

Saved by the Grace of God to Witness and Serve Others
St. John's Lutheran Church
Stony Ridge, OH
May 18, 2021/Update July 20, 2021
Effective Date July 25, 2021

St. John's Plan for Return to In-Church Worship Services

Purpose

Due to COVID-19, in-church worship services were stopped out of love and concern for the most vulnerable among our congregation. For a variety of reasons – to be able to worship God together, to feel the support of our church family, to reach those not using technology to worship, and to receive the Sacraments of the Altar – we are now resuming in-church worship services. The purpose of this plan is to provide a safe environment to do this.

General Comments

- 1) We will follow the directives and recommendations of the Ohio Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Wood County Health Department.
- 2) All members shall make their own determination on attending in-church worship services. Members may consider consulting with their primary physician in making this determination.

Worship Guidelines

1. Worship Service will continue to be streamed via Facebook Live, Zoom or telephone. The Worship Service will also be broadcast via FM transmission to east and west parking lots.
2. Mailing of DVD of service, Weekly Voice and/or sermon copies will be continued to those requesting.
3. Member Responsibilities for In-Church Service and Funerals
 - a. Wash your hands before leaving home. Bring hand sanitizer with you to worship service, if possible.
 - b. Any person entering worship must be asymptomatic. If you are not feeling well, please do not come to in-church services.
 - c. The wearing of masks will be a personal decision.
 - d. Social distancing will be at your discretion. Please respect personal boundaries of others who choose to continue social distancing at this time.
 - e. For the time being, no coffee/fellowship hour will be held in the church.
4. During the Worship Service
 - a. At this time, children's activity bags will not be available.
 - b. On September 22, 2020, Church Council approved the resuming of singing by the congregation during the Worship service. Hymns and songs may be pre-recorded by our parish musicians (Stones of Praise, members of our Festival or

Jubilee choirs, etc.) for play-back during the worship service or may be performed live (with or without masks). During In-Church services, the words will be projected on wall for worshippers to follow.

- c. Worshipers may resume standing during worship service at appropriate times i.e., during Gospel Reading, Creed, and prayers. Standing is also a personal decision, stand as you are willing and able to do.
- d. At this time, there will not be “passing of the peace”.
- e. The Lord’s Supper will be received by intinction using the following procedure: Communicants will come forward at the direction of the ushers. Prior to receiving the host (the bread), communicants will apply hand sanitizer using the touchless hand sanitizing units placed at the head of each aisle. After receiving the host, communicants will proceed to the wine or grape juice server and intinct (dip) the host into the wine or grape juice. Communicants will then step aside and consume the bread and wine. Communicants may choose to use the touchless hand sanitizing units to apply hand sanitizer as they return to their pews. Worshippers wishing to receive communion in their pews or in their vehicles in the parking lot will be served following those who have come forward to commune. At this time, small children and others wishing to receive a blessing will receive a verbal (non-physical contact) blessing when they come forward during communion.
- f. Offering plates will not be passed during the service, these will be located at the Sanctuary entrance. We encourage you to consider on-line giving.
- g. For the time being, there will be no “Children’s Chapel” or children’s sermon and the nursery will not be available.

5. Building Preparation

- a. Hand sanitizers will be located by entrances.
- a. Dayschool rooms other than those used for Sunday School are NOT available and doors should remain closed.

Meetings – March, 2021

1. All committees are encouraged to hold their meeting in person on their designated meeting night. Meetings may be held electronically (ex. through the use of email, Zoom) if deemed necessary.
2. Committees, community groups or individuals may request the use of the Parish House. This is to be done through the church office. If the request is approved, cleaning guidelines and supplies will be provided to the group or individual making the request.
3. For the time being, the Parish House is not available from the Monday before through the Saturday of Food Pantry distribution (3rd Saturday of the month).