

March 2020 Pastor Jaime Updates

Tuesday, March 31, 2020

Pastor Jaime's Update - Take 4.1

Good afternoon. Just a very quick word regarding my follow up visit with the surgeon this morning. By the grace of God, the staples were removed (there were 18 per knee), and I received a more compact set of braces to be worn for the next 6 weeks. The doctor also decided that moving forward, therapy will be done in his office twice a week. I should start working on bending my knees by Friday. In summary, the doctor is pleased with the progress and I'm beyond thankful!

While there's still a bit of a journey ahead, I'm excited to be where we are. With God's help, I'll be able to resume preaching on Easter!

THANK YOU! The result of your intercession is evident. I will see you soon. To God be the glory for the things He has done!

PJ

Monday, March 30, 2020

Pastor Jaime's Update - Take 4

Greetings from a distance, St. John's family! I pray you are well and continuing to observe safety measures. I think you would agree that this isn't much fun. Let's pray we can see each other soon. We were created by God to live in community. Enough said!

My weekend was fairly uneventful. I continue to get up and walk around the house several times a day and to do my exercises in bed as much as I can. Tomorrow morning—Tuesday—I see the surgeon for the first time since surgery. I'm excited to see what the next steps will be in the journey toward recovery. I hope you had the opportunity to join us for worship yesterday. The Staff continues to do a great job. I know we have been blessed as a family!

In my desire to remain connected with the church I'm honored to lead, I have decided to post two brief segments a week online with reflections. I have titled these "Honest to God." These will be available on the church's website every Tuesday and Friday. Make sure to visit www.stjohns-sarasota.com.

Thanks for being the church. Please continue to check the website periodically for updates and information. Don't forget that we continue in ministry. Call if we can be of help or encouragement. Let's continue,

Serving All. Following One.

PJ

Friday, March 27, 2020

Pastor Jaime's Update—Take 3

Good morning, St. John's family! How are you this foggy Friday morning? I just want to spend a minute updating you on my recovery and sharing a few thoughts.

I have continued in therapy and cannot thank you enough for your prayer. By God's grace the pain has

remained mostly manageable. I'm doing my exercises 3-4 times a day. The nurse came by yesterday and checked the incisions and everything seems to be in order. Next step is my follow up visit with the surgeon on Tuesday at 9 a.m.

A number of families have brought meals to us. THANK YOU! Your generosity and care are truly invaluable and we do not take it for granted. May God bless you accordingly.

I have also been following coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic closely. Do you know anyone directly impacted? Is there anyone in your family on the frontlines in the medical field? It'll be an honor for me to pray for them by name. Please email me at pastorjaime@stjohns-sarasota.com. Furthermore, let's us join together to pray through Psalm 91 every day until this crisis subsides. If possible, pray it with your loved ones, at the table, before bed, just pray...

Finally, join us for worship on Sunday at 10. Our Staff has worked very hard in coordinating great worship experiences you won't want to miss. Don't forget that we remain in ministry together, simply on a different format for the time being. Stay safe and whatever you do...take care of your knees 😊. We move onward, soldiers...

Serving All. Following One.

PJ

Monday, March 23, 2020

Pastor Jaime's Update—Take 2

Greetings, St. John's faithful! I pray this email finds you well. As some of us are in recovery, and most of us in this forced period of self distancing, I'll be sending updates a couple of times a week. Keep an eye out for the email and visit our website (www.stjohns-sarasota.com).

My weekend was spent resting and doing some of the mandated exercises. A few moments ago I had visits by the home health care nurse, as well as the therapist. The wounds seem to be in good shape— healing properly. I'm also walking around the house 3-4 times a day as per medical instructions to remain active and avoid clotting. A number of you have inquired about the level of pain. The pain is being managed as well as possible. I'm learning the key is to not allow it to get intense. The medication helps. This is a very personal lesson on patience and trust, and I am learning a lot!

How about you? How was your weekend? Did you get an opportunity to worship with us on Sunday? I hope you did. In fact, over 300 people did! We'll continue following this format until we can get together again. The Staff has done a tremendous job of setting this up and I'm incredibly thankful!

Do not forget that there are a thousand ways to go about the Father's business. What does this mean? We may not be able to see each other as much as we are accustomed to, but we are still in ministry together. Let us know if there's anything we can do to assist you during this season. You can contact the office at 941-925-2661. [Email me](mailto:pastorjaime@stjohns-sarasota.com) and let me know how I can pray for you. I have always prayed and these days...I seem to have additional time available 😊!

Thanks for being the church you are. I appreciate and miss you lots! We continue, Serving All. Following One.

PJ

Tuesday, March 17, 2020

Pastor Jaime's Surgery and St. John's Ministry Update

Greetings, St. John's family. I pray you are staying encouraged in the midst of intentional isolation. This too shall pass and before you now it, life will resume with all the buzz and busyness we have come to embrace so well. In the meantime, use this period of relative quiet and solitude to mediate upon God's faithfulness. You may take a walk or sit at home and play cards (in groups of less than 10 people!), or simply rest. Whatever you choose to do, make the time count!

What follows are updates with regard to my knee surgery, and our plans for ministry for the next 2 weeks. First, THANK YOU, kindly for the abundance of emails, cards and expressions of love and concern shared over the last few days. Our family is thankful for every one of them. Surgery is set for tomorrow—Wednesday—at 2:15 p.m. at Doctors' Hospital. The expectation is that I'll be in recovery for most of tomorrow. The first therapy session should take place later in the day or early Thursday morning, at which point a determination will be made as to whether I'll be ready to be released to continue therapy at home. Join me in prayer for that! I have asked [Heidi Welbourn](#) to be our point of connection for update information. Julie will be updating Heidi and she will pass the information along. Over the next few days, our Staff will work diligently in sending update emails as things unfold. Thank you in advance for your attentiveness and care!

