

“Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” — John 12:21

Welcome Visitors!

You are our honored guests and we are pleased that you have chosen to visit us today. Our goal is to do everything according to God's word, including respecting its silence. This is a church of Christ; we are not a denomination, not part of anything larger than this local church and we have no earthly “headquarters.” The six elders oversee this work and, ultimately, we answer only to Christ. The comments you hear today are primarily aimed at our own members, as we examine Scripture and seek to be built up in our faith in Christ. If you don't understand something, please do not hesitate to ask one of the elders. We welcome and appreciate your comments and questions on any issue and especially if you see or hear anything that you feel does not correspond to God's word. We are here to serve; please help us do that.

Please fill out a visitor's card and put it in the collection plate. Thank You

Schedule

The Lord's Day

Change

We will be meeting in homes today due to the Coronavirus situation. Please contact the deacon in charge of your group. Other classes will be held as scheduled unless otherwise notified.

2 PM Class at the Building
James (Room 13/14)

5 PM (building)
TBA

Weekly Young Adults' Class
Class at Posey's: 5 PM

Tuesday 10 AM
The Fruit of the Spirit

Wednesday, 7 PM
TBA

Men's Saturday Morning Meeting
7 AM, second Saturday of the month
(see Tyler Wade)

Information

Website & Online Presence

Visit our website at www.folsomchurch.com for updates and material on current and past classes, and recorded sermons and classes. You will also find a directory of churches on page one. If you are a member of the church here at Folsom, see one of the deacons or elders to inquire about access to the password -protected members section. Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/folsomchurch>

Classes & Home Studies

We have classes for children from 18 months and up. Please see the map in the hallway or ask any of the members which room is appropriate for you and/or your child. There are several Bible studies in progress on Sunday afternoon and evening. Check with David Posey if you have questions.

Restrooms

There are two sets of restrooms: one off the first hallway to the right of the lobby and another at the end of the first hallway to the left. Ask anyone and they'll be happy to point you in the right direction.

For Small Children

There is a special room for nursing mothers and a separate “cry room” at the rear of the auditorium. You enter them from the first hallway to the right, across from the restrooms.

View & Junior View

Be sure to pick up a copy of the View and Junior View; both are sent out weekly to our member list and hard copies are printed on Sundays and available in the foyer.

Our Unique Situation

We are facing a unique Lord's Day, at least for us here at Folsom. I have lived through many unusual, dangerous, and strange circumstances but I have never experienced a disruption of an assembly the way we are experiencing that this Sunday. And that includes several serious health scares, 9/11, the cold war that heated to a boiling point and other local and national crises.

On one Sunday in Manteca, we got to the building only to find that the door was padlocked because the owner made some renovations without bothering to get a permit. But that church, at that time, was not much bigger than the size of one our groups here at Folsom, so the whole was able to meet in a home.

Dealing with this in a congregation that averages over 300 in attendance creates some serious logistics issues. We chose the least risky plan that we felt we could get together in the shortest time. We can only say that because we have 24 outstanding men who serve as deacons here.

Let's come back to that word "risky." Our concern is based on the guidelines issued by the CDC and reiterated by the governor and the city of Folsom. You're probably familiar with these by now: (1) no more than 250 in attendance; (2) no more than 10 together who are in the high risk category (including those who are elderly); and (3) keeping a safe distance (6 ft) between each person (or family). In the short amount of time we had to decide, we didn't see any scenario that would ensure that we properly followed these guidelines. #2 was especially problematic.

A second risk factor we took into account was the possibility that the CDC could raise the level of caution further and, in fact, issue an edict making violation of any of these rules a crime. I'm not sure how they could enforce some of these, but that's beside the point. We are bound to obey government ordinances (Romans 13) so we would need to apply the rules as written. Even if we planned for 3 split services, that could be 100 in each service and we could foresee that being outlawed — and making sure there were not 10 high risk people in that number... you get the idea.

The deacons and elders will discuss this further, because we assume that the crisis will continue for at least 2-4 more weeks. The CDC rules, at least as presented by the governor and repeated by the city of Folsom, came out late last week and there was some confusion about whether it was a law or just suggestions. We should get some clarification on those guidelines this week and that will help.

We'll keep you posted.

Our Situation is Really *not* Unique

In trying to make plans for assembling this week, in these unusual circumstances, I couldn't help but think of the Day of Pentecost when thousands were baptized on one day and more afterwards (Acts 2:41; 4:4). What did *they* do about assembling on the Sundays that followed? They were all in one town, at least for awhile, with no building to meet in. What did they do?

