

Petersburg Lutheran Church Reopening/Mitigation Plan

June 1, 2020

On June 3rd, 2020, Petersburg Lutheran Church Council voted to reopen the church for services beginning June 14th. The reopening will follow mandates and guidelines established by the State of Alaska and some considerations for reopening provided by the Alaska Synod. It is intended to allow in-church worship while mitigating the risk of COVID-19 transmission for our safety. We realize that individuals have varying perspectives on the appropriate response to the ongoing situation. It is our duty and responsibility to show our Christian love for one another by making these important, temporary changes in our worship habits. In doing so, there will be a number of changes within the church and with our usual way of doing business. We have developed and will follow this plan as long as necessary to do everything we can to protect each other and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Guidelines for Church services

1. **Reopening Alaska:** Everyone will be expected to follow the COVID-19 Reopening Alaska responsible Attachment N which states that persons with COVID 19 symptoms should not be on the premises. Reopening Alaska Phase III/IV Guidance includes “the best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus...keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.”
2. **Entering and Exiting the church:** Parishioners shall enter the church through the door at the front of the church below the outside steps and exit through the double doors at the top of the outside steps. If you arrive and realize you need to go back out to your car for something prior to the service starting, please use the double doors to the outside steps. If you need to use the **elevator**, please do so. Upon exiting, use a sanitary wipe in the elevator to disinfectant areas you have contacted.
3. **Face coverings:** Face coverings must be worn by everyone entering and exiting the church as well as through the entire service. Exceptions will be made for the pianist, the pastor, a soloist, and the reader when reading the lessons. If you are unable to wear a mask we invite you to continue worshiping at home online or on the radio.
4. **Checking In.** While we will not have typical Greeters and Ushers someone will be by the double doors to give you a face covering if you forgot one. Out of a desire to protect those at greater risk of more severe consequences for COVID-19, someone will ask if you are ill (even slightly) or have just traveled and if that is the case you will be asked not to join the group that is gathering.
5. **Distancing:** The mandate requires that in all public spaces, a six-foot social distancing from other members of the public be maintained. Social distancing is not required for members of the same household.
6. **Seating:** Parishioners should sit in designated areas as per the church layout diagram. Roped off pews shall not be used.
7. **Sanitizing:** When you come in use the hand sanitizer provided by the entrances and use again upon exiting.
8. **Tithes and Offerings:** An offering will not be taken during the service. However, offering plates will be available by the double doors as you enter the sanctuary both before and after the service.

9. **Bulletins:** Bulletins will be placed at the designated seats on Fridays. Hymnals, Bibles, and Children's bags will not be available for use. If you would like to have a Bible or a hymnal, please bring your own.
10. **Singing, Communal Prayers, and Readings:** To mitigate droplet projection (aerosol), singing, communal prayers and readings will be done while seated, wearing a face covering. Worship leaders may stand, unmasked, a minimum of 15' from congregants.
11. **Length of Service:** The service length will be shorter (30-45 minutes) in an effort to minimize droplet projection.
12. **Overflow:** In the event there are more parishioners than designated sitting available in the sanctuary the Fellowship Hall is set to social distance and watch the service via Facebook on the TV.
13. **Balcony:** The balcony will be closed to all parishioners except the sound person and a singer.
14. **Airflow:** All doors will remain open 15 minutes before, during, and 15 minutes after the service to allow for extra airflow. Please dress accordingly.
15. **VERY SPECIAL NOTES:** There will be no sharing of the peace, no communion, no coffee hour/fellowship in person after church, no lingering in church after the service, and no children's sermon.
16. **Closed Areas:** The office, and kitchen areas will be closed until it is safe to open again.
17. **Restrooms:** The restrooms will be open. There will be a sign on the mirror in the restrooms giving instructions on how you should sanitize the restroom prior to leaving if you use it.

Communication & Virtual Worship

1. **Communication:** This plan will be communicated to all interested parties by mail, email, by posting it on the church website and outside the church entrance.
2. **Bulletins:** Bulletins will continue to be emailed out in preparation for the upcoming worship service.
3. **Virtual Worship:** Services via the radio (88.5 FM), Zoom, and Facebook will continue as they have been for those who will join worship service from home.
4. **Zoom Fellowship time:** Fellowship time, supply your own coffee, will continue for those who want to join in using the Zoom format that is currently in place.