



## CC NEWS

### BELIEVERS ASSEMBLE!

A Letter From Pastor Joe

We are told in Hebrews 10:25, as believers, “not to forsake the assembling together.” Some have argued that is exactly what we did for almost 3 months. And, we did it voluntarily. We closed down our assemblies with good intentions. We believed it to be an act of compassion and wisdom. We didn’t want to “spread the virus” and we wanted to “flatten the curve.” We encouraged

“NOT FORSAKING THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER, AS IS THE MANNER OF SOME, BUT EXHORTING ONE ANOTHER, AND SO MUCH THE MORE AS YOU SEE THE DAY APPROACHING.” HEBREWS 10:25

everyone to “go online.” Looking back, I have to wonder if it was the correct decision. Did we do more damage than good? Did we close the door to hurting people who needed the encouragement and assurance that comes from our gatherings? Need I mention the power and dynamics of corporate prayer we suspended and the laying on of hands and anointing oil that James tells us “will make the sick person well?” I wonder.

As with most things, hindsight is 20/20. I believed at the time that closing the church was the wise and correct decision. But knowing what I know now I would do things differently. I would keep the doors open! I am more convinced than ever of the necessity of our gathering. We are given the command to gather and worship for our benefit and the benefit of others. The early church risked severe persecution and confiscation of their goods by gathering to worship, yet they did

it anyway. They understood how vital it was to worship God with other believers even to the point of risking everything. Why? What’s so important about what we do on Sundays?

**One** - *It centers us together with other believers.*

When we worship God together we unite our hearts and minds. Jesus prayed to the Father and asked “I pray that they will be one, just as you and I are one” (John 17:21). Our corporate gathering unites us under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. If there was ever a time when the church needed to be united, it is now. As chaos, confusion, and division spreads across the world, we need to be united. Satan brings division but God calls us to unity. Our gathering brings us together and centers our corporate attention on Jesus.

**Two** - *It releases faith.*

The corporate gathering is like *Miracle Gro* for our faith! This is why when we come together we are to encourage each other and pray for each other. When I see and hear others worshipping God it motivates my faith to believe and worship. It takes my attention off my problems and directs it heavenward. When others pray for me, it awakens my confidence to believe in the Almighty and his grace for my situation.

**Three** - *It’s the place where the Holy Spirit moves in power.*

I have experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit in many places and settings, but never so often as when I am in a church gathering. There is a special presence of the Divine when we get

together to worship and listen to the proclamation of God's Word. In fact, the direction the apostle Paul gives regarding the moving of the Holy Spirit and the exercise of spiritual gifts is given specifically to the church gathering. He says "when you meet together" (1 Corinthians 14:6). This is how and where the Holy Spirit's gifts should operate. Although the supernatural God can operate at any time and place of God's choosing, it is in our gathering together that he most often chooses.

These are just a few of the motivations behind our gathering in person. God wants to meet us in the assembly. He wants to show His love and compassion. He wants to encourage our faith and meet our needs. Our online offering is merely an alternative when meeting is not possible. It allows for message content to be passed along, but it can never take the place of the in-person meeting.

Please don't fall into the mindset that an online church presence is an acceptable replacement or alternative to a biblically defined gathering. At best, it should function only as a supplement.

In the movies, when the world was in crisis and the enemy was attacking, Captain America would call upon the other Marvel heroes (*Avengers*) to assemble. This is what Hebrews 10:25 means when it says not to forsake the assembling together "especially now that the day of his return is drawing near." When things turn bad and are getting worse, our assembly is imperative. So, if I may borrow from Captain America: BELIEVERS ASSEMBLE!

Your fellow servant,

Pastor Joe

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Special Guest Month in August!

For the month of August, for our Sunday services 9 and 11 am, we will have some of the most phenomenal guest speakers; Pastor Bill Kirk, Evangelist Jermel Mayo and Pastor Will Hampton. If you are ready to be blessed then this is your chance to come and join us.

### Volunteer Church Picnic –

Volunteers! Join us on August 30<sup>th</sup> to celebrate and fellowship. We thank you for all the hard work you do and hope that you will join us! More details to follow soon.

**Regenerate Tent Revival** - This September Evangelist Jermel Mayo with Regenerate will be coming to City Church! Join us September 11-13th for some old school tent meetings with fresh revival. Join us in the Water Street Parking Lot on the 11-12th at 7PM and on Sunday the 13th at 10AM *and* 7PM. We hope to see you there! This will be a great opportunity to invite someone to church with you.