

Daily View

"But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today'" Hebrews 3:13

July 9, 2020

News, Notes & Opinion

Church News

From Mike McCollum: "My dad passed away peacefully... I know he is in the comfort of our loving Father. Thank you again for all the prayers on our behalf. It's so wonderful to have brothers and sisters in faith!

– Love to you all, Mike, Paula and all our family.

From Nita Sellgren: Beverly Vasquez, was admitted into Mercy Folsom (on Thursday). She has been diagnosed recently with atrial fibrillation, and has been being treated for that. She is in the Telemetry section of the hospital. I had to look it up, but, basically, it means they are keeping a close eye on her heart and are in a position to act quickly if necessary. She can only have one person visiting her which will be her daughter, Jeree. She is scheduled to be in hospital a couple of days at this point. She wanted all of you to know and would very much appreciate your prayers. I'm sure she would also appreciate cards as well.

Headlines

"Several California based Christian legal organizations say Governor Newsom's new ban on church singing isn't enforceable..." [7-8-20]

"Let me be clear, the state does not have the jurisdiction to ban houses of worship from singing praises to God" (Robert Tyler, Advocates for Faith & Freedom)... "So, mask-less BLM protests and Antifa riots (and looting) where people are definitely not social distancing and are chanting and shouting are permitted, while singing or chanting in church with a mask and social distancing are forbidden. Am I missing something here?" (Dean Broyles, president of the National Center for Law and Policy). Source: <https://tinyurl.com/y7lxub2p>

Also... everything I've read on the incidence of singing spreading the virus points to 3-4 choir practices, some as long as 2 1/2 hours, with choir members sitting inches apart from each other and, in the most notorious case, sharing snacks. This is a far cry from congregational singing with masks on sitting more than 6 feet apart. There is no data that what we are doing (even without masks) has ever resulted in one case of coronavirus. [dp]

Please read below the headline!

You are free, of course, to draw your own conclusions from what is being reported in the media, but the headlines on news sites or in social media do not tell the whole story and many misrepresent what is actually going on. So, read the entire article; look at the charts and data to see the basis for the claims that are made. Here are two examples that hit close to home:

"Doctors: Religious Services Are Among Highest Risk Activities"

If you look at the charts included under this headline, you'll find churches in the highest risk category. Look closely and you'll see it uses a church of "500+ worshippers" as an example with no reference to social distancing or other health policies. There is no hint of this in the headline. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/ydgs2dny>

"Churches... a Major Source of Coronavirus Cases." (NY Times)

"The virus has infiltrated Sunday services, church meetings and youth camps. More than 650 cases have been linked to reopened religious facilities." Am I missing something? **650 cases out of almost 3 million cases in the US is a "major source" of cases?** I'm not very good at math but I believe it's .000217%. So that should cause us to ask, "given all of the gatherings recently, including protests, peaceful and otherwise, why are churches being singled out as a 'major source of coronavirus cases'? Furthermore, without knowing what steps these churches took to prevent the spread, the "facts," as stated, are meaningless. Source: <https://tinyurl.com/y85p6jyx>

A Question and a Comment

It worth considering whether a governing body has the right to ban any biblically-authorized practice such as singing (see Ephesians 5:19). If it can ban singing, how about *preaching*? I don't usually lock on to slippery slope arguments but, in this case, there is reason to believe that if our freedom to exercise religion can be regulated, our freedom of (religious) speech could be in jeopardy as well. Both are first amendment rights. This is new; I'm not aware of any time in history when a church has been "ordered" to stop worshipping in some way.

Some talk about the "optics" of doing things that contradict the local authorities directions and I agree that's an important consideration. But that sword cuts two ways. What message are we sending – to our children, for example – when we blindly follow a governmental mandate? What if a governor told us we can no longer preach the gospel? No one can reasonably disagree that we would have to disobey that edict, even if they passed a law against it. That's *exactly* what the apostles did.

"So they called them and charged them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard." Acts 4:18-20

And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, saying, "We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us." But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men." Acts 5:27-29

Shouldn't these examples at least be considered when we are making decisions about whether to obey governmental authorities? If there's a difference, what is it exactly?

Having said all of this, the elders do not want to put anyone at risk. We are taking every reasonable step to lessen the chance of transmission of the virus as much as possible. We have our own "health and safety task force," and the deacons work very hard to make sure our policies are implemented. We are requiring masks, disinfecting between services and our HVAC system is a good one that exchanges the air every few minutes. Still, as long as there is a threat, we urge those who have an underlying health condition that puts them at greater risk – and even those who are just uncomfortable – to stay home and livestream the service on Sundays at 9:45. [[Live-Streaming: 9:45 AM Every Sunday](#)]