

First Evangelical Lutheran Church Council

Re-Opening Plan

WELCOME BACK!

"I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord." Psalm 122:1

Starting Sunday March 14 2021, we will again be able to gather for worship. Because COVID-19 is still with us, there will be continued limitations to our in-person worship services. Our reopening plan follows the guidelines recommended by the Ontario government, the Niagara Region, as well as the Eastern Synod.

- Corporate worship may be conducted in-person; the wearing of face coverings (covering nose, mouth and chin) is required in the Niagara Region: - The Eucharist may be celebrated, with distribution of the bread only. - Congregational ensemble and choir singing are discouraged. Singing by one soloist is permissible with augmented physical distancing. - The Peace will be shared using non-contact gestures while remaining in place.
- Online services continue to be offered in addition to in-person worship.
- Larger in-person meetings may resume where physical distancing is possible. Food and beverages should not be served or shared
- Public Health sanitization protocols must be followed after each use of our buildings.

If you do not feel comfortable joining us at this point, we pray for your continued health and well-being, and remind you to please continue to enjoy the recorded services available on St. Matthew's website.

Despite the restrictions placed upon us, our community of faith continues to minister to one another and to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. Again, I thank everyone who continues to pray for us and support us with your generosity, so that our community of faith can continue to function under these circumstances. I, along with your church council, look forward to resuming in-person worship.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Before you arrive

The Church has been sanitized before you arrive.

Please be prepared to wear a mask throughout the service, that covers the chin, mouth and nose. (If you do not have a mask, one will be provided for you.)

Entrance door

The front door is the only door we will be using until further notice. The door attached to the kitchen will remain locked at all times.

Coffee Hour

While we so look forward to gathering together for worship, coffee hour is on hold for now.

Inside the church

All persons will be asked to sanitize their hands with the sanitizer provided. We will be asking for your name and contact information each Sunday. We are obliged to do so by the Ministry of Health so that we may contact you in case of an outbreak. This list will be used only for this purpose and destroyed when no longer needed.

Please note that we will abide by public by-laws and maintain 2 metre separation between families. We ask that everyone use the centre aisle to be seated. We are only using the north side of the church. (Lectern side)

Singing

Congregational ensemble and choir singing are discouraged. Singing by one soloist is permissible with augmented physical distancing

Sharing the Peace

The Peace will be shared using non-contact gestures only while remaining in place.

Offering

We will not be passing the offering plate. Instead, the offering plate will be waiting for you at the entrance of the church.

Communion

The Eucharist will be celebrated, with distribution of the bread only at this time. Pastor will serve communion at the foot of the stairs. Please one pew at a time even if only one person. Anyone who receives communion is asked to return to their seat before removing their mask to consume the bread.

Exiting the Church

We ask that the congregation exit the church after the Blessing, during the last hymn. We will exit starting with the pew closest to the door and only doing one pew at a time.

We all so look forward to seeing everyone in church once again!

