

**Pastor Herman Hicks**  
Senior Pastor

**Mrs. Anadina Hicks**  
First Lady



**Elder Rondell Love**  
Assistant Pastor

**Elder Clinton Moss**  
Associate Pastor  
Church Development

**Elder Dennis Fontelroy**  
Associate Pastor  
Evangelism & Missions

*November 12, 2020*

## Letter to the Congregation

Dear Greater Pentecostal Family,

**We are living in a very unique but important moment. So, let me say up front, this is a long, but necessary letter, but I encourage every member to read this entire letter.**

Lady Hicks and I are so grateful to all of you for your faith, patience, and fortitude throughout these past eight months as COVID-19 has brought restructuring of our church life. I want you to know that I continue to pay close attention to the science and data about COVID-19 from the Sedgwick County Health Dept, talking to other church leaders throughout this area, and prayerfully considering the will of God and the health and safety of our congregation.

Please know that we are not in hiding! Your Greater Pentecostal staff will continue to find creative ways to connect all of us during this exceptional season and continue providing online content for your journey. Our church office will be open during the week **(9am until 3pm)** to provide care and support for all of you, whether you need help listening to our online services, prayer for your health, or just a phone call to know you're not alone.

Please know that the grace of God remains visible in our community of faith, and that the vitality of our congregation continues during this unexpected and challenging time. Together, let us seek to discover the new things God is doing in our midst!

We know that everyone misses seeing one another in person. As your pastor, I feel that loss profoundly. I understand that being unable to worship in person as the Body of Christ is no small thing. It is also true that we are learning new ways of being the Body of Christ during this time. We rejoice in the generosity that our congregation has exhibited in caring for one another. The words of support from all of you have provided both encouragement and hope. Our online worship services continue to draw a wonderful diversity of people from a wide range of geographic locations. Other virtual ministry gatherings (**Bible Study, Prayer and**

**Saturday Night Sunday School**) continue to provide rich and deeply faithful opportunities for learning and fellowship. As we approach the beginning of a new year, we are so excited for all of the new (or newly structured) ways we will be participating in Christ's work!

In early 2019, God spoke to me, and I encouraged all of you to **"Get Connected."** Now more than ever we need to stay connected. All leaders in Greater Pentecostal have the opportunity to lead in spite of this worldwide pandemic. I want to thank the Youth Department for their innovative approach to Ministry during this unusual season. For months, they conducted weekly **Virtual Game Night** for our kids by way of Zoom. They recognized our **2020 High School and College Graduate** with a video, funds, and social media recognition. The kids did **Easter speeches from home**, and the Youth Department combined the speeches and made a Creative video for Facebook! Furthermore, they worked with the children of GP to provide a **video for Facebook to celebrate mothers on Mother's Day & a picture collage for Facebook to celebrate fathers on Father's day**. Proving that this pandemic can't stop ministry, they held a community wide **School Supply Drive by Giveaway for over 200 children** in September and a **Drive by Hallelujah Fest** in October to provide candy for **over 200 children**. They are currently conducting a **Toy Drive** to give away **toys to all of our children for Christmas...all while in the middle of a worldwide Pandemic. That is Kingdom minded ministry!**

That's not all of what we, as a church, have done during this pandemic. During the height of this pandemic, we provided **boxes of food to our Seniors Citizens** each week. Eventually, we expanded the program to providing **food to the community**. We also **fed about 90 families (approximately 300 people) a week** for about eight weeks this summer. We are working to bring that program back. I want to remind all Greater Pentecostal members that if you are ever in need of food (no matter who you are, or where you work), please call the church and let us know and we will go purchase food for you (no questions asked). We have provided **free masks** for all Greater Pentecostal Members and the community. If you have not received your ten (10) cloth masks, please come by Greater Pentecostal and get as many masks as you need. For those who have picked up mask, please feel free to come by and get more (we still have over 2,000 masks to give away). Furthermore, we provided over **1,200 Kids masks and 1,000 masks for adults to Anderson Elementary School**, where our own **Eboni Armstrong is the Assistant Principal**. We also, provided **\$1,600 to Anderson Elementary to help provide internet service** to children who didn't have internet for "at-home remote learning." Finally, we are planning to provide **turkey and food baskets for Thanksgiving 2020** for those who need one. Please call the church and let us know if you would like a basket (no questions asked).

Lady Hicks has encouraged the women with personal one-on-one texts. We are so appreciative in how the women of Greater Pentecostal have reached back out to First Lady Hicks to let her know what is going on in your life so she could pray for and with you. Lady Hicks also hosted a **Virtual Prayer Breakfast**, and a **Virtual Spa Day (with a professional aesthetician from Chicago)** over Zoom with the ladies of GP. Lady Hicks has invited all the women to join her for her **Virtual Kansas Southwest Book Review Call over Zoom**. She also is encouraging all ladies to join **District Missionary Sandra Bland's powerful 6am Morning Prayer Call**.

Additionally, the entire church celebrated First Lady Hicks and me with an outstanding **Pastoral Appreciation Drive By Parade**. We were so honored and appreciative, and we thank you for all the cards, gifts, and funds. You also participated in several **drive by Birthday Parades for members** who reached a monumental age of wisdom. You continue to support one another, and for that we are grateful. This pandemic has not stopped us from being kind to one another.

