

From the Church Council

Over the past several weeks, the Re-Opening Committee, along with the Worship and Music Committee, have worked on the idea of how we might restart in-person worship at Redeemer. The goal was to identify ways to reduce risk from Covid-19 to offer a reasonably safe place and way to worship in person. We have reviewed information from the CDC, the NE Synod, ELCA, as well as information from the Wisconsin Council of Churches. We have reviewed on-line scientific reports and best practices information. This includes considering the effects of aerosol transmission of the virus; the amount of aerosol produced when speaking, singing, and humming; the level of ventilation in our church; and the amount of protection different types of masks provide.

For the next several months we believe that our primary way to worship will be an on-line service each Sunday morning. However, we also acknowledge that some members of the congregation want to be able to worship in person at the church. To accommodate this desire, we will be offering an outside worship opportunity twice a month starting July 26. In-person services will be different than in the past. We will need to wear a mask and maintain social distancing. Because speaking and singing greatly increase the aerosols we all produce, we will not have singing nor unison responses. We will offer communion using pre-sealed containers that have a wafer and grape juice.

Specific protocols for outside services are listed on the back of this letter – please review. If you have questions regarding why we are recommending certain practices, please feel free to email Wally Jakubas at [redacted]. He will group your questions into similar themes and will work with Council and the Reopening Committee to develop responses to these questions. A question and answer document with the responses to your questions will be sent out. Questions can be directed to Council or the Reopening Committee. If after reading the responses you believe that a particular protocol should be changed, please let a member of the Congregational Council know what you would like to see adjusted.

Without question there is no 100% safe way to reopen church that guarantees that no one will get Covid-19, but we also believe that the protocols approved by the Congregational Council offer a reasonably low-risk place to worship. Each member of the congregation needs to decide whether they are comfortable attending an in-person service or would rather continue worshiping via the on-line Sunday service.

Over the next months, things will change and new information will become available. The Reopening Committee and the Congregational Council will continue review new information and use it to inform our worship and meeting practices.