

Messiah Lutheran Church

May 21, 2020; 6:00pm

Pastor's Report

Rev. Chuck Harris

Here at Messiah, we continue to be **primarily an online community, and we engage in worship, faith formation, pastoral care, service, and fellowship activities through multiple, web-based channels.**

Even though this is our new reality, we are beginning to look at the weeks and months ahead and are planning what "church" might look like utilizing some combination of online and in-person gatherings and activities.

To this end, I am encouraging Messiah's staff and leadership to think of ourselves as an online faith community that gets to meet in-person at various times depending on the wider pandemic situation in our county and state. I believe this shift in perspective will do us well over the next 12 to 24 months, as we as a nation grapple with complex health, social, and economic issues. Until there is an effective treatment and/or a vaccine, there will most likely be periods of time we can meet together shoulder-to-shoulder and periods of time when our gatherings will be exclusively online.

Much of our council meeting tonight will be devoted to a discussion of a draft document containing a framework for re-opening Messiah during this time of pandemic. This document is meant to be a living, evolving guide. It will gain depth as we evolve our policies, practices, and procedures. It will be posted on our website and can be accessed to provide a foundation for conversation. A conversation time is scheduled for Tuesday, May 26, at 7:00pm, online on Zoom.

Below are some mission-specific areas and updated comments:

Worship

- No in-person worship will continue for the time being. No date for in-person worship has yet been set. Live online worship and a variety of pre-recorded worship opportunities will continue.
- Re-opening to in-person worship is extremely complex in a pandemic environment. There are a great many guidelines available but not much actual experience. It will be a long process!
- **Worship Survey Results:**
- **Where do you primarily go to access Messiah's online worship?**
Facebook – 63.1%
YouTube – 6.1%
Messiah Website – 30.8%
65 Responses
- **Do you like to comment about the service as it airs on Facebook?**
Yes – 42.9%
No – 57.1%
21 Responses
- **When do you primarily experience Messiah's livestream of worship?**
On Sunday morning when scheduled – 87.5%
Another time or day of the week – 12.5%

64 Responses

- **If we offered a special drive thru service of worship for healing, using the Messiah parking lot, would you participate from your car?**
Yes – 12.5%
No – 45.3%
Maybe – 42.2%
64 Responses
- **For older adults and / or those with underlying medical conditions: Would you participate in a daytime, midweek service of worship with a limited number of participants and enhanced coronavirus safety measures?**
Yes – 24.6%
No – 34.4%
Does not apply – 41%
61 Responses

Staff

- All staff continue to work hard to produce and present online worship and faith formation opportunities.
- Staff comes into office at staggered times. There is some overlap, but social distancing is practiced. Staff keeping office area sanitized.
- Jan continues to manage some "front-end" social media activities and all "back-end"

technical changes. There are opportunities for her to really develop an integrated and robust web and social media presence.

- Tia and Jan are drafting proposals for elevating our web presence and build more functionality for our website.
- Traci and Savannah have communicated changes in plans for mission trips and retreats. Planning for a mixture of in-person and online faith formation opportunities in the fall continues.

Communication

- Updated communication plan is being evolved in conjunction with the building and program re-opening guidelines.

Building Use

- Building continues to be closed.
- Office is closed.
- The only scheduled groups continue to be Sunday afternoon and Thursday evening Community Meals. The meals are distributed outside as “grab and go”. Folks inside fixing food are social distancing.
- Same is true for Wednesday morning foodbank.

Operations

- Janitorial service continues to be reduced to 4 hours on Wednesday and 4 hours on Friday. Service is also donating free of charge 4-8 hours per week for 8 weeks
- Janitorial service will ramp up as the building slowly begins to see more use.
- Garbage is now bi-weekly with smaller bins.

Care

- Lots of phone calling, emails, and Zoom chats
- Care Team Zoom meeting this coming week.
- 33 members receiving weekly calls from 12 Care Team volunteers.