

A close-up portrait of a Black man with a short beard and mustache, looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. He is wearing a dark hoodie. The background is a red brick wall.

LUTZ

Love Letter

June, 2020



“I CAN’T BREATHE”

lutzcommunitychurch.org

I CAN'T BREATHE

“I can’t breathe.” These last words of George Floyd capture the hurt, the pain, and the cry of so many African Americans and people of color throughout our history as a nation. The death of Floyd in Minneapolis on Monday has once again exposed the injustice and racism in our land.

It is in moments like these, when it’s hard to find the words, that we should be reminded of the Biblical practice of Lament. Where we cry out to God for justice and change.

To the African-Americans in our church family, we want you to know that while many of us can’t fully understand your pain, we see your pain, and we grieve with you.

George Floyd joins a long list of names in recent years (Eric Garner, Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, Philando Castille, Alton Sterling, Ahmaud Aubrey, Breonna Taylor, the list goes on), who in recent years have been killed for the color of their skin by those charged with protecting life.

These tragic stories highlight the inequality and racism that not only exists today but has throughout our history as a nation. Sadly the white church in America has too often been complicit, silent, or lukewarm about racism. Meanwhile we see thousands of young people protesting in the streets in cities across the nation tonight crying out for change. We pray for peace on our streets and we pray that the church will understand these stories and understand this pain.

We must be reminded today of the biblical truth taught in Genesis 1 that every person is made in the image of God. And we must speak out whenever the beauty of God’s image is ignored. God’s heart is for every person. That is what Pentecost reminds us of. That God’s Spirit is available to all of us, people from every nation on earth.

There is so much to say or try to say, there is so much to do or try to do, but let us right now focus on mourning. Let us lament.

Lament is the recognition of death and loss. To lament is to create emotional space to mourn before God and with others. It is a critical first step in the healing process. Being honest. We need to be reminded that God wants us to come to him in our anger, in our fear, in our loneliness, in our hurt, and in our pain. And as we cry out in prayer we can be assured that we have a Savior who is able to empathize with us in our weakness and need.

As we seek to be a church for the city, we must know our context here where God has called us. We must learn the insidious story of racism in the United States. It is a cancer that affects everything from politics to education to poverty to health care to the criminal justice system. Without an awareness of the most prevalent, underlying issue in our city, we cannot hope to make any significant impact on the very place we claim to be for. More significantly for this current situation, we will fail to understand and empathize with the deep-seated pain, grief, anger, and confusion felt by the African-American community.

So what are we to do? While we know that sin, injustice and racism will never be fully eradicated until Christ's return, we know that we have the responsibility to carry out the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:20). We have the responsibility to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God (Mic 6:8). So how can we respond?

1) **Pray.** Prayer is the most powerful weapon we have in our arsenal against the principalities and powers against which we struggle. Ephesians 6 says that our struggle is not against "flesh and blood" but against these principalities and powers. In other words, this is not a fight against specific people, groups of people, political parties, or media outlets. This is a battle in the spiritual realm against Satan and the ways he seeks to rob, steal, destroy, and counter Christ's mission to seek, save, heal, and unite.

2) **Listen and Learn.** If you don't understand the depth of the emotion felt by people of color in response to racist incidents, take time to listen. Listen to the African-American community, to the Latino community and to the Native community. Listen to the Asian American community who is experiencing a huge spike in racism during this pandemic with hateful comments being made to them. In humility, genuinely seek to learn, opening your heart and your mind to understanding the experiences of those different than your own.

3) **Support Justice Ministries.** The Presbyterian Church's [Matthew 25 Initiative](#), [Sojourners](#), and the [Repentance Project](#) are great places to start. Faith In Action the Mustard Seed Garden, and Christian Social Services, and great ministries we support as a congregation.

These are times we must come together as a community as best we are able given the continued restrictions on physical gatherings.