I'm choosing to talk about this in our small group tomorrow. Acts 2:41-47 and 4:4, 32-37 is an exciting text. It seems we have the perfect opportunity to dive into this text and see what it was that prompted the "awe that came upon every soul..." (Acts 2:43) and caused believers to have everything in common, to sell their possessions and spend every day together (Acts 2:42, 4:4, 32-37). It definitely wasn't just a Sunday/Wednesday at the building thing.

You might consider using this text for your study or devotional on Sunday. If we all do that, we'll have something in common, along with the observance of the Lord's Supper.

— *dp*

dp

Should Christians Be Anxious About the Coronavirus?

MARCH 3, 2020 | TODD WAGNER

With the increasing coronavirus cases outside of China, many believers across the United States wonder how to respond to the increasing alarm. What would God have us do in the face of a growing international health crisis? Should our churches close their doors for fear of spreading illness? Should I take my kids out of school? Cancel travel plans?

How should we help a panicked world?

Remember What We Know

First, it's important to be reminded about what we already know. Worry is not our friend, and panic is not our way. Solomon reminds us, "If you faint in the day of adversity, your strength is small" (Prov. 24:10). May it never be said that God's people are governed more by fear than faith.

Corrie ten Boom, along with other faithful from among the nations, led courageously in the face of the Nazi fascism—a different form of deadly virus. And she reminds us, "Worry doesn't empty tomorrow of its sorrows, it empties today of its strength."

In times of crisis, the world needs steady people who are strengthened by God's grace and selfless by God's power. Worry accomplishes nothing except weakness of heart and head. It's been said that 90 percent of the things we worry or become panicked about never happen, and the other 10 percent are outside our control.

While we remain on alert against viruses of doctrine or disease, worrying won't change our circumstances or lower our chance of infection. It won't help us fight off illness or move us to action. Worrying about COVID-19 (or anything else) will only increase trouble. Rather than worrying and being anxious, Jesus calls us to respond with prayer and faith in him (Matt. 6:33-34; Phil. 4:6). We need not worry ultimately because we know the One who has defeated sin and death (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

Remind yourself continually: it takes the same amount of energy to worry as to pray. One leads to peace, the other to panic. Choose wisely.

Love Well and Trust Him

If God calls us to worry about anything, it's how to love people well. The psalmist encourages us, "Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness" (Ps. 37:3). Peter reminds us to press on in the midst of every evil. Whether persecutions or pandemics, we can trust in the Lord, knowing, "It is

better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil" (1 Pet. 3:17).

Worry is common to man. But God has called us to face troubles and threats with courage, leaning our weight on him.

Throughout history, Christians have often stood out because they were willing to help the sick even during plagues, pandemics, and persecutions. They loved people and weren't afraid of death because they understood that "to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). By stepping into the mess of sickness and disease, they were able to demonstrate their faith to a watching world. So, rather than just asking "How do I stay healthy?" perhaps we should be also ask "How can I help the sick?" Let's be quick to help and slow to hide in basements.

Prayer-infused confidence, compassion, and selflessness should mark how we talk about the coronavirus. Why? Because our Savior put on flesh (John 1:14) and stepped into our sickness, sin, and death. He healed the sick and cared for the hurting. We must do likewise.

We Can Be Careful, Too

None of this means we should be reckless. Neither Christ's love nor God's Word encourages careless risks, but both promote obedience. Loving the sick doesn't mean we intentionally infect ourselves (Prov. 22:3). If infection becomes a legitimate risk (at the moment, the Center for Disease Control says the virus isn't communally spreading in the United States, and the health risk is low), responding to the coronavirus likely means taking small practical steps like washing our hands and staying home if we're sick.

Finally, as you watch the world react to this crisis—itsself a stark reminder of our mortality—don't neglect to share the hope you have in Jesus (1 Pet. 3:15). Share how he rescued you from the universal epidemic of sin and the penalty of death. Share that your hope is not found in remaining healthy this side of heaven.

We'll all face death eventually. Thanks to Jesus, we can come to that day with confidence. Like Paul, we can remember that to live is Christ, but to die is gain (Phil. 1:21). We truly have nothing ultimate to fear—not from the coronavirus, the Ebola virus, natural disasters, or anything else.

Press on, friends. Pray for the sick. Walk in God's strength. Love the brotherhood. Do good to all men. Use your health to serve, not to hide. Jesus is sovereign over it all. And we are immortal until God's work for us to do is finished.