

Give Thanks, and Celebrate Being Together!

Updated 3/24/21

God has answered our prayers about vaccines being available and lowered numbers of COVID-19 cases. We are also thankful for being able to worship together in the building, a reason to celebrate. And there also are ongoing opportunities to care for one another in light of viruses still being present in the community.

Following the MN Dept of Health protocols will also encourage our friends to return to the building for worship if they have felt reluctant to be in groups. Everyone's compliance keeps everyone's safety and comfort in mind.

We are thankful for these concrete ways to care as we seek to prevent illness, keep us healthy, and respect one another:

1. **Stay Home if you are feeling sick, have any of the COVID-19 symptoms, or have been exposed to COVID-19:**
 - Cough, fever, shortness of breath, body aches and fatigue, loss of smell and taste, nausea and diarrhea ...are symptoms.
 - Also stay home if you have been exposed to anyone with COVID-19 symptoms or anyone who has tested positive to the virus in the last 2 weeks.

2. ***General guidelines to prevent spread of COVID-19*** that we will continue to follow as we come together:
 - **Wear a mask**
 - **Keep at least 6 feet apart (including not "clustering" around the doors when we leave the building)**
 - **Wash hands thoroughly and use hand sanitizer**
 - **Disinfect surfaces that are touched**

3. ***What you can expect as we come together for worship*** (a review for those who have come to indoor worship, and new for others)
 - God will be present with us, and will teach us new things as followers of Jesus who care for one another in the midst of a pandemic! We will worship God together, though it may "look different" from what we are used to.
 - ***When we arrive:***
 - Doors will open at 9:45 a.m.
 - We will be welcomed by a team of people who will encourage us: They will ask us to look the list of Health Screening Questions to keep us safe (symptoms listed above and posted by the doors, including "*stay home if you are not feeling well.*")

Alert: People coming to the building with COVID-19 symptoms will be asked to leave rather than expose others to the virus.

- Though there will not be handshakes and hugs, we can “touch our own hands together” with the hand sanitizer stations provided at each door.
- Team members will help us find a place to sit in the sanctuary (spaces marked in the pews to give social distancing of 6 feet).

➤ ***When we are in the building:***

* Instead of passing offering plates we can deposit donations in a container in the narthex. Attendance pads will not be used, or bulletins. Hymnals and Bibles are stored for now. There is a disinfecting team to serve and protect us before and after worship as viruses can stay on surfaces.

- Watch indicators on the floor helping us keep 6 feet apart.
- Bring coats with you to the sanctuary, to avoid gathering around the coat racks.
- Worship materials will be on screens, rather than using hymnals, Bibles, and bulletins.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be by all the doors for us to use.
- Congregational singing: now possible, with masks.
- Sorry that we will not have coffee and treats.
- Restrooms: Signs will be posted about 2 people in the room at a time.

➤ ***When we leave the building***

- If you visit with people after the service please respect social distancing, avoid “clustering” of people in the narthex and outside the door, and continue to wear your mask. With warmer weather, visiting outside the building is helpful. *The reason: we seek to care for one another.*
- Reflect on what God has said during worship rather than being frustrated about the changes you experienced,
- Focus on giving thanks for *what we can do.*

4. ***We continue to need God’s help to encourage us*** in the grief we feel about the losses and changes because of the pandemic. But there also is hope for the future as we pray for healing and protection, vaccine distribution, and a gradual return to a “new normal” when the pandemic will be contained.

Thank God and celebrate His work among us!

BCC Health Professionals Ministry Team: 3/24/21