

A letter from Trinity's Return Team:

As we return to in-person worship services and other in-facility gatherings, Trinity staff and leaders are doing everything we can to provide safe accessibility to all our members.

Many of us have begun to get used to varying degrees of "normalcy" as different businesses and institutions start to open back up. There are many different experiences we are all having with this pandemic and, notably, there are many different perspectives on how to deal with it.

As things begin to "get back to normal" at Trinity, you may notice that we move a bit slower than some of the other businesses or institutions you may have had experiences with recently. We intend to take it slow. Some of our members are among the most vulnerable health risks while some of our members don't feel very much risk at all. Some of our members take the guidelines and cautionary measures very seriously, while others may be more cavalier about them.

The point is, Trinity is a family and we are going to be respectful of everyone in our family. We are going to take precautions, follow health care guidelines, and do everything we can to see that all of our members are able to worship. So, it may seem that we are "re-opening" a little slower than what you might expect. Please be patient.

We as the Return Team have been working diligently to create a plan which lays out what our return process will look like. It should give you an idea of what to expect as we continue to move toward a safe return to worship and other activities in the building.

As a way to help us gauge YOUR comfort level, can you please let us know your preference for worship by selecting one of the following?

**Do you plan to continue to worship on-line?**

**Do you plan to continue to worship in our Parking Lot/Outdoors?**

**Do you plan on worshipping in our Sanctuary when available?**

**Please share your response with Teri in the office by calling the office 218-847-7211 or emailing [tlchurch@arvig.net](mailto:tlchurch@arvig.net) or snail mail 1401 Madison Ave, Detroit Lakes, MN 56501**

Again, thank you for your prayers and support!

Donna Craigmile, Judy Fankhanel, Pastor Jillene Gallatin, Colin Gedrose, Peter Jacobson, Dean Johnson, Teresa Schlieman, Andy Van Dam

Hi Friends! I'm very excited to share a few updates in the life of Trinity! For the last several weeks, Trinity's Return Team (June Newsletter) has been working diligently to create a plan for how our church family can begin to gather for in persons gatherings!

This Newsletter contains our Return Plan presented in **PHASES**. You'll notice the Return Plan explains the **phases** in two different formats. The first format presents our Return Plan in paragraph form. The second format presents our Return Plan in a table-like form. Both formats share the same content of the two **phases**.

Please read through the various **phases** to familiarize yourself of how our Trinity building, Staff and congregation will function in each **phase**-then read everything through again please. (There is a lot of helpful information in the Return Plan!)

One of the biggest questions folks have been asking is, "When can we gather for worship in our Sanctuary?" Trinity's Return Team, Staff, and Council feel we can safely gather 60 people in our Sanctuary for worship. We hope to begin gathering in early August.

Please watch for a mailing to arrive in the first few days of next month with a lot more details about how and when we'll gather for Sanctuary worship. Again, we ask for your continued patience as we move forward, aiming for optimal safety for everyone.

Knowing our Trinity family has a variety of health and comfort levels, we'll continue to offer on-line, parking lot, and outdoor worship services. Sanctuary worship will be in addition to these current offerings. Here ends the first update.

The second update is how I want to rave about Trinity's staff! In addition to creating and implementing meaningful connection and worship opportunities, our Support and Program Staff continue their faithful work! Teri provides welcome and communicate all things Trinity; Suzie and Laura are intently creating education, ministry and program opportunities for our peeps by networking, attending webinars and connecting with Trinity families in order to hear their needs; Bill shares technical expertise; Pastor Ann visits and preaches; April and Mark are working on upcoming music opportunities; Dan is working on some of the bigger cleaning projects; and Roger and Sue maintain their faithful service in overseeing our congregation's tithes and offerings. This staff is amazing! Please continue to keep us all in your prayers!

Thanks for taking time to read the updates-we're doing good, Trinity family! Please know....

We love you! We miss you! And we're glad we're able to start seeing you-this is a blessing upon MY journey!

