

Guidelines for In-Person Worship – Updated November 3, 2020

Thank you for the overwhelming response to the livestream services Messiah has offered since May and the in-person services we resumed in August. We are grateful that we are able to continue proclaiming and offering forgiveness of sins, life and salvation to you through our Lord's Word and Sacraments.

However, as in-person attendance has increased in recent weeks, available space in the sanctuary has decreased, to the point that we are no longer able to maintain social distancing between households at a single service. Whenever a group gets together, whatever the location, there is some risk of disease transmission. In light of this, Messiah's Board of Elders took action at its November meeting. Beginning on **Sunday, November 15**, Messiah will offer two services per Sunday, at **8:30 and 11:00 am**. (Sunday School for Preschool – Grade 2 and LifeLight will be offered at **9:45 am**.)

The following general guidelines apply to us at Messiah:

- Please do not come if you are sick! If you have a fever, cough, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell, please do not attend.
- Please do not come if you:
 - Have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus;
 - Are awaiting test results after possible exposure to COVID-19;
 - Been exposed to someone who has tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, or who is awaiting test results following possible exposure.
- Note that if you are over 60 and/or have underlying health conditions, you are at greater risk from exposure to COVID-19.
- Please wash your hands often with soap and water. Hand sanitizer stations are also available throughout the church building.
- Please avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, as well as unnecessarily touching surfaces, handrails and doors. Please cover your cough or sneeze (discarding soiled tissues at home).
- Please maintain minimum 6-foot social distancing and avoid people who are sick.

For the 8:30 am service:

- Face coverings are required for this service, from when you enter the building to when you leave. If you forget a face mask or don't have one, please don't let this keep you from attending; we will gladly provide you with one.
- Advance sign-up will be required for this service. Sign-up options will be available by phone, email and Internet.
- Worshipers will sit on the opposite ends of alternate pews. Designated seating will be clearly marked for "8:30"; other pew entrances will be roped off to assure social distancing.
- After the service, worshipers will leave through the side door of the narthex, using the classroom hallway and exiting the building through the exterior doors in the fellowship hall foyer.

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For the 11:00 am service:

- Face coverings are recommended and strongly encouraged for this service. We will gladly provide you with a face mask if you don't have one.
- Worshipers will sit on the opposite ends of alternate pews; these will be different pew entrances from those used in the previous service. Designated seating will be clearly marked for "11:00"; other pew entrances will be roped off to assure social distancing.

These practices will continue for both services:

- Outside doors will be staffed by volunteers for entry and exit. Inner doors will be left open.
- The entire service will be printed in the bulletin. Congregants should take bulletins with them for reference, then recycle or discard them at home.
- Offering plates will not be passed. Offerings can be given electronically or taken at the door.
- When Holy Communion is offered, safe distribution protocols will continue:
 - The Pastor, Elder and Ushers will carry the elements to the pews; please stand as able when they approach your seat.
 - Please receive the Body of Christ in your open hand from the Elder.
 - Please take an individual cup from the tray held by the Pastor to receive the Blood of Christ.
 - Please return the empty cup to the container held by the Usher, then sit following your reception of the Sacrament.
- The Nursery remains closed.
- Following announcements, dismissal by families will begin from the back of the church. Please maintain social distancing and wait until you are outdoors to greet others.
- No food or coffee will be served after worship; the kitchen remains closed.
- Restrooms in the church foyer will be open for use. Water fountains will remain out of service.
- The sanctuary will be sanitized following Sunday services.

These additional worship opportunities will be offered:

- Worship service video of the 11:00 am service will continue to be livestreamed, then archived on YouTube.
- If you want to receive Holy Communion, but do not feel comfortable attending these services, please call (734-645-4353) or email (revjpeterson@yahoo.com) our vacancy pastor, Rev. Jason Peterson, to make arrangements to receive the Lord's Supper by individual weekday appointment, either at the church, at home, or another location that meets your needs.