In unrelenting hope of what Christ has done and promised to do,

Pastor Jody



In Loving Memory of Denise Beaird

On April 27, Lutz Community Church lost one of its beloved members to cancer, Denise Beaird. Denise was born on March 31, 1962 and was raised in Littleton, CO, where she was a 1980 graduate of Littleton High School. On August 5, 1995, she married the love of her life, John (JB) Beaird. They have two children, Melody (m. Kyle Purvis) and Tyler (engaged to Sam McGinn). She was excited for the birth of her first grandson, due this month. She worked for the Hillsborough County Public Schools.

Denise was loved by all who met her, and her gentle and loving personality never waned throughout her life and illness. Denise loved the Lord, and was active at LCC, including serving as a deacon. She will be missed by all.

“Denise was one of the most caring and loving people I have ever met.”

Pastor Jody

LUTZ COMMUNITY CHURCH

REOPENING PLAN

(FULL PLAN ON FOLLOWING PAGES)

PHASE 0

Online Experience Only

Current
Phase

PHASE 1

Online Experience Only
Both Services Streamed Live From Church

PHASE 2

Online Experience
Live Worship with Social Distancing
No Kingdom Kids, Sunday School or Choir
Small Groups and Faith In Action Resume

PHASE 3

Online Experience
Live Worship with Social Distancing
Kingdom Kids, Sunday School, Choir Return

PHASE 4

Online Experience
Return to Normal Activities

May 26, 2020

A Plan to Reopen Lutz Community Church in Phases

Introduction:

The last time that Lutz Community Church had an on-campus service was Sunday, March 8. Due to the spread of COVID-19 and the government social distancing restrictions that accompanied, LCC voluntarily suspended all on-campus services and activities beginning the week of March 15. As we look to the possibility of social distancing restrictions being lifted in a phased approach in the weeks and months ahead, this is a plan to consider how LCC may safely begin meeting together again in accordance with remaining social distancing restrictions. This plan was developed by consulting the White House Guidelines for Opening Up America Again. All ministries shall follow these same phasing and phase triggers for re-starting each ministry. Each ministry may add an appendix to this plan which describes details consistent with church-wide plan

Triggers to Move Into Next Phase -

Move Forward Into Next Phase

- Downward trajectory of new documented cases in Hillsborough/Pasco Counties within a 14-day period. This is the percentage of positive tests from all tests given in a single day. Must be consistent for both counties. Trajectory will be reevaluated every 14 days to see that the new cases continue to trend downward. -

Move Backward to Previous Phase

- A spike of 50% new cases in a 24 hour period or a general upward trajectory over a 14 day period. A level trajectory over 14 days signals a remaining in the current phase

Communicating to the Congregation

- LCC Website - E-mail - Deacon Calls

Phase 0: Extreme Physical Distancing/Stay At Home Order (Current Phase)

- All on-campus services and activities remain suspended until Stay at Home Order is lifted and we enter Phase 1 of reopening.
- - Continue to produce video sermons to be viewed via Facebook, and Website.
- - Continue to host meetings via Webex..
- - A weekly Bible study will be held via Webex.
- - Send communication via email and letter.
- - Utilize online giving and mailed checks for tithes and offerings.
- - Establish safety plan for when in-person activities begin.

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Phase 1: Strict Physical Distancing

- Downward trajectory of new documented cases in Hillsborough/Pasco Counties within a 14-day period
- - All in-person services and activities remain suspended for the length of Phase 1.
- - When Phase 1 begins, we will begin livestreaming both services from the church without congregation present. This will allow us to resume both services at a May 26, 2020 limited capacity. Singers (choir and worship band singers) will not be included at this point as singing spreads the virus more efficiently than talking. We will have one worship leader for traditional service, who will lead both responses and songs. The musicians in ELEVATE, following 6-foot minimum distancing, will be allowed to sing, but no additional singers.
- - No in-person small groups will meet during Phase 1.
- - A weekly Bible study will be held via Webex.
- - All meetings will continue using Webex.
- - Continue to use online and mail in giving.
- - Office hours will return to normal with social distancing and by appointment only. Anyone entering the office, must be masked. A sign will be placed at the door communicating this.

