

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH



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May 12, 2020

RE: A Careful "Reopening"!

Dear Fellow St. John's Members,

The past two months have been challenging as we cope with the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. We are thankful for God's loving care, and we continue to trust in Him through this crisis. After having to suspend all onsite worship and meetings at St. John's for the past two months, we are pleased to announce the careful resumption of some activities at the church. This will require adherence to strict policies for minimizing the risk of exposing each other and our staff to Covid-19.

Just as businesses have to do, the church must have detailed policies for "reopening." These policies, which are attached herewith, have been approved by the Church Council to be in compliance with directives of the Ohio Department of Health and the ELCA Southern Ohio Synod. They are based on information available as of this date, and they will surely evolve as circumstances change. We ask each member to please review each policy carefully.

Next steps as we begin to "reopen" include:

Necessary Council and Ministry Meetings of 10 or fewer people may be held at the church beginning on **May 18, 2020**.

However, choir practices and other gatherings remain suspended for now. The attached Policy for onsite meetings of 10 people or less is to be followed.

Onsite Worship Services will resume on **Sunday, June 7, 2020** unless otherwise prohibited by government order. For now, there will be just one service at 9:00AM in the main sanctuary. This is necessary for required social distancing and to avoid the decontamination that would be required between services held on the same morning. The attached Policy for resumption of onsite Worship Services is to be followed. We intend to resume our traditional two service schedule when the pandemic is over.

Facebook Live streaming of services will be continued for the benefit of those who are not able to, or prefer not to, attend onsite worship. We are investigating how to upgrade our internet connectivity and supporting equipment to improve the quality and reliability of this outreach ministry.

Weekday Entrance to St. John's Lutheran Church will continue to be limited until further notice. The attached Policy for Weekday Entrance is to be followed.

We look forward to resuming active gatherings in our church building, but remember that we are an active church family, regardless of whether we are meeting physically.

In His Service and
on behalf of the St. John's Lutheran Church Council,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. Norm Shade".

W. Norm Shade, President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Combs".

The Rev. Mark A. Combs, Pastor

Policy for onsite meetings of 10 people or less at St. John's Lutheran Church
Rev. 1, May 12, 2020

This policy is effective as of May 12, 2020 and will remain in effect until further notice. It has been approved by SJLC Council for the resumption of necessary meetings while complying with Ohio Dept. of Health guidance for public gatherings and providing reasonable precautions for the protection of members and staff from transmission of Covid-19. The policy will be reviewed and adapted as conditions may dictate in the future.

1. Beginning May 18, necessary Council and Ministry Meetings of 10 or fewer participants may be held at the church. Choir practice and other gatherings remain suspended for now.
2. Meetings are to be held only in the Fellowship Hall using the table and chair arrangement that is set-up to enable 6' distancing and timely cleaning.
3. Only metal folding chairs will be used to enable effective cleaning by wiping down.
4. Use of fans is to be minimized because of the risk of spreading droplets from coughs and sneezes. If fans must be used, recommend keeping them at least 10' away from any person.
5. All meetings are to be scheduled with the church office. The church secretary or another person (if the secretary is not available) is to post the meeting date and time on a calendar outside church office.
6. The sexton is to monitor the posted meeting schedule and ensure that the meeting tables and chairs in the Fellowship Hall are wiped down before and, as soon as possible, after the meeting. (Note that the sexton's work days are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.)
7. Precautions to be followed by all attendees:
 - a. Do not come to the church with a fever, another symptom of Covid-19, or if having been diagnosed with active Covid-19.
 - b. Strongly encouraged to wear face covering (to protect others and themselves).
 - c. Maintain strict 6' separation at all times.
 - d. Avoid handshakes and other physical contact.
 - e. Requested to bring and use their own hand sanitizer, if possible. (The church will try to have hand sanitizer available for those that need it, but re-supply is sometimes uncertain and not timely.)
 - f. Wash hands frequently.

