

Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church

Initial “In-Person Worship” and Building Policies

As we resume in-person worship, we will utilize the following initial practices. As time progresses and we learn more about safe practices, we will work to relax some of these procedures so that we can gather in a “more normal” way. We will communicate these changes well in advance.

Before Coming for Worship:

1. If you are feeling ill or have recently been ill, (cough, fever, etc.), please use one of our electronic means for worship as listed below.
2. If you a “High Risk” person (see “Additional Notes” on at the end of the document), we encourage you to monitor the activity of the virus in our community when making your decision about whether to attend.
3. For those who wish to worship at home, you can do so in the following ways:
 - **Facebook Live Worship:** We will go live at 9am on Sundays; services will be archived to view later. To join, go to www.mtcalvarydecatour.org, hover over the “Resources” tab, scroll down to “Worship Live Stream,” and then click on the link.
 - **Radio Worship:** Tune in to 100.9FM WZUS from 9:00am-9:30am.

Entering and Exiting the Building

1. Please use the carport entrance when entering and exiting the building. If you have mobility issues, we encourage you to park on the south side of the building and use the door by the Pastor’s Study. An usher will be at both doors to greet you.
2. At each entrance, there will be a station where you are to use the hand sanitizer provided. If not already wearing a face covering brought from home, you must use one of the ones provided for you at the station.
3. Although it will be difficult since we are such a welcoming and friendly congregation, we must refrain from personal contact with each other (No handshakes, hugs, etc.) to help ensure the safety of our fellow worshippers.
4. Please make your way to the sanctuary as quickly as possible, again making use of the hand sanitizer by the doors upon entering.

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During Worship

1. In the sanctuary, you will find certain pews marked off that are not to be used. An usher will guide you and your household to your seat. This practice allows us to efficiently dismiss for communion in a way that creates safe spacing at Communion. While it may not be your usual pew, you may just get to know some of the other members of Mt. Calvary better!
2. To limit touching potentially infected objects, we will be using projectors to guide our worship. For a time, you will not find hymnals or Bibles in the pew racks. If you like to use a Bible to follow along with the sermons and readings, we recommend you bring your own from home. For those with limited vision, we encourage you to contact the Church Office about how to receive a large print bulletin.
3. For a time, we will be reducing congregation singing. It has been found that singing, along with other forms of projected speech, increases the risk of transmission. We will work with our musicians to supplement worship with other special music during this time.
4. To some people’s relief, we will remain seated for the vast majority of the worship service since this position also helps limit projecting droplets. So yes, there will temporarily be NO LUTHERAN AEROBICS!
5. Instead of “passing the plate,” please drop any tithes or offering envelopes in the “Elder Box” at the rear of the sanctuary when you enter the sanctuary.

During Communion

1. When communion is offered during the service, we will have ushers dismiss to the Lord’s Table in a way that allows for social distancing.
2. When arriving at the chancel, we will remain standing to receive the Lord’s Supper. Communicants from different households should remain six feet apart. These distances will be marked on the carpet.
3. The assistant who serves the host (wafer), will wear gloves during distribution. He will change them between each table.
4. We will use only individual cups for the time being. All cups will be spread out in the tray to avoid accidental contact. The common cup will remain on the altar as a symbol of the unity we share in the one cup we bless (see 1 Cor. 10:16-17).
5. The pastor will work closely with the Altar Guild to assure that proper procedures are being taken when preparing the communion elements.

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Dismissing from Worship

1. At the end of our worship service, an usher will dismiss you and your family allowing for social distancing to occur.
2. Since we will need to disinfect the sanctuary for another service, worshippers should leave the building in a timely manner so as to respect the others who will be entering.
3. Pastor will greet you under the carport, as time allows, before the next service.

Sunday School, Bible Studies and Other Groups

1. As is our custom, we will not be offering children’s Sunday School during the summer. Please stay connected with us as we look to reevaluate this during the fall.
2. Our Midweek Bible Studies may resume during this time but will meet in the Fellowship Hall rather than the Conference Room. All social distancing rules must be followed (masks, 6 ft distance, etc.). We will use a projector to share material and participants should bring their own Bibles. Please see Pastor or the Bible Study group leader for more information.
3. Although we love to eat together, for the time being we will refrain from common meals, snacks, or drinks during our gatherings. Per CDC recommendations, commonly shared food puts people at increased risk.

A Final Word

While we realize that these measures are certainly going to be awkward for a while, please remember that they are temporary. As Christians, we have a God-given responsibility to care for our neighbors. Not all will do it in the same way, but as a congregation, we should set an example of compassion, patience, and sacrifice for those around us. For the sake of people’s health and their conscience, we must step up and show that we can conduct ourselves safely. We must use our Christian freedom, not for our own comfort and convenience, but for the sake of others.

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Additional Notes:

1. These policies were created based on the recommendations of the CDC, the Illinois Department of Public Health, and the Macon County Health Department. If you desire more information, please check out the following resources:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/faith-based.html>
 - <http://dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/Church%20Guidance.pdf>

2. According to the CDC, “Based on what we know now, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:
 - People 65 years and older
 - People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
 - People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:
 - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - People who have serious heart conditions
 - People who are immunocompromised
 - Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications.
 - People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
 - People with diabetes
 - People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
 - People with liver disease