Pastor Brian's
Mid Week Message
September 2, 2020

"TIME FOR A CHANGE"

He [Jesus] said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority." Acts 1:7

This was the response of our Lord Jesus to a question posed by the disciples. *"Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"* (Acts 1:6) After Jesus' death and resurrection they thought that He was about to bring about the eternal age where He would reign over all things and they would reign with Him. They still didn't understand how God was going to bring about the eternal heavenly Kingdom. The truth is that when that will occur is not for us to know, we're to be ready at all times for Jesus' coming in glory. But there are times and seasons that we must know in order to properly function as the Church, God's people in the world. These include the times that we are going to gather in worship. This past Sunday our attendance swelled to more than we've seen since the covid-19 pandemic began back in March. Normally, this would be a good thing, and in some ways it still is. But, when worship attendance reaches 50 and surpasses it, we cannot maintain proper social distance. As it is now September, and some of our seasonal members are beginning to return for the fall and winter, the Board of Elders has made the decision that we will be going to TWO SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES much earlier this year in order to be able to "keep our distance". That will happen not this Sunday, but NEXT SUNDAY, September 13th. On that day, and from there on, we will hold worship services at 8:30am and 10:30am on Sundays. This change will result in a few others. The live stream on Facebook will then come up at 8:30am and be available as a recording after the conclusion of the first service. On communion Sundays we will continue to offer extended communion for those who are not yet ready and/or able to join in corporate worship. That will take place after the late service from 11:45am to 12:15pm. It is my hope and prayer that with the smaller numbers that gather in each particular service and the continuation of the use of masks more and more of those who have been reluctant to return to our on site worship will be able to do so. It is good for us to gather together as God's people to meet with our Lord Jesus and receive His gifts of forgiveness and eternal salvation in Word and Sacrament. As has been the custom in past years both of the worship services will be exactly the same in terms of the hymns, liturgy and preaching. As we get farther into "the season" the Board of Elders will be keeping a watchful eye on our numbers in case social distancing would require us to offer three worship services. How that would look schedule-wise at this point is still speculation. We'll cross that bridge if and when we get to it.