

Date: June 16, 2021

To: Members and Friends of Lutheran Church of the Holy Spirit

From: Pr Ric Elliott and Mark Stanziola (Council President)

An important Update about our Congregation's Ministries

Please be aware that throughout the pandemic, the Pastors, staff and Council have worked diligently to follow safety protocols at all times to keep our members, visitors and staff as safe as possible. Council has strongly encouraged all staff members to be vaccinated and many have done so. We have regularly consulted CDC Guidelines, Medical Professionals, as well as safe practice guidelines provided by the ELCA. On June 8, The Ecumenical Consultation on Protocols for Worship, Fellowship and Sacraments published new guidelines. Those guidelines may be found here at: <https://ministrylink.org/new-guidance-for-safer-worship-and-sacraments/>. We will be revisiting these guidelines regularly notifying the congregation as protocols change.

Opening our Facilities for Staff and Congregational Usage

In the recently completed academic year, Congregation Council has prioritized Nursery School as the primary use of the church building. The required COVID protocols for that ministry have limited access to the building for other meetings or gatherings. With the conclusion of our Nursery School program for the year, and the reduction in mandated restrictions, our church staff resumed utilization of the office wing and the Church Office is now open as normal during the week.

The following criteria apply in compliance with CDC guidelines when entering the building:

- Anyone experiencing any illness or COVID symptoms should stay home.
- When in the church building, vaccinated persons may choose to not wear a mask.
- But vaccinated persons may choose to mask if they feel more comfortable doing so.
- Unvaccinated persons must wear a face mask.
- When indoors, people are encouraged to practice social distancing.

In addition, Church groups and outside groups may schedule the use of the Fellowship Center, Room 117-119 or the temporary tent with the following requirements:

- Groups must schedule the meeting with Nikki, our Office Administrator, to avoid schedule conflicts.
- Due to the reduced staffing for sexton services during construction, groups will be asked to set-up and tear down any needed tables and chairs.
- Groups will be asked to clean after their usage.

On Sundays this summer beginning on June 27, in person worship will be offered in the tent erected on our staff parking lot. Please note there will be no Center for Faith and Life, Catechism Class or Sunday School offered during June, July & August.

- **WORSHIP IN THE TENT:** Two in-person worship services will be held each Sunday one at 8:45 am and one at 10:15 am, (both using the Spirit Worship liturgy for that week).
- **FELLOWSHIP:** Please note there will be bottled water and prepackaged snacks available for fellowship time between services and after the 10:15 worship service.
- **BRING CHAIRS:** Worshippers are encouraged to bring their own folding chairs. Some folding chairs will be available for visitors or those who do not bring chairs.
- **MASKS?** Worshippers will be asked to follow CDC guidelines for outdoor activities; Vaccinated persons may choose either to mask or unmask. Unvaccinated persons must mask.
- **SOCIAL DISTANCING:** Social distancing will be encouraged for the safety of all; especially those with compromised immune systems or those unable to be vaccinated.
- **RESTROOMS:** Church restrooms will be available and trash cans will be provided.
- **BULLETINS:** The worship service will be in bulletin form since we have limited access to technology outdoors. Holy Happenings will be provided each Sunday for announcements.
- **SPOKEN LITURGY:** Members will be encouraged to share in the spoken responses.
- **HUM, NOT SING:** We are aware that people want to have the opportunity to sing. However, we encourage congregants to participate by humming. We will continue to revisit this guideline and will return to congregational song as soon as it is deemed safe to do so.
- **PRE-PACKAGED BREAD/GRAPE JUICE:** Holy Communion will be offered using prepackaged communion element distributed in a safe, sanitary way to each worshipper. Holy Communion will only be distributed by vaccinated persons.
- **SERVICE LENGTH:** Worship services will be about 45 minutes in length and will be held rain or shine.

Worship will continue to be offered on Zoom throughout the summer.

- The current schedule will be continued; Family service at 9:00 am and the Spirit Service at 10:00 am. The Zoom connection will remain the same at 5115048051

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Ric or Mark Stanziola.

We hope you will join us for worship this summer either online or in person and are grateful for your faithful support and seek your patience and flexibility throughout this process.