

ST. PETER'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

COVID-19 / CORONAVIRUS UPDATE

Dear Members, Guests, and the Community:

Today I am writing with good news! The church council has voted to open our church on July 19, 2020 with the following reminders and limitations. The worship service will be continually reviewed and revised as new information and local exposures come into play. These guidelines have been developed based on the survey results from our members.

St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church already had many protective measures in place prior to Coronavirus. Additional protective measures are being implemented such as:

1. **Worship Service**— We encourage people to continue to attend regular worship services, if you are feeling well. We will be using every other pew to ensure social distancing. Members are encouraged not to attend worship if they are feeling sick in any way. We require everyone to wear a mask with the exception of while you are seated within your own family group. If you do not have a mask, there will be some available for a donation to the church. Bulletins will be available for you to pick up on your way in, please remember to take them home with you to limit the need for someone else to remove from the church. There will be no choir anthem for the time being. Hymns will be played by the organist and we ask that you only sing along if you are able to do so with a mask on. Hymnals will be on a cart as you enter and we ask that you place them in the "used" cart when you exit so we can sanitize them.
2. **Sharing of the Peace**—The church council has decided to suspend sharing of the peace and shaking hands for any reason. We will not have greeters in the narthex or downstairs. When we have greeters, they will be outside, practicing social distancing including wearing of a mask.
3. **Holy Communion- On Communion Sundays** — The first time we have communion will be the first Sunday of August. During the distribution of Holy Communion, the pastor along with communion assistant will apply hand sanitizer and use protective gloves as a precaution. We will revert to using communion wafers instead of bread to limit the need for handling. All communion ware will be washed in hot water and sanitized appropriately. We will continue to use disposable communion cups.
4. **Offering** -We will place the offering plate in the narthex and ask you to drop your offering in as you pass it. If you are unable to attend worship, or do not feel comfortable with putting your offering envelope in the plate, we do provide for electronic giving on our website and you are welcome to mail it in to the office.
5. **Cleaning**— Our custodian and members are and will continue to do a thorough job of cleaning the church, especially those areas that are frequently touched by others. We will have all interior doors propped open at the start of worship to reduce the number of times they need to be touched. We are also using high power air purifiers with germicidal UV Light and purification to clean and purify the air inside of our church. We also provide hand sanitizer stations for your use but also encourage you to bring hand sanitizer with you.
6. **Miscellaneous items to be aware of** — We are adding paper toilet seat covers in the restrooms. Please be sure to use them when it is necessary for you to use the facilities.
We will have an usher present to clean the buttons in the elevator after each use. We will also have one usher to light the candles before the service so no acolytes will be scheduled for the time being.
There will be no coffee social for the time being.
We ask that you wait to be dismissed by an usher at the end of service to avoid large groups of people in line to leave.
We ask that you do not congregate in groups.
There will be no Sunday School. The council plans to restart Sunday School in late August or early September.

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Again, church council will be continually monitoring and reviewing the spread of COVID-19. The above may be revised as new information and local exposures come into play. (Subject to change as necessary). As with every aspect of life right now, this is a learning experience and church may not seem the same. But with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will find our way through this and will feel the blessing of the Lord.

Going forward, we will continue to put sermons on line and offer as much support to our members as we can for those of you that have expressed the need for caution in returning. Jesus Christ is the source of faithful hope, and he calls us to love and serve our neighbors. The coronavirus has challenged us to seek ways to share hope, witness and service. Please continue to pray for the people who are suffering with this disease, for medical personnel, caregivers, and all who commit themselves to caring for the sick and their families. Call your elderly neighbors to check on them, love one another.

The entire church council is excited and looking forward to being together again as the body of Christ!

In Christ,
From Church Council
Nancy Reichelt, Council President