many Seats would you like to reserve?
 Adults: Children:

Are you a Member of Crossgates Baptist Church?
 Yes No

[RESERVE SEAT!](#)

→ NOTE – Registration opens TOMORROW, Monday, June 1st at 12:00 NOON...

→ NOTE – You will need to register EACH WEEK ←

It is going to be different, but that's OK

Well, we have answered the WHO, WHEN, & HOW questions, but that leaves one more question...

WHY?

The BIG QUESTION... Why should I come to Church?

It's not easy gathering together as the body of Christ for worship...

- We all have our likes and dislikes...
- We all have our opinions and ideas...
- We all have our quirks and habits...
- We all have our weaknesses and blindspots...



SAVE-A-SEAT
 Locations >> Events >> Save-A-Seat >> Reservation

CROSSGATES BAPTIST CHURCH
 9 AM ON-CAMPUS FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORSHIP ENCOUNTER | THE VENUE
 SUNDAY MORNING ENCOUNTER FOR 6/7/20
 Reservations Left: 100

First Name: Last Name:

Email Address:

How many Seats would you like to reserve?
 Adults: Children:

Are you a Member of Crossgates Baptist Church?
 Yes No

[RESERVE SEAT!](#)

All these things make it hard sometimes to join together for worship...

Since we have been worshipping online, some may find it... well ... easier ... maybe even better...

I mean, there's no trying to impress or even look and act decent...

- **We can stay in our pajamas and worship!**
- **We can be on the back porch enjoying the outdoors and worship!**
- **We can be in our cars on the way to the beach and worship!**

So, again, the question arises... Why should I come to Church?

So, why now do I believe it is so important for us to resume gathering?

As I said at the beginning of all this... Temporarily suspending our gathering together at church was one of the toughest decisions I have had to make as a pastor...

Similarly, resuming our gatherings as this time is another difficult decision...

- **When is best?**
- **How do we open safely?**
- **Should we maintain physical distancing?**
- **Should we require masks?**
- **Should we ...**

First, why did we temporarily suspend gathering?

For the love of our neighbors and the sake of the Gospel!

Our key MISSION STATEMENT is

We make disciples by ... “Carrying the transforming love of Jesus to every longing heart.”

So, why do I believe it is so important for us to resume gathering?

ONE THING

Collectively we have an opportunity to bring God glory in ways we cannot do individually!

The letter to the Romans can be divided into two major sections...

Chapters 1-11 are focused primarily on Theology...

- **What we need to know and believe**

Chapters 12-16 are focused primarily on the Practical...

- **How we need to live**

Romans 12:1 (ESV) — I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

When we arrive at Chapter 15, Paul begins by telling us why we gather together as believers

Romans 15:1–7 (ESV) — We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

The KEY to this passage is verse 7

Romans 15:7 (ESV) — Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Romans 15:7 (NLT) — Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory.

ONE THING

Collectively we have an opportunity to bring God glory in ways we cannot do individually!

➤ **So, WHY DO WE NEED TO GATHER TOGETHER?**

1. We need each other for strength!

Romans 15:1–3 (ESV) — We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to

please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.”

Strong here is referring to strength of conviction

The weak is referring to the spiritually immature

Romans 15:1 (ESV) — We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

Every believer resides somewhere on the maturity/immaturity scale...

In areas where one is weak, another is strong...

Believers are not to live just to please themselves!

We must gather to build up one another!

Romans 15:2 (ESV) — Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

Hebrews 10:24–25 (ESV) — And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

As a believer, you have been gifted with gifts to be given to others...

1 Peter 4:10–11 (ESV) — As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God;

whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Our example in all this is Jesus!

Romans 15:3 (ESV) — For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.”

Did you listen to the words of the songs we sang today?

Redeemed by the Blood...

**“Not the same, I am changed,
Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.
By His grace, I am saved,
I’m His child forever I am!”**

His Mercy is More...

**“My sins they are many,
His mercy is more!”**

1 John 2:6 (NLT) — Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did.

BTW... when Jesus cleansed the Temple in John 2, the first part of Psalm 69:9 was quoted ...

Psalm 69:9 (ESV) — For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me.

Collectively we have an opportunity to bring God glory in ways we cannot do individually!

We are resuming our gathering together because...

1. We need each other for strength!

2. We need instruction from God’s Word for hope!

Romans 15:4 (ESV) — For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (ESV) — All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

The priority of the preacher...

Acts 6:4 (ESV) — But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.

Collectively we have an opportunity to bring God glory in ways we cannot do individually!

We are resuming our gathering together because...

1. We need each other for strength!

2. We need instruction from God's Word for hope!

3. We need the unity of the Spirit to glorify God!

Romans 15:5–6 (ESV) — May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The KEY WORD here is the very first word...

Romans 15:5–6 (ESV) — MAY the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another...

The word “MAY” means it's a POSSIBILITY not a CERTAINTY...

When we meet the conditions for unity, God will grant us harmony which will bring Him glory!

Romans 15:7 (NLT) — Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory.

Ephesians 4:3 (NLT) — Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.

Collectively we have an opportunity to bring God glory in ways we cannot do individually!

Gathering with Believers ... Why?
Romans 15:1-7

Collectively we have an opportunity to bring God glory in ways we cannot do individually!

- 1. We need each other for strength!***
- 2. We need instruction from God's Word for hope!***
- 3. We need the unity of the Spirit to glorify God!***

When we meet the conditions for unity, God will grant us harmony which will bring Him glory!