We have tried our best to communicate to each of you through Facebook, Zoom and Free Conference Calling. I personally conducted a “**Men’s Talk**” with the men of GP via Zoom...it was so good to see the faces of the GP men! Some former men of GP also joined us for our call. We have developed a **brand-new website ([www.gpcogic.org](http://www.gpcogic.org))**. You can now go on our website 24-hours a day and find out what is going on in YOUR church. Finally, we conducted **weekly parking lot services** during the month of September 2020 and part of October 2020.

So, as you can see, we have not allowed this pandemic to stop us from ministry. I am asking all GP leaders to find innovative ways to do ministry, Find ways to stay connected to those on your team, your church family and the community. **I need leaders to reach out to members of GP and make sure we don’t have ONE disciple who has not heard from their GP church family.** I encourage you to meet virtually (through regular phone calls, Zoom or Free Conference Calling). Discuss, develop and execute ways you can provide ministry in the midst of a pandemic.

This virus does not discriminate who it infects, but it is especially severe to our aging, pregnant women, and those with heart, lung, and immune conditions. As a **multi-generational congregation**, our church has many who would fall into these categories. Not gathering together as a church family is more than just a way to protect the people that are within our church family, but to extend this care to those within our cities and communities as well. This is our chance to love those in both **home and neighborhood**.

The CDC, doctors and the Health Department has stated that due to the winter months and flu season, combined with COVID-19, this could be the worst winter in years (as far as sicknesses). Thus, increasing the probability that the COVID-19 positive testing will increase and cause more hospitalization, and even death. **It is for these reasons that I have decided NOT to open Greater Pentecostal (the building) for services, gatherings, or events for the rest of 2020.** We want to do our part in stopping the transmission of this virus and protect those populations within our church and city who are most vulnerable to its effects. **We will Not have Watch Night (New Year’s Eve Service) this year for the first time in 17 years!** In January, we **WILL** have **Consecration 2020**, but it will be done from our homes through virtual means. As to when we will re-open in 2021, that will depend on the viability of a vaccine and the reduction of the virus in our community. Once we decide to reopen the church, we will follow the Integration Package I emailed you during the summer (using the Phase 1 through Phase 4 process). I will keep you inform of our 2021 REOPENING!!

Our services will continue as follows: GP Sunday Morning Worship Experience at 10:15am on **Facebook Live**, **Zoom App** or **[www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us)** or call Zoom at 1-346-248-7799. The Zoom

**Mtg ID is: 7695210022. Zoom Passcode is: 730.** You can also call in from your house or cell phone to **Free Conference Calling: 1-302-202-1112; Code 210529.** **Soon you will be able to find us live on our Website and YouTube Channel (Greater Pentecostal COGIC)...check out our YouTube Channel today.** **Our Bible Study/Prayer (6:30pm Wednesdays) and Saturday Night Sunday School (7pm) will continue on Zoom & Free Conference Calling.**

As we get more information, we will post updates on our website, through social media, email and text. If you have any questions, please call the church at **316-262-7155** or email the church at **admin@gpcogic.org**. A copy of this letter will be placed on our website.

If you have been giving your tithes and offering to Greater Pentecostal during this difficult season, thank you for your continued financial support to this ministry. If you have not been tithing and giving offerings, please seek God about being faithful to his Word even in a pandemic. God will bless you beyond measure if you bless his house first. God has blessed at least six of our family members to start or expand their own business **during this pandemic**. **Aubrey Banks** opened **Ray's Food Express**, located at 1536 E. 61<sup>st</sup> North. The catfish and chicken are very good! Call ahead so your food will be ready when you get there (**316-253-9536**). The Lord blessed **Missionary Vernetta Dixon** to started **Life Connections Youth Homes LLC**. It is a group boarding home for Girls in the State of Kansas Foster Care System. They are a long-term placement that prepare girls for reintegration or aging out the system successful. The Lord has blessed **Keston & Tamecca Rolfe (Keystone Custom Builders, LLC)** to build affordable housing units behind Greater Pentecostal (on Mathewson St). This project will bring new people into the neighborhood, and hopefully, new disciples to our ministry. Finally, **Mark and Paris Walker** expanded to a second "**Mark Paris The Shoppe**" facility, located at 2020 N. Woodlawn, Suite #460 (with 4 beauticians, 4 Barbers, 1 dreads technician, and 1 aesthetician). The old barber/beauty shop is still at 2120 N. Woodlawn, Suite #410. **Look at what God is doing for our GP family members in the midst of a Worldwide Pandemic!!! Congratulations to all of them!** Maybe some of you have started a business or enlarged your territory, please feel free to send us an email with your praise report.

**Finally, I am reminded of this blessing from Paul's letter to the Philippians 4:4-7:** *<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. <sup>6</sup> Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* Lady Hicks and I hold all of you in our prayers, and we request your prayers as well. May the peace of God dwell richly in your homes and neighborhoods in these next few months. We will be back together soon!

*See you online!*

***HERMAN HICKS***  
**PASTOR HERMAN HICKS**  
**SENIOR PASTOR**