

# Calvary Lutheran Church Opening Guidelines

## **In-person worship times and format:**

Sunday, 9:30 am in the sanctuary (balcony open for seating)

\*Pre-registration for in-person worship will be required. Registration will be done through Eventbrite. Please print and bring your ticket when you come for Sunday worship. If that does not work for you, you can also call the church office to reserve seating for your family unit. We will have your name on our reservation list. **Eventbrite information will be given in next week's congregational update.**

\*We will be limiting in-person worship to no more than 100 people. Registration will close when we reach our limit and/or when we close registration on Friday morning so that we are able to plan for worship.

\*Registration will be open the Monday before the following Sunday worship service.

\*Our in-person worship services will be shortened in length to minimize the time that congregation members are in the same space. We will also reduce our congregational music/hymn offerings.

We will continue all of our online worship service options via Facebook and YouTube, as well as the Keloland television worship at 10:00 am on Sundays. Since we will make changes to Sunday worship, 9:30 am when we are in-person in order to maintain safety while we are together, those who join us online for that service will notice changes.

We encourage anyone who is in a high risk category to continue to worship with us online or through the Keloland worship service and not attend in person at this time. According to the CDC, those who are in the high-risk category include people over 65 or with underlying conditions that put them at risk. We also ask that anyone who has been at a large group gathering or traveled outside of the state refrain from registering for in-person worship for two weeks. If you are experiencing a fever, cough, or other possible covid-19 symptoms, we ask that you also refrain from registering for/or attending in-person worship.

## **Steps taken prior to in-person worship:**

\*Removal of all hymnals and other items from the pews.

\*Some pews will be blocked off in order to maintain 6-foot social distancing between family units.

\*Removal of children's activity bags from the worship space.

\*Removal of guest books, sign-up sheets and care notes from the gathering space.

\*All other areas of the church building will be closed to the congregation, including the office. Those areas will either be locked, blocked off or signs will be posted.

\*Deep cleaning and sanitizing of all areas, as well as cleaning/sanitizing before each in-person worship service.

\*The placement of hand sanitizers, as well as masks for those who do not have/bring one.

## **Expectations for in-person worship attendees:**

- \*Arrive as close to the worship start time as possible. Doors will only be open for you to come in for the worship service. Please do not come too early.
- \*Please bring your ticket that you received when you registered for worship. If you registered via phone, we will have your name on a list. There will not be “assigned” seating. Upon your arrival, please find an open seat in the sanctuary for your family unit that is socially distanced from others seated in the sanctuary.
- \*Face masks are required. Please bring your own mask. If you do not have one, one will be provided for you. The wearing of face masks is done out of love of your neighbor.
- \*Worship leaders will not wear masks while leading worship. If worship leaders move from the front of the sanctuary, they will put on masks.
- \*If you choose not to wear a mask, please remain at home to worship with us online.
- \*Regarding Singing: Although we will not completely eliminate singing, we invite you to listen and meditate when any music is shared. If that will be difficult for you, please sing softly to yourself. While wearing of masks helps, it does not remove the transmission of all droplets into the air during singing. Singing is considered one of the riskiest behaviors for the transmission of the Covid-19 virus. (See resources below)
- \*No passing of the peace, handshakes, hugging or greeting at the door.
- \*No passing of the offering plates. The offering plates will be by the doors for when you exit. The offering time will be at the end of the worship service. Please remember that you can also give through online, texting and simply giving options.
- \*No Holy Communion will be offered during our initial opening for in-person worship.
- \*The nursery will remain closed.
- \*At the end of worship, you will be ushered out of the sanctuary by rows/family units.
- \*Bathrooms will be open, but we encourage you to use them only for emergency use. Please be mindful of social distancing within the bathroom space.
- \*No hymnals or bulletins will be distributed. Please follow along with worship on the screens.
- \*We encourage you to bring hand sanitizer with you so that you can clean your hands as soon as you leave the church building.
- \*We will take pictures of the congregation at each in-person worship service. This will help us know which areas are in need of deep cleaning between worship services. It will also be helpful in case we need to contact people if we are informed that someone who attended an in-person worship service tested positive for Covid-19.
- \*If you attend in-person worship, you are assuming personal responsibility, as well as the risk that goes with being around other people.
- \*We recognize that whether people are worshipping in-person or online at home, we are all making sacrifices.

## **When To Open / Gradual Re-Opening**

We continue to follow CDC, synod and ELCA guidelines for our initial opening for in-person worship. We support opening in a phased approach. The above guidelines are for our initial opening (phase one). When changes occur, they will be shared with the congregation prior to any movement into the next phase of opening. We are committed to monitoring the level of local cases in order to make safe decisions for opening. We

understand that changes may need to be made during our phased-approach to opening. We also know that as we follow this gradual approach to opening, there may be times that we will need to move back to certain restrictions if new waves of infection emerge.

**Suggestions and Links to Other Resources, as provided by the ELCA:**

ELCA.org/PublicHealth: Resources to help leaders and members stay connected and resilient during COVID-19. <https://www.elca.org/PublicHealth>

“Returning to Church”: The Wisconsin Council of Churches offers helpful guidance. <https://www.wichurches.org/2020/04/23/returning-to-church/> Other information is available at <https://www.wichurches.org/2020/03/11/coronavirus>.

“Returning to Public Worship: Theological and Practical Considerations”: Guidance from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). [https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/covid-19/returning\\_to\\_public\\_worship\\_may\\_2020.pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/covid-19/returning_to_public_worship_may_2020.pdf)

On May 5, 2020, the Minneapolis Area Synod hosted a conversation with Dr. Michael Osterholm, Regents Professor, McKnight Presidential Endowed Chair in Public Health, and director of the Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP) at the University of Minnesota. You can find the link to this presentation at <https://mpls-synod.org>.

For more on congregational singing, see the website for the National Association of Teachers of Singing, <https://www.nats.org>.

Consult the following national and state resources:

“Coronavirus (COVID-19),” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>.

“Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Pandemic,” World Health Organization, <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>.

“National Coronavirus Response: A Road Map to Reopening,” American Enterprise Institute, <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/national-coronavirus-response-a-road-map-to-reopening/>.

“Public Health Principles for a Phased Reopening During COVID-19: Guidance for Governors,” Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Center for Health Security, [https://www.centerforhealthsecurity.org/our-work/pubs\\_archive/pubs-pdfs/2020/200417-reopening-guidance-governors.pdf](https://www.centerforhealthsecurity.org/our-work/pubs_archive/pubs-pdfs/2020/200417-reopening-guidance-governors.pdf).

“Guidelines: Opening Up America Again,” <https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/>.