To the people of Bethlehem Stonepile UMC and Springvale UMC:

Some years ago our son created a facebook page for my wife and I, but until last week I had never posted anything – I would look at the posts of other people but I never posted. Now here I am posting my second one to you.

In this time of not being able to be together for worship I have been thinking after some conversation with the staff of your charge. What happens when this covid19 thing is over and we are able to gather together once again? In my thinking there are at least a couple possibilities – one good and one not so good.

The not so good possibility is that we will get out of the “habit” of worshiping. One of my favorite sayings is that “worship should be a habit without being habitual.” What do I mean by that? We should be in a mindset where Sunday just doesn’t “feel” right if we have not worshiped God. But our worship should never be something we do without thinking about what we are doing. Getting out of the “habit” of worshiping is one of the possibilities that this time of not being together could bring. I hope not!

The other thing that could happen is that you will be so anxious and happy to be together again that your enthusiasm will show. I had a family in a church that I served as pastor that was helping to socialize a service dog. He was a German Shepherd named Orion. They would bring him to worship and he would lay quietly beside them during our service, but I always enjoyed how excited he was when they first entered the church building. He acted like he was sooo glad to be there. I hope that is how you are feeling in the time we, as a worshiping community, are apart. We will be back together again, and when we are I hope that you are as excited as Orion always was. But until then be strong and be faithful.

Joy and Peace,

Pastor Bud