

March 12, 2021

Dear West Erwin family,

As progress continues to be made in our nation's battle against COVID-19 we are grateful to our God for leading us through these last 12 months, and for His promise to continue leading and blessing us through the months ahead. While we realize that the threat remains, we are encouraged and thankful for the more favorable outlook today. And we as your shepherds are especially thankful for you, our West Erwin members, who have shown such faithfulness and vigilance throughout this difficult time.

We want you to know the plan that we have to continue to open up our church activities and ministries with the goal of getting back to a fully functioning and active church schedule.

- Our goal and plan is to gradually, slowly, deliberately, wisely, faithfully, continue a step by step process of getting back to our full schedule.
- Beginning this Sunday we will no longer have the pews taped off for social distancing. We ask that you continue to maintain social distance with those outside of your immediate family/friendship circle, and respect the distance others will be comfortable maintaining during our Bible classes and worship assemblies and fellowship times. We feel at this time there is plenty of space in our auditorium for us to be able to maintain desired distance without marking the pews.
- We encourage all our members to continue to wear a mask entering and leaving our classes and assemblies. We realize there are varied opinions on the need for this at this time, but that indicates that out of respect and consideration and love for our fellow members that we continue to use the masks at this time. We look forward to the time—which we hope and expect will be soon—when that will no longer be needed.
- We encourage all our members to **come home** to our in person worship assemblies and Bible classes as soon as you are comfortable doing so! We are excited to see the numbers continuing to increase. We encourage all those who feel more at risk and vulnerable to come back just yet to continue to connect and participate through our multiple online opportunities. However as progress in fighting this virus continues to be made we ask everyone as you feel safe to connect again in person and with your personal involvement in the life and ministry of your West Erwin church family.
- We look forward to upcoming activities and opportunities to grow and serve, including our ongoing Bible classes and worship assemblies both in person and online; a one-day VBS type event being planned for this summer; special Wednesday night lessons this summer; our Christian Evidences seminar with Kyle Butt of Apologetics Press which will take place on Oct. 22-24 of this year; our small groups and life groups; Young At Heart (YAH) activities; our Wednesday night meals; expanded Benevolent Center activities; and other opportunities for fellowship and service that we are excited to start up again in the months ahead.
- **Our goal is to be back to a full schedule the first Sunday after Labor Day, Sept. 12, 2021.** We realize there may still be setbacks and that could very well be adjusted, but that

is our goal, and we ask for your prayers and participation in helping to make that happen to God's glory.

Once again, as your shepherds, we commend each of you for continuing to participate as best you can, for checking on our most vulnerable individuals and families, for continuing to support the life and work of this church through your faithful giving, and for continuing to be vigilant in prayer for our leaders and all our West Erwin family. What a remarkable way this church family has responded to the unexpected challenges we have experienced over this past year! All glory goes to God, and He is to be praised for the blessing and ministry this church continues to be in the lives of so many in this church family as well as throughout our community, our nation, and our world.

In His service,

Your shepherds