Pastor Jillene Gallatin

## **Trinity Lutheran Church**

### **COVID-19 Return Efforts**



#### **Purpose of this Document:**

To provide clarity on return efforts for Trinity Lutheran Church operations, church services, facility, and staffing in response to COVID-19.

| This document provides guidance for the following:

- Return Timeline through Phases
- Service & Ministry Changes / Online Strategy
- Physical Distancing / Close-Contact
- Facility Changes / Sanitization
- Special Events

#### **Definitions:**

Vulnerable Population (VP) members: Over the age of 65 or immune system compromised

#### **Physical Distancing / Close-Contact**

The Surgeon General and CDC strongly recommend that we keep physical distancing (a 6' buffer between people) at all times throughout Phase 1, 2, and 3. This may be relaxed in phase 4.

Following Phase 3, the return to services will likely result in a mass flood of members wishing to return to see those they've been apart from over the last few months. There will be a desire for people to come in close contact with one another, which should be avoided temporarily in Phase 3, and for our staff and congregation should be cautious of even going into Phase 4.

#### **Face Coverings**

Trinity Lutheran Church encourages the use of face coverings among staff and congregants. Face coverings are most essential when physical distancing is difficult. Note: Face coverings should not be placed on children younger than 2 years old, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, and anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance. Face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected and does not have symptoms.

## Return Timeline and Phases

Trinity Lutheran Church return timetables are predicated on the Phase requirements set forth by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). While some TLC programs will continue during all phases, they may have different expressions (online vs in-person group gatherings) depending on the Phase we're currently under.



### Phase 1 (RESTRICTED) Operations

Phase 1 operations have the strictest requirements due to concern of spread of the virus, where we have the most responsibility of doing our part to keep physical distancing and isolation of staff. No gathering of staff or congregation is authorized with the exception of the production of streaming church services and recording of special communications to the congregation. Only facilities personnel and accepted staff may be on campus.

### Phase 2 (REDUCED) Operations

Achieving Phase 2 Operations allows for the lightening of restrictions on staff. This phase will allow off campus gathering with restrictions as set forth by the CDC and Department of Health .

### Phase 3 (LIMITED) Operations - **Current**

Achieving Phase 3 Operations allows for the gathering of larger groups of people. Please see the Trinity Lutheran Church Return Plan Phases Table for specific numbers. Trinity will transition to outdoor/online services and in-person, off-campus small group meetings. Preferred outdoors, weather permitting. In facility gatherings aligned with room size and physical distancing requirements. Online options available.

### Phase 4 (STEADY-STATE) Operations

Achieving Phase 4 Operations is the new steady-state for Trinity Lutheran Church, keeping protective measures in place, but allowing for the return of our vulnerable members. Please see the Trinity Lutheran Church Return Plan Phases Table for specific numbers.

## **Service & Ministry Changes**

Services are currently being conducted online over YouTube and Facebook, and broadcast over 91.5 FM in the Trinity parking lots at 9am on Sunday mornings. Services will remain online through all Phases

## **Protection of Vulnerable Members**

People over the age of 65 and those with compromised immune systems or other underlying health conditions should pay special attention to CDC guidelines as they make their personal attendance choices. All who are sick are strongly encouraged to participate in online services.

## **Worship Service Materials**

Until further notice, worship service materials that come in contact with multiple people will be changed to reduce contact between church members;

- Communion will be offered on a limited basis at phase 3 but individually wrapped.
- Pens, bulletins, hymnals including anything that has multiple touch points will be removed from circulation until Phase 4.
- The “greeting, shaking hands” portion of the service will be discontinued until further notice.
- No offering plates will be passed. Baskets for offering will be located at the sanctuary doors during indoor services and in the secretary’s office during non-service times. During outdoor services, there will be buckets at the entrance to each parking lot for offerings. You may also continue giving online.

## **Weddings/Funerals/Baptisms**

No weddings, funerals, or baptisms will be held in Phases 1.

Phases 2 and 3 will allow limited size gatherings for weddings/funerals/baptisms

- No Food Service or coffee service until Phase 4 for weddings/funerals/baptisms
- Food Service will take place with multiple touch items being removed such as self-serve buffet styles. The funeral groups will dish each individual item with proper gloves, masks, and handwashing.

## **Hospitality**

The welcome ministry team (greeters, ushers, parking team, communion assistants) interact with people and typically are in close contact with church members. Until further notice, volunteers will not engage in physical contact to make church members feel comfortable. A simple wave and a friendly greeting is sufficient to welcome people into the church. Even if our volunteers feel comfortable greeting with a handshake or hug, it may make others uncomfortable. Training will be conducted prior to returning to services on site. Wearing face-masks will be required by greeters, parking team members, and ushers.

