

*Thoughts from Pastor Rodney
April 30, 2020*

Greetings to all! I hope this letter finds you well during this abnormal time of distancing. So many changes have been made over a short period of time in the name of health and safety. It has affected families, businesses and churches. It has forced us to explore and implement new ways of ministry. I am thankful that God is helping us to discover these new and exciting ways to share His Good News with the world.

I am thankful to our deacons at Blackman's Grove for their prayerful leadership. We have met in person, by conference call, or by text once a week during the last five weeks. We have reached out to our church family by recorded messages, written word, cards, phone calls, puppet shows, Sunday School literature, and live stream services. People are worshiping through the ministry of Blackman's Grove Baptist Church. Thank you all for caring and sharing in Jesus' name.

We have now used live stream for three services. The quality has improved each week and people are responding favorably. Each week we receive between one-hundred to two-hundred views. This is also something that we plan to continue when we are back together in the sanctuary. We pray this will be a blessing to those who are sick and shut-in, and even those who are on vacation. We are also hearing from friends who no longer live locally, but grew up in the Blackman's Crossroads community. They are excited to be able to worship with us. Thank you for sharing our link with others.

Some have questioned our reasons for not having a drive-in service. As stated, the on-line service has been improving and working to reach many who may not feel safe at a drive-in service. We are also not sure that an outdoor service can be live streamed with the same quality that we now have. At this time, the deacons and I agree that we should continue with a live stream worship.

Some have requested that we gather to worship outside at church and just seeing each other is a blessing. I long to see you too. Some have gathered at church on Sunday morning to watch the live stream on their devices in their cars. This is not a drive-in service. It is a drive-to service. You are more than welcomed to join them. However, we ask that you maintain social distancing guidelines when parking and that you remain in your cars. The restrooms will not be available for use until we can once again meet as a congregation in our sanctuary. This is being done in an effort to keep us safe from any contamination, not only now but when the church opens its doors once again. This is recommended for everyone's safety.

Thank you for praying for our church and encouraging one another during this stressful time. God is still God! He is in control and He loves and cares for His church. God has seen Blackman's Grove through wars, recessions, depressions and other epidemics. Continue to trust Him through this. I look forward to the professions of faith that are happening and the baptisms that we will celebrate because the church is being the church.

May God Bless us all,

Pastor Rodney

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles...And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2: 42, 43 &47b