

May 11, 2020

Hi ECOB Family,

Greetings dear loved ones in the name of Jesus the Christ!

This past weekend we distributed online and, in the mail, a survey to help the leadership of the church determine next steps for us as a congregation. We recognize that throughout this process, as a life sustaining service (deemed that way by our state authorities), we could have kept meeting together with proper social distancing options in place. We believe we made the right decision in closing regular meetings, ministries, and worship to help our community make sure that hospital beds, ICU rooms, and care needs were met and were available if there was to be an abundance of cases. As the local, state, and federal government begin their process to re-open, we too are beginning to look at what ECOB looks like in the weeks to come.

My first and foremost thought is on how we are honoring God through this process. We will abide by His guidance over our decisions. We have, and will continue to abide by the local, state, and federal authorities as it pertains to us being a "life sustaining" organization. We will continue to be sure that needs are being met, Christ proclaimed, and congregational/community safety.

With all of that shared, you will see, later in this letter, the Leadership Team will meet this week to discuss what these next few weeks looks like for ECOB. We will not rush this decision, we will not be swayed by what other congregations are doing in the area, we will focus on the needs of the church and God's call for us as a community of faith. Thanks for your patience and understanding.

Here is what has happened and what is coming up!

1. Last week May 4-10
 - a. Operations
 - i. Construction continues. The waiver process is no longer needed. We are now mandated to be wearing masks when walking through the building – we have been complying with this order starting Monday April 20. In addition, no one is allowed into construction areas without a hard hat. We want to be sure that we honor what AMES has told us in this way. Please do not come to the building and walk around without a member of the building team.
 1. Offices – final touchups
 2. Life Group Rooms – final touchups
 3. Heritage Room – waiting on cabinets, table, and sofa
 4. Sanctuary – finalizing media needs and touchups
 5. Student Space – final touchups
 6. Children's Center is 80% finished
2. This coming week May 11-17
 - a. CONGREGATION WIDE
 - i. What: Community Prayer Time
 1. Date/Time: May 13, 2020 08:00 PM
 2. Zoom Information: <https://zoom.us/j/163473464>
 3. Call In: 1 646 558 8656 - Meeting ID: 163 473 464
 - ii. What ECOB LIVE WORSHIP
 1. Date/Time: May 17, 2020
 - a. Worship – 10AM
 - i. ECOB Website: www.ecob.church
 - ii. FB LIVE: <https://www.facebook.com/ephratacob/>
 - iii. Vimeo - <https://vimeo.com/user65628481>
 - iv. YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNaNiDBGKmkQ4v9-W6ysqYA>
 - b. KIDMIN – please connect with KidMin through their Facebook Page

- c. Student Ministry – please connect with our Student Ministries through their Facebook Page
 - d. Young Adult Ministry – please connect with our young adult ministries through their Facebook Page
3. OTHER ITEMS
- a. Tithes and Offerings
 - i. Thank you so much for keeping the ministries and mission of Jesus alive and well at ECOB. Your missionaries (staff) are working hard to maintain the connections we have to one another each week and we will continue to do so. Remember, you can go to www.ecob.church and click on the “GIVE” link to use PushPay or you may mail in your tithe.
 - b. Office Opening!
 - i. Currently the office is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9am-noon. If you must come in, please follow the guidelines below.
 1. Parking: Please park in the front lot – this is the new office entrance and will be the only entrance you will be able to use. The driveway to the office entrance is off Crescent Ave.
 2. You must be wearing a mask to enter the building, even if it is for a second.
 3. You will not be allowed to go anywhere else in the building but the office wing. Please do not come and “snoop” around.
 4. If you wish to see staff, you may do so, but only by APPOINTMENT.
 5. If you wish to come and drop off your tithes and offerings, you may do so during that time or you may mail them to 201 Crescent Ave Ephrata, PA 17522.
 - c. Celebrating Mothers!
 - i. We hope that you had a chance to go out and be celebrated! We are grateful for all the women in our lives that have encouraged, pushed, celebrated, challenged, and disciplined us to be better followers of Jesus. Thank you so much for your care and wisdom.
 - d. Leadership Team Conversation
 - i. The Leadership Team will be engaged in discussion this week concerning the phased re-opening of ECOB. More information will be coming out about this either later this week or in next weeks email to you all. Please be in prayer for them as they discern the best next steps for our congregation – always keeping in mind the safety and health of ECOB, Ephrata, and surrounding communities.
 - e. Payment Protection Plan
 - i. ECOB and ECOB-CC filed and received a portion of the PPP. This will help ECOB and ECOB-CC subsidize our tithes, offerings, and enrollment fees (ECOB-CC) for a short time – to give us margin in the coming months. Thanks to Rich Bealer for doing the paperwork for this. We have done our due diligence in this process and are utilizing the funds in a manner that adheres to the guidelines so that, when completed, we will receive those funds as a grant. If you have questions on this, please feel free to contact me or Rich Bealer.
 - f. Ministries
 - i. Until further notice all “in person” ministries are cancelled. If there are gatherings (worship/missions), all CDC and governmental guidelines need to be adhered to in the strictest manner (social distancing, masks, only going out when essential).

If you have any concerns or questions, please feel free to contact me directly at brian@ecob.church. In the meantime, keep safe, stay sane.

Blessings,
Pastor Brian