



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church and Preschool

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Hi Everyone,

Peace to you in Jesus! He is our risen and living Good Shepherd who continues to love and care for us as individuals and as a congregation during this challenging time.

With the relaxation of some of the restrictions on public gatherings that began on May 4th, many have been wondering when we will return to joining together for worship on Sunday mornings. On behalf of the Board of Elders, the Board of Directors and Chairman of the congregation, I am writing to inform you about what has been decided.

The Board of Elders, the Chairman of the congregation, and I discussed this issue at length last week. We considered the following:

1. Information from the White House National Faith Leaders Call on the Covid Response from Thursday, April 23rd.
2. Guidance by Dr. Mike Zaruba based on his assessment of the situation as a local medical professional.
3. Conversation with other pastors in our area.

Based on these discussions, the decision has been made to wait a while longer before re-starting public worship services here at Trinity Lutheran. A tentative date for doing that has been set for **Sunday, June 7th, the Lord-willing.**

We know that other congregations may start sooner. We also understand that members of the congregation may have different opinions about this decision. Some may want to start sooner. Others may want to delay even longer. Several things weighed upon us and motivated our decision to choose this date.

1. The “spike” in cases in our area is not expected until sometime in mid-May.
2. The number of people who have the virus but have no symptoms.
3. The desire to protect those most vulnerable in our congregation and communities.
4. The procedures (masks, social distancing, sanitizing, how we do Communion, etc.) that would still be required. (*It is likely that those procedures will still be needed when we get back together.*)

We ask for your understanding and your patience regarding this decision. Through repentant faith alone in Jesus Christ, we are not only part of the same congregation, but also of the same
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Body—the Body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12ff) As such, we have received the same wonderful gifts from our loving Savior—the forgiveness of our sins, spiritual life, salvation, and the assurance of His ongoing love and care for us.

The Lord doesn't want us to be divided but rather to have the same care for one another. (1 Corinthians 12:25) Because He has first loved us, He wants us and enables us to love each other (1 John 4:19) and to look not only to our own interests but also to the interests of others. (Philippians 2:4)

This has been a challenging time for all of us. As you discuss this with others, we pray that you will put the best construction on what has been decided and give no opportunity to the devil to make this situation even more challenging.

As we wait for and anticipate the time when we can be back together again to receive the Lord's good gifts, to praise His name and to care for each other in a more personal way, we encourage you to do/continue doing the following to feed and strengthen your faith in Jesus Christ:

- ✠ Listen to the recordings of our worship services posted on Trinity's website (www.trinityaubne.org) or watch the videos posted on YouTube. (*Please note: The service is pre-recorded and posted so that you can worship at the normal time on Sunday mornings.*) The weekly bulletin and hymns are available on the website for printing, so that you can more fully participate by following along with the Scripture readings and singing the hymns.
- ✠ Receive Holy Communion privately here at church. I sent out details about how that is done last month. Please call me at (402) 274-4210 to make an appointment.
- ✠ Read daily devotional resources like Portals of Prayer with your family or listen to devotional resources online at the Lutheran Hour Ministries website—www.lhm.org.
- ✠ Listen to *The Lutheran Hour* radio program as it is broadcast on Sunday mornings at the following times and stations.
 - 6:30 a.m. on KFAB—1110 AM
 - 7:30 a.m. on KMA—960 AM or 99.1 FM
 - 8:30 a.m. on KTNC—1230 AM

You can also listen at your convenience on the Lutheran Hour Ministries website above.

If you have any questions or if I can assist you with anything, please give me a call. God's continued blessings to you and your families!

In Christ, Risen Indeed!

Pastor Jon Rathjen

John 10:11, ESV: Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."