

# St. Matthew Lutheran Church



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Rev. Markus Zeuch

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

God willing and by His Grace we are planning and preparing to restart worship services at Saint Matthew on June 14<sup>th</sup> in both the German and the English languages. Given the current situation concerning COVID-19 worship services will be different.

The PPC has been working diligently over the past few weeks to incorporate Alberta-Health COVID Relaunch Guidelines for Places of Worship. The following are a list of questions and answers that will be implemented.

## **What time are worship services?**

- Worship services are at the usual times, 9:30am for the German service and 11am for the English

## **How many people may attend worship service?**

- There will be a 40-person attendance limit for members for each worship service.
- Pastor, ushers and other volunteers account for an addition 10 participants.

## **Who may attend service?**

- Anyone attending must register by phone or email with the church office by the previous Thursday for any Sunday worship service.
- Anyone who is displaying symptoms or who has returned from travel outside of Canada within the past 2 weeks cannot attend.
  - Symptoms include cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat (that is not related to a pre-existing illness or health condition). Additional information can be found at [albertahealthservices.ca](http://albertahealthservices.ca).

## **What happens if more than 40 parishioners want to attend?**

- Attendance lists will be maintained by the Ushers for each service.
- People arriving who are not registered will be admitted so long as the 40-attendance limit has not yet been reached. Once the attendance limit has been reached then unregistered people may be asked to go home and visit again another week.
- If we find that one worship service per week is not enough to accommodate everyone then another worship service will be offered on Wednesday Evenings at 7pm.

## **How can we maintain physical distancing rules within the church?**

- Members with mobility challenges will enter and exit through the basement door and will use the lift for entering and exiting the Sanctuary.
  - A lift operator for both services will be present who is wearing a mask and wearing gloves. Members will not need to touch anything within the lift.

*"I love you, O LORD, my strength." Psalm 18:1*

- For other members, entrance to the church is through the front door and exiting the church will be through the back door
- Pews will be marked in three different alternating color sections. For any given service parishioners will be seated in only one colored section and different colors will be used for each worship service. Ushers will direct members to their seats to help ensure physical distancing requirements, and we will try to fill the church from the front to back.
- People from the same household can share the same pew.
- People from different households can share the same pew at either end of the row so long as no one is sitting within 2m of someone from another household.
- Ushers will help maintain distances while we are entering or exiting the church.

#### **How will the worship service be different?**

- There will be no singing during the service, but sacred music will be included.
- There will be no communion
- There will be a liturgical component as well as a sermon and we will follow a service as printed in the bulletin.
- The service will be recorded and posted on Youtube as Pastor has been doing for the past two months. Such recordings will only be of Pastor and the Altar area.

#### **How will offering be collected?**

- An offering plate will be posted near the front doors and members can place their offering in the plate as they enter the church.
- An offering plate will also be placed near the sanctuary lift doors and members can place their offering in the plate as they exit the lift.

#### **What are the additional cleaning and distance maintenance steps?**

- The ushers will be wearing face masks and gloves.
- Pews will be disinfected between the German and English services.
- Plexiglass has been installed around the pulpit.
- During the week the washrooms, pews and high-touch surfaces will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.

#### **Should members wear masks?**

- It is recommended that at-risk members wear masks and others should consider wearing a mask, but wearing masks is currently optional.

#### **What else can we all do to be safe?**

- Always follow physical distancing rules both inside and outside the church
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water when using the washroom.
- Upon entering or exiting the church use the hand sanitizer located throughout the church.
- Follow the Alberta health guideline protocols as posted at the entrances and around the church.