Phase 2: Moderate Physical Distancing

- No evidence of a rebound while maintaining a 14 day downward trajectory.
- - We will ease back into gathering inside for worship during Phase 2.
- - All persons 65 or older and vulnerable persons (the CDC defines this as people at higher risk for severe illness, people who are immunocompromised, people with asthma, people with HIV, and people with liver disease) should be encouraged to stay home.
- - Anyone inside the building will be required to wear a face mask. Those leading the service will wear a face mask when they are not speaking or singing. Masks will be available for those who may not have one.
- - Participants will be encouraged to maintain adequate social distancing of at least 6 feet apart. This guidance does not apply to family members of the same household.
- - Hand sanitizer stations will be available.
- - Adults may meet for in-person small groups either in homes or in the church building at a time when the building is not being occupied for worship services.
- - Continue to use online and mail in giving. Also provide opportunity for folks to drop offering in donation station as they arrive for service. No passing of the plate. A guide will be developed for safety considerations.
- - Doors will be opened by greeters.
- - Each person who enters will have their temperature taken by a greeter using a non-contact thermometer.
- - No physical bulletins or use of hymnals. Responses and lyrics will be on screen.
- - Congregation may sing during this phase.
- - No social time nor refreshments between services.
- - Special precautions will be taken for observing the Lord's Supper.
- - There will be no children's activities through the end of Phase 2.

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Phase 3: Limited Physical Distancing

- No evidence of a rebound while continuing to maintain a 14 day downward trajectory.
- - We will ease back into a more normal routine for gathering during Phase 3.
- - Those 65 or older and vulnerable persons may return at their discretion. May 26, 2020
- - This phase includes resuming children's activities (i.e. nursery, children's church).
- - Hand sanitizer stations will still be available.
- - Face masks may still be required. This depends on the CDC rescinding the mask guideline.
- - Social distancing should still be maintained.
- - Giving may still need to follow the plan for Phase 2.
- - Coffee, prepared in kitchen and served through window, may resume. No bagels yet.
- - Special precautions will be still taken for observing the Lord's Supper.
- - Specifics will be worked out as we move through the phases and get closer to this point.

Phase 4: Return to New Normal

- No evidence of a rebound while continuing to maintain a 14 day downward trajectory.
- - Masks will no longer be required.
- - Safety precautions, such as hand sanitizer stations and donation stations, will remain for those wishing to use them.

Additional Considerations:

- There remains uncertainty regarding specific restrictions that will be in place from state and local government at each phase.
- - This plan is to get us thinking and planning. The plan will undoubtedly require adjustments. - There may be setbacks. Patience will be a necessity.
- - While those most vulnerable to the virus may need to limit their interaction more than others, we will not forget them as we move through these phases. Online services will continue and pastor and deacons will continue to maintain contact with them.

END OF DOCUMENT



PRAYER FOR UNITY "RACIAL HARMONY"

Compassionate and Gracious God,
all tribes and tongues will one day
acknowledge Jesus as Lord.

Alongside this, we know the truth
proclaimed in Your Word that we
are all created in Your image. Too
easily we allow division based on
culture, language, or race. Change
our behavior and make us united.
Let us focus on our shared status as
Your creation and unite together
over what we have in common and
not fracture over how we differ. To
You, the Creator of all people, I pray.
Amen.



→→→→→
ConnectUs



5 TIPS FROM A PSYCHOLOGIST FOR DEALING WITH ANXIETY

1

Approach your anxiety like a scientist.

2

Learn to redirect your attention.

3

Breathe mindfully.

4

Watch out for 'should statements.'

5

Remember: Your thoughts are not always accurate.

