

“I rejoiced with those who said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord!”

~Psalm 122:1

July 16, 2020

Dear Saints,

Churches have been allowed to return to worship at 25% of their capacity provided that they maintain social distancing and have a plan in place to mitigate the spread of germs in those services. In order to be in compliance with state orders and to mitigate the spread of germs, we're going to follow these practices initially (hopefully relaxing restrictions as we get closer to normal in the weeks and months ahead):

We will return to our four services (Saturday at 6:30pm and Sunday at 8:00am, 9:30am and 11:00am). But **we will limit attendance to 80 per service**. In order to do that in an organized way without having to turn anyone away, we're asking our members to sign up on a first come, first served basis.

There will be **NO congregational singing in the 6:30pm Saturday** night service, so those who are uncomfortable or higher risk may choose to attend that service, but **there WILL be congregational singing again in all three services on Sunday**. Please sign up accordingly:

[Click Here to Sign Up for Worship.](#)

Once we have 80 signed up, that service will be considered full. **Please note that if you have concerns about attending or are uneasy, or especially if you are high-risk (65+ or have underlying health issues), or are sick in any way, please stay home.** If you do stay at home, or if you can't make it this weekend, not to fear. We will continue to serve you at home. We'll continue to hold services online. The pastors will gladly commune our members at home or at the church office by appointment. And we will also continue to hold Bible Class online (on *The Screwtape Letters*) but will shift our time to **7:00pm**. Please join us there!

For those who sign up to gather for worship, we ask that these precautions be followed:

- Please consider wearing masks, which are encouraged, but not mandatory.
- Please enter through the Washington Street doors or under the colonnade under the arches. (The 7th Street entrance will remain locked.) Doors will be propped open, weather permitting, or ushers will open doors for you so you need not touch them.
- We will greet one another from a distance without physical contact.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in the narthex for your use. But please try to keep what you touch to a minimum.
- We will sit in every third pew to maintain social distancing and, while immediate families may sit together, we ask that you distance yourself from others by 6 feet.
- **We will suspend congregational singing at our Saturday night service. Cantors and instrumental music will help edify our worship then.**

- Ushers will direct you to fill the sanctuary from the front to the back. (If you prefer sitting in the back of the church, please wait to arrive closer to the start of the service.)
- The hymnals and Bibles have been removed from the pews, but everything will be printed out in bulletins left out in the narthex. Please do NOT return these, but take them home or dispose of them on the way out.
- We will not pass offering plates, but will have an offering drop box in the narthex.
- Ushers will direct you to leave the sanctuary **from the back to the front**. After the service, we ask that you would head out immediately not lingering in the narthex or parking lot, while continuing to maintain social distancing and stay 6 feet apart from other families.

We are now back to celebrating the Lord's Supper on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month (and the preceding Saturdays). You'll notice that the online sign-up has a column to indicate how many in your family will commune. This will serve as our communion registration for now and ought to give the side benefit of time to focus and prepare for the reception of our Savior's body and blood and the forgiveness he gives. (Consider using the questions and answers from pg. 156 in the front of the hymnal in your preparation.) During distribution, we will follow these procedures...

- We will let family units come up together, but ask that you continue to maintain 6 feet of distance from other worshipers, even at the altar.
- We ask that you would stand rather than kneel (the kneelers will not be in place to avoid touching the kneelers and railings).
- We ask that you cup both hands to receive the wafer rather than receive it in your mouth. We will drop the wafer into your hands.
- We will not offer the common cup, but only individual cups, which will be spaced apart on the trays to avoid contact with any cup but the one you take.
- **If the cup that you take seems stuck at first, please twist the cup to release it; DO NOT squeeze the cup as this tends to crack the cup and spill the wine.**
- Finally, we will commune the pulpit side first ushering communicants up the center aisle, returning down the side aisle like usual. Then we will commune the lectern side.

We, on our part will do all we can to keep the sanctuary safe and clean, with thorough cleanings prior to Saturday and wiping down pews with disinfectant wipes between services. And the Pastors will regularly use hand sanitizer to reduce transmission of any germs. We know it's lot of precautions for now, but we wish to be wise as we pray for the day when we can return to normal. And this is all to help prevent the spread of germs and disease and keep you and others safe and make everyone as comfortable as possible.

Once more, a reminder that worship is not mandatory in any way and **if you have any concerns or are uneasy, or especially if you are high-risk or are sick in any way, please stay home**. The pastors will be happy to serve you and commune you at church or at your home.

Thanks in advance for following these precautions. Lord willing, see you all soon!