

# St. Johns Lutheran Church Park Rapids

## Public Worship Plan

### Phase 1 – Our present situation as of May 14, 2020

- 1) Out of love for our neighbor and respect for our state, St. Johns is closed for public worship. We will continue to live stream Sunday morning worship at 9:00 a.m.
- 2) We will continue the normal rotation of worship services without communion:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month – Blended
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month – Divine Service 1 (This is the Feast)
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month – Divine Service 3
  - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month – Divine Service 4
  - 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month – Matins, Special Order, Prayer and Preaching

### Reopening Plan Phase 2 (Target date: June 7<sup>th</sup>?)

**Marker:** We will begin hosting small group worship the first Sunday at least 5 days after the following criteria are met:

1. The Governor's Executive Order allows for the gathering of groups of 25 - 80 people
2. **OR** gathering for worship is clearly allowed.

**Worship times:** While there are restrictions on gathering size up to 80, we will:

- 1) Live stream Sunday morning at 9:00 a.m. This will be considered our main worship time.
  - a) We will continue the normal rotation of worship services without communion
  - b) After the live stream is ended, we will hold the communion service for those present.

*Part 2 and 3 are still under consideration, but are included for feedback*

- 2) *Communion service on Wednesday at Noon.*
  - a) *This will be exclusively (except worship leaders) for 65+ and other at-risk persons.*
  - b) *It will follow an abbreviated order of service for communion (30 minutes tops)*
- 3) *Communion service on Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m.*
  - a) *This will be open to anyone*
  - b) *It will follow an abbreviated order of service for communion (30 minutes tops)*

### **Attendance:**

- 1) Under the Stay Safe Minnesota orders, those who are elderly and high risk are encouraged to continue to shelter in place and not risk exposure. We are emphasizing that as well.
- 2) If anyone is not feeling well or has a temperature they need to remain at home for the good of others.
- 3) We will use a signup system that will be available online and by calling in.
- 4) **Good Neighbor Policy:** When you have attended a service please wait until Sat. evening to sign up for the following Sunday to allow others maximum time to sign up.

## Worship Considerations:

- 1) Door will be propped open for people coming and going.
- 2) Temperatures may be taken.
- 3) Bulletins will be available to be picked up on the front table. The bulletin should be taken home or recycled (a box for recycling will be evident) and not added back into circulation.
- 4) Signs will be posted as to the room capacity of the narthex and markers to remind people what six feet looks like and to encourage people to not stand around in the entryway too much, but to enter the sanctuary.
- 5) Offering plate will be at the center aisle.
- 6) Social distancing guidelines:
  - a) Masks will be optional while in the building
  - b) Hand sanitizer will be in numerous and obvious places
  - c) Hymnals and soft surfaces will be removed from the sanctuary (couches/chairs in narthex?)
  - d) Pews will be marked
    - Seating will be along the lectern and center aisles at the ends of the pews
    - Seating will be in every other pew.
    - Tape will mark how far in people can sit to allow six feet between occupants in a single pew.
    - The space is comfortable for two people.
    - Family groups can sit together, but if they go past the tape mark then they “take up the whole pew.”
    - With social distancing we have 20 pews with 2-4/pew (depending on single/couple/family unit) gives us the number of 80 people. We would consider this 50% occupancy.
- 7) Holy Communion
  - a) Only enough elements will be used to match the maximum number present
  - b) Disposable individual cups will be used.
  - c) Pastors will don masks and then wash hands or use hand sanitizer before the distribution of the elements.
  - d) *Distribution (still being considered)*
    - *Option A: Communion in the pews, pastors coming to communicants*
    - *Option B: Walk-up Communion, communicants come forward to receive*
    - *Option C: Receiving Communion as you leave.*
    - *No matter the option we decide upon, the pastors will be handing both the wafer and the cup to the communicants and the empty cups will be disposed of in a basket and not go back to the tray.*
- 8) At the end of service, participants will be dismissed pew by pew.
- 9) Anyone who wants to have some fellowship time should consider the front lawn and remember social distancing.

### **Bible Study, Sunday School and other small groups:**

- 1) We will continue to host Bible study by Google Meet and Live Stream. Sunday school doesn't meet during the summer.
- 2) Boards will be encouraged to meet face-to-face once the group size is at least 25, but we will not have a joint meeting until the allowed group size is 50.
- 3) Ladies Aid, Evening Guild, LLL, etc. are free to meet, observing social distancing guidelines.
- 4) Outside groups (under 25) can use our facilities if they follow proper precautions currently recommended.

### **Other Matters:**

- 1) Restrooms – We have signs posted already for proper hand washing. We will post a reminder about using paper towels to open doors. Hand sanitizers are available in numerous and obvious places.
- 2) Rooms that are not being used will be locked.

## **Reopening Plan Phase 3 (Preliminary)**

**Marker:** We will begin regular worship services the first Sunday at least 5 days after the group limit has been raised to 100 and social distancing and sanitizing requirements have been relaxed some.

**Worship times:** We will return to the normal Sunday service schedule, 8:00 and 10:30 with Bible study in between services and continue to Live Stream. *We will also start or continue to have the Wednesday Noon service exclusively for 65+ and other at-risk persons.*

**Attendance:** Depending on restrictions we may continue worship sign up and other aspects of Phase 2. If social distancing rules are still at 6 feet, our max capacity will hover around 80, depending on families. With two services this will increase our Sunday total capacity to 160 people.

**Worship considerations:** We will continue to observe the necessary aspects of phase 2. And will sanitize the sanctuary between services.

**Bible Study and other small groups:** Meeting face-to-face will resume including Boards and Voters.

## **Reopening Plan Phase 4 (Preliminary)**

**Marker:** When all restrictions have been lifted on large group gatherings.

**Attendance:** Restrictions will be lifted.

**Worship consideration:** Observe updated CDC, federal and state guidelines as warranted. We will be prepared to return to prior phases if necessary.

**Small groups:** Return to normal policies.