



The Evangelical Lutheran Church of
Saint John



I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the LORD!”

Psalm 122:1

4 June 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

On May 28 Governor Pritzger — facing growing litigation and only hours away from a U.S. Supreme Court deadline to respond — dropped the limitations he had placed on churches. This does not mean things here will immediately return to what they were before Covid-19. But it does mean we can begin gathering as a congregation again.

On June 1 the Board of Elders and I met to develop a reopening plan to welcome you back to God’s house to receive Christ’s gracious gifts in the Divine Service (when you are comfortable returning), taking into account the recommendations of the CDC, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and the Northern Illinois District. This reopening plan is enclosed.

With this reopening plan in place, we invite you to join us for a celebratory Divine Service on **Sunday, June 7 at 9:00am** as we observe the Feast of the Holy Trinity. *We will continue to live-stream our services* on our Facebook page for the sake of our homebound, those sick, those working, and those who have underlying health issues or feel vulnerable to this virus. What’s more, I continue to be available by appointment if you desire individual communion either at home or at church.

Thank you for your patience, your understanding, and your prayers during these past several months. We continue to need all three as we begin the process of safely reopening and welcoming our membership back into God’s house for Christ’s gracious gifts in Word and Sacrament.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear...” (Psalm 46:1-2a).

In Christ,

Rev. Paul G. Mumme

Senior Pastor

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A congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS).

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Reopening Plan for Saint John Sycamore

4 June 2020

As we begin gathering together to receive our Lord's gracious gifts in Word and Sacrament as a church family, the following measures will be observed to maintain a reverent atmosphere befitting our worship of the Triune God, a sanitary environment, reasonable distancing, and the general welfare of our brothers and sisters in Christ. These measures will be gradually relaxed over time as current circumstances allow.

General Items

- We will gather together for the Divine Service on Sundays at our normal time of 9:00am.
- All exterior doors will either be propped open or attended by an usher wearing a face covering. Enter and exit through the doors near the sanctuary or the multi-purpose room. The education wing doors will remain locked.
- All interior doors will be propped open so that no one needs to touch the handles.
- Taking into account both pews and chairs in the transepts, our seating capacity is roughly 400 people. Following suggested guidelines, our goal is to limit attendance to 25% of our seating capacity, with overflow seating in the narthex if needed. We believe this will be adequate in the short term.
- We will only be utilizing every other pew for congregational seating. Sit only in pews that are not blocked off. Utilize the center as well as the ends of each pew.
- Do not congregate in the narthex before or after the worship service. Visiting may take place in the parking lot if the weather cooperates or else in the multi-purpose room (no tables or chairs will be set up).
- No food or beverages will be served before or after the service.
- The education wing and nursery will be closed.
- The men's, women's, and family restrooms between the narthex and multi-purpose room will be open. Each has a baby changing station.

Distancing and Etiquette

- Maintain at least a 6-foot distance between households at all times.
- Hand sanitizer will be located in numerous locations in the narthex.
- Wash your hands with soap and water (preferred) or hand sanitizer as needed.
- Face coverings are optional and left to your personal discretion.

Order of Service

- The Divine Service — both liturgy and hymns — will be printed in its entirety in the bulletin to avoid handling the hymnals. Feel free to bring and use your own hymnal.
- We will be shortening the service and limiting our singing for a time.
- Worship Bulletins (one per participant) and News & Announcements (one per family) may be picked up by congregants from the designated tables in the narthex.
- Offering plates will not be passed, but will be situated in several locations in the narthex.
- We begin live-streaming at about 8:55am; please silence your phone and enter quietly.
- The ushers will dismiss the congregation, beginning with the back pews, following the announcements at the end of the service. Please follow their direction.

(continued...)

Holy Communion

- We will utilize a continuous line for the distribution of Christ's body and blood. The ushers will direct the communicants up the center aisle to the entrance of the chancel, where they will receive the Body of Christ from Pastor Mumme and the Blood of Christ from the assisting elder, after which they will continue around the front pew, down the side aisle, and back into their pew.
- Households should properly distance in the aisles.
- Pastor Mumme and the assisting elder will wash their hands before the service and sanitize their hands immediately before the distribution (and during the distribution as needed).
- Pastor Mumme and the assisting elder will wear a face covering during the distribution.
- The Body of Christ will be distributed to your hand (if held in front of you) or mouth (if open).
- The Blood of Christ will be distributed via chalice and individual cup.
- To receive the Blood of Christ via chalice, you must contact Pastor Mumme by Saturday evening and let him know ahead of time. We will be using multiple chalices, each of which will be thoroughly washed and sanitized by a member of the Altar Guild as needed during the distribution.
- To receive the Blood of Christ via individual cup, take one from the tray held by the assisting elder. The cups will be spaced so that you need not touch adjacent cups when taking your own. Empty cups should be placed in the baskets we normally utilize for this purpose.
- The dismissal will be spoken by Pastor Mumme from the altar after everyone has communed.

Staying Home

Please stay home if...

- you have Covid-19, Covid-19 symptoms, or have come into contact with someone who does in the last 14 days;
- you have a fever, cold, or are not feeling well;
- you consider yourself to be high risk;
- you are not comfortable going out into public or congregating just yet.

Live-Streaming

- We will continue to live-stream our services on our Facebook page for the sake of our homebound, those sick, those working, and those who have underlying health issues or feel vulnerable to this virus.
- The bulletin will be available in the foyer and on our church website by Friday noon each week.
- This remains a wonderful opportunity for you to invite others to "join us" for worship.

Guests

As seating will be limited in our sanctuary while these reopening measures are in place...

- we encourage members of other congregations to attend worship at their own congregation (or to participate in our live-stream if attending worship at their own congregation isn't possible);
- we encourage those without a church home to participate in our live-stream until we can fully open up our sanctuary and properly welcome them.

Pastor Mumme
Senior Pastor

John Fairfield
Board of Elders, Chairman

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Saint John