

RE: Worship Plans for June, 2020

Trinity Lutheran Church
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Dear Members and Friends of Trinity Lutheran Church,

Following our council meeting this past Sunday, we have much to share. I realize it is a lot of information, but I encourage you to take the time to read all that is included in this letter and in the letter regarding our building. I'm grateful to each of our council members. They have been meeting every 2 to 4 weeks throughout COVID-19, to stay involved and give guidance to the ministry God has given us through Trinity Lutheran Church right now.

This past Sunday, our council had a long meeting to discuss and discern two items:

- #1: How to faithfully move forward with onsite ministry, which is outlined in this letter, and
- #2: How to move forward with building repairs, which is outlined in the attached letter from John Monetelone, our Council President, and me.

I'm grateful for the patience you've had in this time, as we've become eager to gather together again, and grateful for how many of you responded to the survey about returning to onsite ministry. We had received 50 online surveys and 2 hard copy surveys by the morning of June 7th, to be reviewed at our council meeting that afternoon. More surveys came in throughout the day on June 7th, and more are still being received, which the council will review after the June 14th deadline. At the time of our Council Meeting, 90% of survey respondents said they would be comfortable attending an outdoor worship.

Based on our survey results and on resources we've shared on our website:

trinitymcalisterville.org; we have moved to hold an outdoor worship on June 21st, at 9 AM. The worship will happen in the McAlisterville Park, under and around the pavilion. The rental cost for the pavilion was covered by a couple of congregation members. While we love our St. Peters Grove worship space behind our church playground, for this first worship together, the pavilion in the park allows more space for shelter, if it should rain. It also allows for anyone who is not comfortable walking on uneven ground, to drive up to the pavilion and remain in their car to hear the worship service with windows down. We felt this would be the way to allow the most people to feel comfortable gathering for worship our first time back together. Also, know that worship will feel different for a while compared to before COVID-19 started.

We will be following CDC Guidelines, and other recommendations, as follows, for this worship service:

- The worship will be 30-45 minutes long.
- We will not include congregational singing right now, but will have special music.
- In an abundance of caution, masks will be required for the worship service, as we can't guarantee everyone will social distance. We will have extra masks available, if you forget yours. Note: The cloth masks don't provide a lot of protection for you from other

people's viruses, but they do provide some protection for others, if you are carrying the virus. Because of that, we see wearing the mask for this 30-45 minutes, as way of showing love for your neighbor, who may be more vulnerable to coronavirus. We have several members, who are more vulnerable to it, due to underlying conditions or age, and some are not comfortable worshipping, if others aren't wearing a mask.

- We will ask you to social distance, trying to keep 6 feet apart.
- We will have a team of people prepared to disinfect picnic tables in the pavilion prior to worship.
- Restrooms in the park will be available.
- We'll have hand sanitizer available or you may bring your own.
- We won't pass offering plates, but will have buckets you may place your offering in on your way to or from worship.
- If you have no trouble walking, please park in our parking lot, to reserve space in the park for those who have a harder time walking.
- We won't have food for social time on June 21st.

Worship will be available online each Sunday in June. For June 14th and June 28th, we'll only have online worship available. We need to order supplies, and get a team of people together to prepare the worship space, so the council felt June 14th was too soon to get that in order. I am on vacation June 28th, and the council felt it would be better to stick with online worship, while I'm gone.

The council will meet again at the end of June, to let you know what we are doing for July.

We know these decisions about worship will not suit everyone, especially those who are more than ready to gather together, as Jesus' people at Trinity Lutheran Church. While we may not all agree on when or how to worship, I trust we will cling to and focus on who is the center of our worship: God, our Creator, Jesus Christ our Savior, and the Holy Spirit, who is called alongside us for this ministry.

I am so looking forward to seeing those, who are able to be in worship on June 21st. I miss you all.

Christ's peace be with you,

Pastor Erin