Policy for resumption of onsite Worship Services at St. John's Lutheran Church
Rev. 1, May 12, 2020

This policy is effective as of May 12, 2020 and will remain in effect until further notice. It has been approved by SJLC Council for the resumption of onsite Worship Services while complying with Ohio Dept. of Health guidance for public gatherings and Southern Ohio Synod ELCA guidance and providing reasonable precautions for the protection of members and staff from transmission of Covid-19. The policy will be reviewed and adapted as conditions may dictate in the future.

1. Onsite Worship Services will resume on June 7, 2020 unless prohibited by government order.
2. For now, there will be only one Sunday service, held at 9:00 AM in the main church for necessary social distancing and avoiding the need to clean/wipe-down worship and common areas between services.
3. Facebook Live broadcasts will continue for the benefit of anyone not attending worship in person.
4. Pews will be marked off for seating with 6' separation.
5. Only one household per marked seating area. (Only members of the same household may sit closer than 6' apart.)
6. Use of fans is to be minimized because of the risk of spreading droplets from coughs and sneezes. (The 9:00 AM service time is to take advantage of cooler morning temperatures, noting that services without communion will typically last less than an hour. If fans must be used, recommend keeping them at least 10' away from any person.)
7. For now, physical communion, passing of the peace, children's sermon, Sunday School, use of the nursery, and parlor coffee/fellowship gatherings will be suspended.
8. Enter and exit only at the parking lot and 7th St. doors.
9. Stacks of bulletins will be available on tables just inside the entrances at the front of the church sanctuary on each side for members to pick-up as they enter.
10. Offering plates will also be available just inside the entrances at the front of the church sanctuary on each side for members to place their offerings as they enter or leave the sanctuary for worship.
11. Attendance will be recorded by each person completing an attendance card provided with the bulletin and either leaving the card in the church pew or placing it in an offering plate upon leaving the sanctuary.
12. When entering or leaving after the service, maintain 6' distance from other members or households.
13. Hymns will be printed in the bulletin. Hymnals and other pew items will be removed and stored to avoid frequent cleaning.
14. Only the restrooms (upstairs and downstairs) in the main church buildings should be used, as these will be regularly wiped down.
15. Pew backs, pew pencils, railings, door handles and designated restrooms are to be wiped down by the sexton on Friday and Monday.
16. Precautions to be followed by all worship attendees, including children:
 - a. Do not come to the church with a fever, another symptom of Covid-19, or if having been diagnosed with active Covid-19.
 - b. Strongly encouraged to wear face covering (to protect others and themselves).
 - c. Maintain strict 6' separation at all times.
 - d. Avoid handshakes, hugs and other physical contact with others.
 - e. Requested to bring and use their own hand sanitizer, if possible. (The church will try to have hand sanitizer available for those that need it, but re-supply is sometimes uncertain and not timely.)
 - f. Wash hands frequently.

Policy for Weekday Entrance to St. John's Lutheran Church
Rev. 1, May 12, 2020

In consideration of the health and safety of staff and members due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the following practices must be followed until further notice:

1. All church doors should remain locked at all times during the week.
2. Casual visits by members and others is strongly discouraged.
3. Members having keys may enter when necessary to conduct church business, pick up or drop off items needed for church business or ministry, sign checks, conduct building inspection or maintenance, etc.
4. Members not having keys, but needing entrance for any reason, should call the church office ahead of time to ensure that a staff member is available to open a door for entry.
5. Staff may enter for work purposes.
6. Contractors are permitted for the purpose of inspections or necessary maintenance.
7. No one should enter the church with a fever, another symptom of Covid-19, or if having been diagnosed with active Covid-19.
8. Members and staff should follow social distancing rules at all times on Church property. No more than one person should be within an office at any time. Any items to be signed, dropped off or picked up in person should be left on the table outside the secretary's office. Wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer upon entering and leaving the building.