6 WAYS TO COPE WITH

Anxiety

- 1 Eat plenty of whole foods & cut out the processed crap.
- 2 Learn to meditate and do it every single day.
- 3 Be disciplined about ensuring you get enough sleep.
It's the key to everything.
- 4 Move your body for half an hour every day.
Make it something you love doing.
- 5 Take deep breaths. Breathe in for a count of 4,
hold for 7 and exhale for 8. Repeat until you feel better.
- 6 Ask for support. Hiding your anxiety will only make
you more anxious - share with people you love and ask for help.

COVID-19: Tips for Staying Connected while Social Distancing

- Make a phone call to a friend or family member
- Connect to others virtually through social media
- Create and follow a daily routine
- Eat healthy and exercise
- Focus on the altruistic reasons for social distancing



@EndSocialIsolation
#isolatedNOTlonely



Coalition to End
Social Isolation
& Loneliness

SUSAN'S TOP FIVE WAYS TO

STAY MOTIVATED

1.

Talk about it! Tell people what you are going to do or to accomplish! Talking about it will keep you accountable and excited!

2.

Remind yourself that Rome was not built in a day, but part of it was. Small steps lead to the big picture!

3.

Write it down or post it up! Stick a picture on your mirror, make the advertisement for that big race your screen saver, or post little note cards on your fridge. Seeing is believing!

4.

Compete with yourself! Stop watching other people and focus on you!

5.

Join a group, work out with friends or family, and read up on proper fitness and nutrition! Having a support system and a good foundation in workout techniques and nutrition will make all the difference in the world, you will see results so much faster when you exercise properly and fuel your body right!

DON'T FORGET TO Clean Your Hands

Handwashing is the most effective way to prevent the spread of infections!



A Prayer for Channeling God's Peace

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me show love,

Where there is injury, pardon

Where there is doubt, faith,

Where there is despair, hope,

Where there is darkness, light,

Where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much
seek to be consoled as to console,
not so much to be understood as to understand,
not so much to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
it is in dying that we awake to eternal life.

—ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

A Prayer for Peace When You're Feeling Overwhelmed

Dear God,

Thank you for being the God who never sleeps.

Thank you for always being here for me,
even when I'm not always here for you.

Thank you that you are Love and that you want
the very best for me.

Thank you for your promises and that you never change.

I am feeling totally overwhelmed. Please help me.

Help me to rest in the fact that you know
what is best for me.

Forgive me for turning away from you and trying to
control the outcome in situations in my life.

The Bible says that you are not the God of
confusion but of peace.

Help me to rest in your love and to feel the peace
which surpasses all understanding.

Help me to feel your love and comfort.

Help me to be still and know that you are God and
that you will take care of me, just like any loving parent
takes care of their children.

Your Word says to cast all of our anxiety on you
because you care for us.

I turn all of my burdens and concerns over to you.

Please guide my every step and help me to be
attentive to your loving direction.

Amen

—UNKNOWN

Woman'sDay





To our friends & family in the medical field, we thank you for your tireless efforts at your God-given gift to aid those affected by COVID-19.

Our gratitude overflows to you & our prayers are with each of you.



BIRTHDAYS

&

ANNIVERSARIES

Phillip Ackart 6/4

Brett Dombrova 6/6

John Moose 6/6

Michael Towson 6/6

William Shepard 6/7

Dave Vinyard 6/7

Jim Bliss 6/8

Diora Demarse 6/9

Joseph James 6/9

Melody Beaird 6/12

Milan Balic 6/14

Stephanie Parades 6/15

Tony Varda 6/16

Steve Polzin 6/20

Christina Kopp 6/21

Phyllis Newberger 6/21

Laura Ackart 6/24

June Dombrova 6/26

Karen Bishop 6/27

Pearl Randles 6/27

James Sakezles 6/27

Nathan Bishop 6/29

ANNIVERSARIES

Janet & John Moose 6/18

Adam & Alexis Balic 6/19

Dave & Jane Thompson 6/19

Patti Taylor 6/21

Tim Taylor 6/21



STAY
UP TO DATE

Check out what's going on around the church with our live time calendar!

<http://lutzcommunitychurch.org/calendar>

