

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Greetings to you from our crucified and risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

On Saturday, May 23rd, Governor Walz issued an order that churches may begin meeting together in Phase 1 of the state's reopening. On Tuesday, May 26th, I met with the Elders and some other members of the Church to discuss the safety protocols we would be putting in place in order to best comply with governmental regulations and suggestions, and in order to minimize the chances of anyone contracting the virus in our services. We considered issues of reverence, sanitation, social distancing, and amount of time spent in the sanctuary.

One of those protocols is that ***we will begin offering 2 services, starting Saturday, June 6th, at 5 pm, and Sunday, June 7th, at 9 am.*** The Saturday service will be for our more at risk members, or those who feel less comfortable. It will not have any singing. Our Sunday service will be more like our normal, Sunday service. Due to this being Phase 1, we will operate at 25%, which means we cannot have more than 38 people in the Sanctuary at a time. I would appreciate if we could have most of our members sign up for each service. You can do so by calling my office phone or by email, pastor@rlcwinona.com. Here are the other protocols.

Before Service:

- † Please stay home if you are ill, or showing symptoms of Covid-19. Likewise, if someone in your household is ill, please stay home.
- † If you do not feel safe, please stay home. We will continue recording our services.
- † Wash your hands often. Frequent and thorough hand-washing is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of Covid-19.
- † The Church will be disinfected between services.
- † These protocols are available at the Church in printed form for distribution. Social distancing guidelines will also be posted in the entryway.

Arriving for Service

- † There will be hand sanitizer at the entrance of the building.
- † The only entrance that will be used is the front entrance. The entrance to the preschool will be locked. The doors will be propped open until service begins in order to allow touchless entry.
- † You are strongly encouraged to wear a mask when entering and exiting the building, and throughout the services as much as possible, in consideration of your fellow congregants. (Please bring your own mask from home. We hope to have some on hand for those who forget or who do not have one. But we cannot guarantee we will have enough for everyone.) You may pull your mask down, but when you move through the sanctuary, please wear it.
- † Bulletins will be laid out on a table, each person is to pick up their own.
- † We will have removed chairs to allow 6 feet of space between family groups. Only sit with those who live in your house.
- † The children's bags and activities will not be available.

During the Service

- † We will not be using hymnals. Everything you need will be in the Bulletin or projected.
- † There will be no lectors. To minimize movement and touching of the pulpit, I will take care of the readings.
- † Rather than taking offering during the service, offering plates will be placed at the entrance of the Sanctuary. Please place your offering in the plate before or after the service.
- † While I normally wash my hands thoroughly wash my hands before the service, I will also be using hand sanitizer during the service.
- † Communion will be given at the base of the altar on person/family group at a time. The ushers will excuse each family group.
- † Communion will be through already sealed cups, laid out on a table. Please take one, I will not touch them. The exception are the gluten-free and grape juice options. Those will be laid out, but covered in a different way.
- † When you are done communing, please deposit the cup in the receptacle placed on each side of the altar.
- † There will be no blessing of children at communion. If possible, please have them remain in the chair when you come forward to commune.
- † Please take your bulletin with you. Recycle it at home or discard it.

After the Service

- † In order to help people move out of the Sanctuary more quickly while maintaining social distancing, I will not greet people at the door.
- † Please do not shake hands, hug, or touch people in greeting, but do your best to maintain social distancing.
- † Please do not congregate in the narthex, but rather go outside to **briefly** greet one another.

Outside of Service

- † As long as there are executive orders limiting large gatherings, we will continue to forgo in-person group activities outside the Divine Service.
- † Please continue to pray for one another, our congregation, your pastor, our community and our governor.

Other Opportunities for Worship (not in person)

- † We will continue to record our services, which can be seen at rlcwinona.com.
- † Bible Study will begin via Zoom on Wednesday, June 3rd, at 6:30 pm.

I look forward to gathering with you soon!

In Christ,

Rev. Ryan Eden