With regard to our ministry over the next 2 weeks, we will follow the recommendation of Bishop Carter to refrain from meeting for public worship in order to maintain the well-being of all. In lieu of on-campus worship we are asking you to *join us for an online Sunday worship experience*. Information about how to join us will be sent via email in the next day or so. We will continue to monitor developments regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and will make the necessary adjustments to make sure we continue in ministry through adversity and limitations. As you well know, this is an ever-changing dynamic and we need to remain calm and prayerful. Together, in the Name of Christ, we will overcome and grow stronger in our relationship with God, our community and one another.

In our desire to keep everyone safe, the Staff and I have made the decision to cancel on-campus programming until further notice. Office hours will remain the same (Mon-Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.) and our weekly time of Prayer and Healing will continue on Wednesdays at 11:00 a.m. All other activities and meetings—church or community based—have been cancelled.

Finally, I sincerely urge you to continue supporting your church with your prayer, gifts and talents. While we may not meet publicly for a few weeks, we will nonetheless continue serving the Lord and doing what we can to remain an effective witness in the community. Our financial gifts make it possible for us to move forward in Jesus' name. You may mail your contribution (6611 Proctor Rd., Sarasota, FL 34241), drop it off in the church office or our secure mailbox outside building, choose to contribute electronically by going to our [website](#) or by downloading *Givelify* on your cellphone (specific instructions will follow this email.)

Brother and sisters, *"for such a time as this God has called us..."* (Esther 4:14) I look forward to the day we get to look back at this particular season in life and ministry and share with the world the new and amazing things God will do in us and through us. The best news is, God is still with us! We continue, Serving All. Following One,
Pastor Jaime

Friday, March 13, 2020

Good morning, all. I pray you are well. I am. Julie and I just got back from the consultation with the surgeon. In a nutshell, the MRI confirmed what he first thought. The Patella tendon on both knees is completely ripped off the bone. Ironically, he said, this is the best way to do it because it allows for an easier surgery and provides the best odds for a full recovery. (You can not see my face, but I'm smiling!)

Dr. Page did not mince words in expressing what the level of pain and discomfort may be. With that in mind, surgery will take place next Wednesday around 2 pm at Doctors Hospital where I will more than likely spend the night.

After the fact, he expects me to have my legs locked for about 6 weeks—no bending—and little by little the therapists will be unlocking the braces to start regaining motion. I will have 3 months of supervised in home rehabilitation and 3 months of rehab on my own. During these first 3 months I should be able to do some work and preach from a wheelchair.

I have asked Trish and Krista to come by the house tomorrow to shoot a short video clip that can be shared with the church on Sunday morning. Wendy Stearns has graciously agreed to introduce it at all morning services. I'll also address the virus crisis in the video.

I have secured pulpit coverage through Palm Sunday and am begging God to allow me to preach on Easter and beyond. The surgeon believes this is within the realm of possibility and I'm trusting the Lord. To be clear, for a while, I'll will be preaching and working in a wheelchair.

Your prayer, concern and leadership mean more to me than I'm able to articulate at this moment. This too shall pass.

What do we need? We need lots of intercession. My biggest concern is Julie's strength and wellbeing. She's a trooper—I'm so very blessed! God has been faithful before, and will walk beside us during this episode as well.

Be of good cheer. Thanks and peace!

PJ

Wednesday, March 11, 2020

A Special Prayer Request for Pastor Jaime

Greetings, St. John's family! It is my prayer that you are enjoying a reflective Lenten season in the Lord. On this occasion, I'm writing with a personal prayer request. On Monday night, while enjoying a great time of fellowship as a member of St. John's softball team, I took a tumble and in the process, ruptured the Patella tendon on BOTH knees!

During my initial visit with the orthopedic surgeon yesterday I learned that surgery on both knees should take place no later than next Thursday. The doctor is of the professional opinion that given my imposing physique and youthful exuberance (my words, my humor), there shouldn't be any long term negative

effects. Surgery will be followed by a season of having to wear special leg braces and lots of physical therapy. The doctor believes that I may not be able to drive for 3 months, following surgery. Two days from now, I'll have my last consultation with him prior to the operation. Needless to say friends, there's an interesting journey ahead for our family.

What does this mean? Well, at a basic level, this is a significant, yet unexpected, trial. We are not exempted, as Christians, from suffering and pain. I am not questioning God; this, dear friends, is life. At a deeper level, this is a tremendous opportunity for the church to work together in the Name of Christ and continue doing great things. I promise you to work as hard as I know how to work, with God's help and strength, to be back doing what I love as soon as possible. The doctor is of the opinion that I should be able to be back at church 2-3 weeks after surgery even if it means preaching sitting down. This is my goal as well. I am confident that attendance, giving and ministry will continue on strongly. In times of trial the church rises to the occasion under the power of the Holy Spirit. Church, God is counting on you. So am I! What do we need as the pastoral family? I covet every bit of prayer support you can provide. My biggest concern is what all this means for Julie and the kids. Having said that, I'm fully confident that, TOGETHER, we will get through this. I believe in God the Father Almighty, remember?

Our district superintendent, Rev. Dan Jackson, is aware of what's taken place. I'm working diligently to cover all areas of my work during my absence. I will rely heavily upon our excellent staff and leadership during this season.

I leave you with these words by the prophet Isaiah: "Do not fear for I am with you. Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God." (41:10) Your prayer and concern mean more to us than you'll ever know.

I love you all so very much. We continue,
Serving All. Following One.

Pastor Jaime

P.S. My short-lived softball career is now over. I have prayerfully decided to retire, following Julie's wise and firm advice!