

Sunday, May 17, 2020

Dear Members, Friends, and Guests of Desert Hills Lutheran Church,

First things first: On May 15, Desert Hills administrator Melissa Buscho submitted a letter with her intent to retire. The working date for her retirement is July 31. I am very happy for Melissa and Britt; however, Melissa will be missed. She single-handedly helped DHLC get the loan that is allowing us to keep people employed, thereby giving us some much-needed breathing room in this time of quarantine. We will begin to look for a replacement immediately. Melissa was a wonderful part of our staff and congregation for three years and she and the finance committee have placed us in a strong position for the future.

Currently, there is not a plan for us to reopen. The church council and staff will hold a short retreat on May 26 to address reopening. We will, of course at some point reopen but we don't yet know when. Calvary Church in Tucson and Grace Church in Sahuarita have opened, and we will watch their progress. There are those who are ready to be back with others and there are those who are not. You may choose to worship online for the rest of this year. No one will be forced to come back, but I think that soon we can safely gather. If people can safely gather at Safeway and Costco, then why not for worship?

It is Sunday and my sermon is online. I need to let you know that it is not easy for me to deliver a sermon to an empty room. Some people are naturals about it but I'm not. I'm looking forward to reopening even to small groups.

Finally, I was in the building this week when the Saturday Country Gospel band was recording for our services. I had not seen Danny, Jay, Ralph, Joe, or Amber for almost two months. I had seen them online, but not in person. It was such a joy to see them and hear them, and it feels like a preview of how great it will be to be together again.

So, on this Sunday, be safe, keep the faith, and know that our God is with us in King Jesus.

Blessings,

Pastor Martin