

# RESUMING IN-PERSON WORSHIP AT FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH



Greetings families and friends of First Lutheran,

July 20, 2020

Over the past several weeks our Worship Re-Entry Planning Team has been working diligently to determine the best safe practices that need to be put in place to resume in-person worship in the midst of life with Covid-19. We are excited to announce that our doors will be open for worship beginning Sunday August 16, 2020, and we look forward to welcoming you. As we resume in-person worship, please be mindful of the following policies and procedures that we are putting in place:

## When you arrive:

- The parking lot will be self regulated. We ask that you use common sense when parking. Please be patient, kind and respectful of others as you arrive.
- To limit access in and around the building, the doors to the preschool entrance and the sliding door entrance will be closed and unavailable for use. We ask that you use the main lobby doors and the lobby doors near the kitchen. These doors will be propped open to minimize hand to hand contact. Signs will be posted to direct you into the worship space.
- To further limit access in and around the building, the hallway beyond the women's bathroom will be closed off to create a safe space for our pre-school. The hallway providing access to the offices, Sunday school classrooms, and library will also be closed off to create a safe working environment for our staff.
- As you approach the Narthex, you will be greeted, asked if you are feeling well, and a note of your attendance will be recorded. Hand sanitizer stations will be available at this location. Temperatures will not be taken at this time. We ask that if you are not feeling well and/or have a temperature that you please stay home.
- For the safety and well being of everyone in attendance, we ask that you wear a mask if you are attending Worship. If you do not have one, masks will be available at the greeter's station. Worship Leaders will not be required to wear a mask while in the chancel area or while leading worship. These individuals will be asked to mask while greeting or interacting with congregational members.
- Upon entering the Worship Space, you will notice that various pews have been roped off to create a safe space for you and your family.

## During Worship:

- As we gather for worship some things will be noticeably different, some things will remain very similar. All of these changes continue to allow us to offer our thanks and praise to God, while maintaining an online and on air worship presence for those listening from home.
- All materials from the pew racks have been removed. For this reason, all the information you need will be emailed in our weekly bulletin and projected on a large screen. Printed copies of the bulletin will not be available on Sunday morning. If you would like a printed copy we ask that you either print your own and bring it from home or use your own mobile device to follow along.
- For the time being we will not be sharing the peace, nor will we be sharing in communion. These will be reserved for festival occasions, and safe practices are still being developed on how best to share these within the congregation.

- The offering will be collected at the door. Large baskets are posted to receive your gifts. At this time we also encourage you to consider a direct deposit from your bank, or online giving.
- Also be mindful that we will continue to stream via Facebook Live. In many ways a “movie studio” has been created in the front of the Worship Space to promote a camera friendly worship environment.

Following Worship:

- While the postlude is being played, the Pastor and the Ushers will begin dismissing individuals and families. We ask all families to remain seated until you are dismissed. This is being done to avoid any larger group gatherings in the Narthex or Lobby areas.
- There will be no Fellowship Hour at this time.

Other notes about how we are trying to best protect you:

- After everyone has left on Sunday, the doors to the Worship Space will be closed for three days to allow time for the room to “self-clean”. A three day time period will be allotted whenever possible before/after all worship services. If for some reason there would need to be a service within this three day time span, the room would be sanitized as necessary.
- The remaining building will be cleaned as necessary with attention given to high touch areas (bathrooms, door knobs, light switches, etc.) repeatedly throughout the week.
- Fellowship/Fundraising/Funeral Dinners: At this time no meals are recommended to be held at First Lutheran. However, if meals are deemed necessary, meals must be pre-plated and served from the kitchen. When this is not possible meals must be catered, with catering being defined as someone preparing the food offsite, having the staff onsite to distribute/plate each meal, and that same staff would be responsible for cleaning up all food and service items. At this time no buffets will be offered at First Lutheran.
- Use within the bathrooms will be self regulated. We ask that you are mindful of others when using the restrooms. Doors into the bathrooms will be left open, as long as it doesn’t infringe on privacy. For the time being, there will not be access to the bathroom near the choir area on Sunday morning.

As you read through these new policies and procedures, please know that every decision was well thought out and planned with the health and well being of everyone attending as our primary focus. Our planning team continually asked, Why? How? and When? as we considered these procedures. Together we want to create a safe and inviting place where all people feel welcome to gather, worship, and praise God for all of the blessings that God has given to us even in these uncertain times. So it is, in that mindset that we look forward to welcoming you back to First on Sunday, August 16.

Lastly, and most importantly, words of reassurance to everyone who does not feel comfortable attending at this time. Together we realize that attending worship in the midst of the uncertainties around us is a personal decision based on each person’s health, comfort, and willingness to venture out. Please know that we will continue to offer worship on the radio as well as through Facebook Live each Sunday. Bulletins, congregational announcements and other material will also be mailed out as they have been. We want to reassure everyone that we can still gather “apart . . . yet together” in person, online, and via the radio, and with God’s divine guidance the day will come soon, when all of us can one day be reunited in this place to offer our thanks and praise to God.

God’s Blessings,

The Worship Re-Entry Planning Team:

*Rev. Clayton J. Bailey, Pastor*  
*Rick Greene, Congregational President*  
*Kelly Reis-Kelly, Congregational Vice-President & Medical Representative*  
*Amy Mills, Council Member & Medical Representative*  
*Jack Myers, Worship and Music Representative*  
*Beth Myers, Worship and Music Representative*  
*Deb Hohman, Worship and Music Representative*  
*Sandra Mellott, Congregational Member & Medical Representative*

*This plan was adopted and is supported by council on July 13, 2020*  
*This plan is subject to review after three months and will be further reviewed in October.*