



St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church

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May 16, 2020

Dear Fellow Parishioners:

We pray that you are safe and healthy in this troubling time. Please know you are in our thoughts and prayers daily.

This letter is to inform you that Church Council met via a virtual meeting on May 12th and voted unanimously to resume Church Services beginning on **Pentecost Sunday, May 31st** with only **one Service at 9:00 a.m.** At this time there will be no Sunday School or other activities. As we try to get back to our normal routine we will have one Service as the church must be disinfected following each gathering to meet the guidelines of the CDC.

Holy Communion will be offered; please be assured that the Pastor and Altar Guild will be taking every precautionary measure to make this a safe process for everyone.

To minimize contact of surfaces, all Hymnal Books, Bibles, envelopes, etc. will be removed from the pew racks. The entire service will be printed in the bulletin and you are expected to take it home.

Please know that as we do return to Church, we pray that you will respect these temporary changes as we follow the CDC and State guidelines. We are still required to maintain social distancing, meaning you are not to be closer than six feet from a non-family member. Our ushers will assist in seeing that every-other pew is sanctioned off to assure safe distancing. Families who live together may sit together. **Also, everyone must wear a mask upon entering the church.**

Only two entrances will be used to enter and exit the church: **the door for access to the elevator** and **the Washington Street with the ramp.** The only restroom available for use will be the one at the back of the Church.

While it will be great to see everyone, we are asking that we **do not shake hands or offer hugs at this time.** We will do this soon when we are able.

We know how excited everyone is to get back to church - but again, a word of caution, if you feel ill, please refrain from attending Church until you are feeling better.

Also, if you should become ill during Church you are to go immediately to the Cry Room as this has been designated as the sick room to comply with CDC guidelines.

We look forward to seeing you on May 31st as we celebrate Pentecost – the out pouring of God’s Holy Spirit upon His church. We want you to feel welcomed and confident that we have everyone’s well-being in mind as we begin to emerge from this viral pandemic. We admit that our coming together may be a bit uncomfortable at first as we ease into these new “rules” for group gatherings, but if we all practice understanding, respect & patience for these temporary guidelines the joy of worshipping our Lord together will truly return. Our immediate goal is that all will stay safe; and to primarily give God the glory for He is turning something bad into something good. Also we want to recognize that if you don’t feel that you are yet ready to return to Church at this moment in time, we understand and pray that you will return when the time is right for you and yours. Also, those who are in vulnerable demographics are encouraged to still stay at home.

With this decision we realize that we will be criticized by some as acting too hastily and yet congratulated by others. To quote our Mission District Dean: “These are very emotional times. Throughout *these uncertain times* I have been condemned by the shrillest of voices and congratulated vociferously for keeping my church open. You know how to make up your own minds and how to use common sense.”

See you figuratively and literally and virtually in Worship. If you are unable to join us in church, please virtually join us each week on the radio (WBUT 1050AM, Sundays at 10:30 AM) or on YouTube (St. Marks Butler PA).

Sincerely yours and God Bless,

Reuben S. Pink

Reuben Pink
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Pastor Neal

Pastor Neal +
Interim Pastor
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P.S. If you wish to discuss anything in this letter, please contact either one of us.