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October 7, 2020 Update

From the Pastor's Desk—

New Home Family,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:3).

As we approach the end of summer and beginning of fall, I felt it necessary to share an update on our positions as a church as well as some thoughts from my heart as the under-shepherd of this congregation. We are now into the 7th calendar month since we have worshiped together inside our facility. I would have never imagined us being in this position, and yet here we are. This COVID-19 pandemic has affected every facet of our daily experiences, including how we engage as a church family.

However, in spite of the many challenges we face—both personally and congregationally, and the unknown length, breadth, and width of this season, I am still grateful. I am grateful that through technology and even by your consistent and joyful presence in the parking lot, we have been granted the privilege to gather together to worship our risen Savior and receive His Word. I am grateful for your consistent obedience to the Lord through your cheerful and generous giving. I am thankful for the many leaders and servants who serve in various capacities, and those who have expressed interest in serving, even in the midst of this unique season. Although we have not been meeting in-person within the walls of our facility, the mission and ministry of the Lord's church has continued. And many of you have been active participants in that mission. Thank you!

The church corporately has continued with our purpose and plan albeit in new methods, along with our leadership continuing to maintain astute and Spirit-led oversight of all of the resources the Lord has entrusted to our care. In partnership with Empowered to Conquer along with local restaurants and others, we participated in helping to provide over 4,000 meals for Coosa county Students; we also assisted financially with meals for summer school students as well. Under the auspice of our State Convention, we served as a host site for the disbursement of over 42,000 pounds of fresh produce in Coosa and Tallapoosa County.

We are continuing to upgrade our technology to assist us in continuing our mission. We are purchasing new equipment to increase the quality of our livestream for our worship experiences. We have upgraded our Zoom video call service to begin engaging in fellowship and discipleship with our students and through our small group activities.

We have also made measured but sizeable steps to maintain, enhance, and prepare our facility for our return. We have installed large-screen TV's for word and video projection, thus providing new methods to share information (announcements, word lyrics, etc.) in our worship experience that also reduce our person-to-person contact. We are in the process of repairing the damage to the building from the April storms. We also have begun the process of deep cleaning the facility, having the pews

and carpets cleaned and sanitized. Our COVID-19 Active Response Team has been diligent in establishing protocols and securing the needed provisions for us to resume worship inside our sanctuary while simultaneously adhering to appropriate medical guidelines when we deem appropriate to return.

We have been able to engage in all of these activities while simultaneously meeting all of our financial obligations, continue to fully compensate our staff, and making extra payments on our mortgage principle. Thank you!

While it is my earnest desire for us to return to corporate worship inside our facility, I also want to ensure that it is in a spiritually uplifting way, strategic, and with our safety in mind. We are charged with juggling the delicate balance of continuing effectively and efficiently our purpose and plan as a church, simultaneously being good stewards over our resources—financial and physical, and most importantly leading in a way that seeks to preserve, protect, and affirm humanity's value.

Plans and preparation are important, but we are also people of prayer. I ask that you continue to pray for increasing unity and spiritual maturity of our church family during this season. Please pray about your own commitment to Christ, and the community of Christ, and where needed, an increase in your consistent engagement—whether that's financial, by your presence and participation in our worship gatherings or times of study and prayer, or by being a “burden-sharer”—helping another brother or sister in unique need during this time. While this season has provided great opportunity to grow and serve, it has also come with great challenge and strain. I also solicit your prayers for me and the leadership of our church as we seek to lead by faith and wisdom.

At this juncture, wisdom and faith have led us to continue our current practices of non-traditional worship until further notice. This is based on our processing of medical and scientific data available to us, CDC guidelines, your received thoughts related to a potential return, and analysis of the best use of our resources to continue our mission and ministry as a church.

I want to encourage you to stay connected as a part of our church family, to communicate needs—whether they be personal or community—to church leadership, and to continue to engage personally as well as corporately (in a safe manner) in the mission and ministry of our church. Through it all, our mandate is clear. The New Home Missionary Baptist Church is called, even in this crisis to ***Worship God, Walk in Community, and Witness to the World***. We will, with God's help, and through our active participation, continue to do that for God's glory.

Please continue to do your part to stay safe in this season while building the Kingdom of God, built by faith on the Solid Rock—Jesus Christ.

Trusting in Christ,



Rev. Christopher M. Todd