

## **RLLC Plan for Reopening Church**

**Target Opening date: May 31, 2020**

Churches in Minnesota are now able to open using 25% of their official capacity, not to exceed a total number of 250 people, provided they are also taking measures to minimize risk of exposure to COVID. For RLLC, with capacity of 600 in the sanctuary and 600 in the dining hall, our max combined capacity is 1200, thus we meet the 250 max.

We aim to reopen the church on May 31 in a controlled manner, according to Governor Walz's Executive Order and abiding with CDC guidelines, as outlined below.

**NOTE:** The CDC cautions that those in positions of compromised immunity should avoid large gatherings. While RLLC will do what we can to make the facility reasonably safe, those in higher risk situations should not attend, but rather continue to listen to the online broadcast. These include e.g. the elderly, those with underlying chronic illnesses and expectant mothers.

We also ask that you refrain from attending services if you are ill and feverish or have any other cold or flu symptoms.

### **Schedule for the coming week:**

Sunday, May 31, 2020

9:00 AM Service (TBD)

11:00 AM Service (Eric Jurmu)

6:30 PM Graduate Evening, Service (Jouko Haapsaari)

We invite all 2020 high-school graduates to attend this service, along with a maximum of 10 family members or friends per graduate.

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

7:00 PM Service (Rocky Sorvala)

### **Schedule for following weeks, beginning Sunday, June 7 until further notice:**

Sundays

9:00 AM Service

11:00 AM Service

6:30 PM Evening Service

8:00 PM Youth/Haps Service (every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday, starting Jun 14)

Mondays (beginning June 8)

7:00 PM Elders (60+) Service

Wednesdays

7:00 PM Service

**Guidelines for attending services:**

- Home Service Committee will schedule Home Service groups for Sunday and Wednesday services. They will schedule approximately 200-215 people per service, leaving room for ministers, service directors, webcasters, ushers, song leader and organists along with their families to also attend.
- **NOTE:** if you do not belong to a Home Service group, please contact Ruthanne Anderson or Brianna Loukusa. They will assign you to a group.
- All youth are encouraged to attend services with their families when their Home Service group is assigned. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month, a youth service will be scheduled, which will allow youth from other congregations to attend.
- Ushers will monitor overall headcount and help seat people to ensure physical distancing.
- Those that are not yet comfortable attending the church service are welcome to listen online, and should notify the Home Service Heads so they can adjust the group schedule accordingly.
- If you have guests in your home, you are welcome to have them join you at the church.
- The CDC guidelines clearly recommend the use of masks, especially in cases where physical distancing is not possible. Attending church is no exception to this, so the use of masks at the church is certainly an advisable approach.

**Seating arrangement:**

- Start with seating in the front row and then fill toward the back of the church on a first-come, first-serve basis.
- Seating should be every 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> bench (optimize based on overall headcount to maximize space between households). With this spacing, we ensure minimum physical distancing per CDC guidelines, even allowing more space which is recommended for singing.
- If every third bench in the sanctuary fills, additional service guests will be directed to the dining hall. Tables will be positioned to ensure proper distancing in the dining hall.
- Those that are more comfortable with more physical distancing are free to go directly to the dining hall.

**Singing:**

- It should be noted that singing is a higher risk point of disease transfer
- We will do our best to stay as physically distant as possible (minimum of 2 pews between households)
- During this time, in an effort to minimize opportunities for COVID to spread, we will sing only an opening song and a closing song for each service.

#### Usher responsibility:

- Coordinate seating
- Prop or hold entry doors as people are coming and going from the building as well as into and exiting the sanctuary
- Prop open bathroom doors to minimize touch points
- Usher guests out of the building to visit outdoors after the service is over
- See “Collections” note below
- Shut off drinking fountains and post a sign indicating they are not in use at this time
- Remove all songbooks from sanctuary and put them in storage until further notice

#### Cleaning:

- We will have hand sanitizing stations in the narthex
- We ask Home Service Groups attending each service to assign a subgroup to wipe down hard services immediately following the service:
  - door handles, pew tops, rails, etc.
  - surfaces in mothers room and restrooms
  - service director room, including sound board and microphones
  - song-leader station, including microphone and tablet
  - NOTE: organists will take care of wiping down the organ
- Weekly cleaning crews will be scheduled normally, with extra emphasis placed on cleaning of hard surfaces in high contact points (same as above)

#### Collections:

- Ushers / Collectors will place a donation box on a table in the narthex.
- We will not pass a collection plate
- We will continue to encourage online donations

#### Coffee lunch:

- The kitchen will not be used during this time
- There will be no coffee lunch until further notice

#### Communion:

- At this time, the board feels we should not schedule communion. This is in line with other congregations in Southern MN.

#### Weddings, funerals, other private events:

- A wedding ceremony or funeral is permitted during this time, provided the above guidelines are followed, but a reception/memorial luncheon or other gathering is not permitted

**A message from the board:**

In closing, we ask for God's blessings for the ongoing work in our congregation. We ask for acceptance of the road God places before each of us. We ask for your patience as we together work to make services possible given the current guidelines. We, with you, know that this plan could change again soon. We will do our best to keep you abreast of any evolving situations.

We trust God will help us navigate through this to a time when we once again can gather unconstrained by these temporary issues, in perfect fellowship, singing praises to our good and gracious God. That day will come dear brothers and sisters!

God's peace, RLLC Board of Directors

Distribution:

- Board, ministers and committee heads
- Newsletter
- Website
- Church bulletin board
- Home services groups
- Haps group