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August 4 – Looking Forward to Sunday Night | A Message from Jim Everette

The Apostle Paul wrote “Greet one another with a holy kiss,” on numerous occasions. It may have been a cultural practice of the first century, or maybe something that took place only among the Christian community, but it is not encouraged in a time of global pandemic, when we are being asked to practice “social distancing” and “wear a facial covering” as a way of “flattening the curve.” The Apostle Peter concurred with Paul, at least on this point. Peter closes his letter to fellow believers with an encouragement to “Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.” Since so many of his first readers were facing or would face persecution for their faith, this practice and prayer is a heartfelt hope that their circumstances would change. It is in the depth of our relationship with Christ that we find peace in the midst of our struggles. It is in the depth of our relationships with other followers of Jesus that our relationship with Christ is deepened. 1 Peter 3:8 says we are to be agreeable, sympathetic, loving, compassionate, and humble. These characteristics imply how kind, warm, tender, gentle, and affectionate we should be towards our sisters and brothers in Christ. That is what is behind what both Peter and Paul mean when they reference greeting one another. They stress the importance of our being demonstrative in practicing true Christian community. Our church does this well during “normal” times. As we look forward to our Tailgate Worship Gathering on Sunday evening, I hope all of us will share our love for Christ and each other with a safe distanced holy kiss.

Hopeful!