

May 27, 2020

Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Christ has died! Christ is risen! He will come again!

After consultation with Fred Rackow, President, Jim Butt, Vice President, the Elders, and Trustees, it has been decided to **resume in-person worship on Sunday, 31 May 2020**. We believe we can safely gather while meeting guidelines put together by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Northern Illinois District (NID) of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS).

As individuals and families, you must decide if you are comfortable returning to in-person worship. We invite you to return to in-person worship with the understanding that we are doing everything we can to ensure safe worship in our facility that is sanitized and spacious. **We ask that each person respects the decisions of other worshippers. While you might be comfortable not wearing a mask or hugging, there are others who are not. We are called to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. In other words, love your brothers and sisters in Christ as He loves us.** The worship time will be the same at 9 am on Sundays. We will delay resuming adult Bible study until we see how this unfolds.

We want everyone to feel safe and comfortable.

- If you are feeling sick, please do not attend
- If you do not feel comfortable gathering yet, please stay home
- If you do not feel comfortable gathering, but would like a pastoral visit, please contact Pastor or the church office to set this up
- You are free to wear a mask, but it is not required

The guidelines we have implemented are as follows:

- We ask that, if possible, you arrive 15-20 minutes early to allow for seating
- When the weather permits, the doors into the facility and interior doors will be propped open, this does not include restroom doors
- In inclement weather, we will have ushers wearing gloves to open the doors into the facility for coming and going, interior doors will be propped open
- Masks and gloves will be available for anyone wishing them and you are encouraged to wear a mask
- Hand sanitizer will be available close to both entrances/exits
- Hand soap will be available in the restrooms
- Infrared thermometers will be available at both entrances for those wishing to have their temperature checked
- We ask that people respect the 6-foot rule for social distancing, this does not include immediate family members
Seating will be marked (immediate family members may sit closer)

- The Givings Back (offering) plate will be centrally placed and not passed around
- There will be worship folders but no hymnals, the hymns and liturgy will be printed out in the worship folder and projected on the wall
- We will be celebrating Holy Communion at all services
- Ushers will allow for closer than 6 feet at the Communion rail and respect those wanting to maintain the 6-foot separation, again immediate families do not need to practice social distancing
- The individual and common cup will still be offered, you are free to receive whichever you are comfortable with
- The wafer will be placed into your open hand, we will refrain from placing it into mouths as that constitutes an undue risk
- Ushers will release people for leaving when church is over to help maintain social distancing
- We encourage fellowship after the service, but please move it to the parking lot to help maintain social distancing
- Regarding physical contact, respect the other person's wishes and do not assume someone wants a handshake or hug

These are difficult times to say the least and I understand that. If at any time you feel the need to talk or visit, please contact me at 224-242-4151 (church direct line), 701-340-8324 (cell and text), or pastor@stpetersnorthplato.org and I will make myself available to you.

I pray that you take the necessary precautions for your specific situation. We continue to comply with the Governor's "Stay at Home" order, which has been extended to May 30, or until it is lifted.

Regarding givings, you may visit the church's website and give online by clicking on the "GIVE NOW" link at the top of the Home page, clicking on the "GIVE NOW" button, and filling in the form. **You may also mail your givings in or drop them by the church. If you do the latter, please call ahead to ensure someone is at the church.**

Please be aware that our custodian, Fern Petersen, continues to thoroughly clean all our surfaces that people touch with disinfectant. She is taking every precaution and then some to ensure our facility is clean.

Sunday worship services will still be available on our church website and Facebook page as soon as possible after the service is concluded. When you visit the website, put your cursor over the link "SERMONS" at the top of the page, click on "SERMON" and scroll down to the sermon or sermons you would like to listen to. We are also posting the worship folder (bulletin) online so that you can follow along. If you don't have a hymnal and would like to sing or follow along at home, please call the church and you are welcome to stop by and borrow a hymnal until this is over. If you need devotional materials such as Portals of Prayer, please contact the church and we will arrange for you to pick them up, mail them to you, or deliver them to you.

These are the plans for now. However, the situation has been changing almost daily. Please monitor your phone calls, the website, your texts, emails, and mail for changes. I will continue to reach out to each of you to offer a visit and Holy Communion. We are working diligently in the Lord's and your best interests. Continue to pray for all that is going on, our leaders, and the church and I continue to pray for each of you.

Remember you are baptized, forgiven children of God whose names are written in God's book of life in Heaven for all of eternity.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you. And be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and ✠ give you His peace. Amen!

Christ is risen! He is risen indeed! Alleluia! Christ has died! Christ is risen! He will come again!

With you in His service!