



# The DOSS FAMILY

CHURCH PLANTING IN CALIFORNIA

Summer 2020

Dear Pastor and Supporting Church,

What a blessing to serve a unchanging God in times that are constantly changing. Since our last letter we have faced nearly constant fluctuation and changes. The government in late May began opening things up, some including the ability for in-person worship services. Our church was able to meet for most of the month of June indoors, socially distanced and with health screenings conducted at the doors. By the end of the month the case numbers in California and our in our county especially, began to dramatically rise. We knew that another lockdown was looming, and churches would be a target.

In the meantime, our governor, prohibited singing in the church services. An order we felt was too far, and an authority that government does not possess. We have been willing to comply with all safety standards, but we chose not to allow the government to meddle with worship. As the new lockdowns came, we had more choices to make and I was determined not to go back to online only worship. My first response was I privately told our church that I would not prevent anyone who was compelled to attend the services. Several of our people were desperate to be back in church and I knew that they were going to attend no matter what was ordered. And that is how we responded the first couple of weeks of July to the new prohibitions against indoor, in-person worship of any size.

I struggled with what to do, for I knew there were others that longed to come, but did not feel comfortable enough to attend in-person, indoor worship service. So, in the middle of July we decided to try conducting an outdoor Sunday morning service. Fortunately for us our parking lot is on the west side of our building and offers us ample shade for an outdoor service. Also, in the San Joaquin Valley in the summertime, we never have to worry about rain, as a desert climate it doesn't rain from May until usually October. The only negative is that it gets very hot here. But we began having outdoor Sunday morning services and more people started coming back to the church. We moved our Wednesday evening service outdoors and again saw an increase in attendance. Last Sunday, we conducted back to back services on Sunday morning at 9:00 am and 10:15 and had our best attendance since the beginning of our pandemic. This was on a very hot day, where the temperatures rose to around 110 degrees.

One great positive from all these changes, is seeing how this has gotten more of our people involved in service. Each Sunday our parking lot looks like a flea market with pop-up tents set up to provide more shade. Our people have been coming early to set up and then even more helping us tear things back down. God is building and growing His church even during this time of adversity.

On a personal note, I still have some problems with vertigo and instability. Perhaps this is permanent, but it is manageable. Our sons have both been gone for the entire summer and things have went pretty good for both of them. Please continue to pray for us as we continue to adjust and adapt to these uncertain times. Thank you for your continued prayers and support.

In Christ,

Andy Doss

#### SENDING CHURCH:

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