## Facility Changes / Sanitization

The following facility changes have been made to protect the congregation before, during, and following services on campus.

- All restrooms will be sanitized frequently based on utilization.
- High-touch areas, doorknobs, handles, tables and desktops will be sanitized frequently based on utilization.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be located throughout the facility.

## Office Staff

### Will adhere to CDC guidelines when working in the building

- Handwashing practices happen often, and use sanitizer
- Sanitize work areas shared by multiple staff before work begins; this includes phones, pens, keyboards, mice, and desk handles.
- Wearing face coverings/masks
  - Masks will be encouraged when talking to in-person guests to the office/church when 6 feet of social distance is difficult to maintain or conversations are for extended periods.
- Physical distancing (specifically, staying 6 feet away from others when you must go into a shared space)
- Avoiding touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Staying home when sick
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched items
- Cleaning and disinfecting your shared workstation before leaving the building

## A NOTE FROM TERI:

Hello all! I'm guessing you have had a chance to look over the Return Team's document - if not, please do. We are taking precautionary slow steps in moving forward. We want everyone to remain healthy and safe during this time and we want to do this right. Here is what I am asking of you:

If you/your group wants to meet inside the church building, please understand there are guidelines we will all be adhering to which will include (but not limited to) physical distancing, masks, restroom usage, and sanitizing. So, before you set up a day and time, PLEASE CALL ME IN THE OFFICE - 847-7211. I will have a calendar of possible dates and where your group is able to meet (depends on the size of the group). It will be making a reservation so to speak.

We continue to encourage you to meet off-site / outside if possible until the weather changes. We miss everyone, but again, we want our Trinity family to be safe and healthy!!!

(ALSO - please be sure to share your response to the questions asked, regarding worship, on the letter from the Return Team with me.)

	Trinity Lutheran Church - RETURN PLAN			
	PHASE 1 Restricted	PHASE 2 Reduced	PHASE 3 Limited	PHASE 4 Steady State
PHYSICAL DISTANCING	Strict	Strict	Modest	New Normal
VULNERABLE POPULATION (VP)*	Stay Home	Stay Home	Cautious Distancing	Discretionary
MAX GROUPS/CROWDS	0	0	*Use discretion/guidelines: Sanctuary - 60 people Balcony - 7 Fellowship Hall - 28 Youth and Family Room - 13 Library - 12 Nursery - 4 Quilting Room - 7 Narthex - 10	New "normal" size limits
*6' social distance by family groups, face masks highly encouraged but necessary when social distancing cannot be observed				
MINISTRY RESPONSE				
Staff /office	Building closed/working from home	Building closed/office open/staff encouraged to work offsite but available by appointment	Front door unlocked and office open during business hours	New normal schedule
Worship Services	Online only	Online only	Outdoor and parking lot, online, limited indoor worship **((hope to begin early to mid August))	New normal schedule/online
Communion	Postponed	Postponed	Individually wrapped packets	As scheduled
Funerals Weddings Baptisms	Postponed/ canceled	Based on size regulations	Based on size Regulations	As scheduled

Small Groups/WELCA/Bible Studies/Committee/Team Meetings/Group Events/Fellowship	Online only	Online only	Off campus and outdoor options preferred -weather permitting. In-facility gatherings aligned with room size and physical distancing requirements. (Please contact the office to reserve a space.) Online options available.	New normal regular schedule
Nursery	Closed	Closed	Closed	New normal regular schedule; TBD
Children and Youth	Online only	Online only	Off campus and outdoor options preferred -weather permitting. In-facility gatherings aligned with room size and physical distancing requirements. Online options available.	New normal regular schedule; TBD
Trips	Postponed	Postponed	Limited-provided physical distancing requirements can be met	As scheduled

\* Vulnerable Population (from the White House COVID-19 Task Force)

Return Task Force - Pastor Jillene Gallatin, Donna Craigmile, Judy Fankhanel, Colin Gedrose, Peter Jacobson, Dean Johnson, Teressa Schlieman, & Andy Van Dam