

## ***Covid-19 Virus Safety Protocols for Re-opening Our Church June 2021—Begin Date: Sunday, June 20th***

### **To Begin With**

#### **The Great News Is....**

We have reached approximately 94% of our attending adult members have been vaccinated. That is well beyond the 70% level needed to reach “herd immunity.” With this fact established by our recent survey process we set up the following Covid-19 Protocols.

As you read the new protocols, please understand that our Covid Committee and our Church Council continue to strive to be considerate of various opinions and various levels of personal sense of security.

### **Updated Covid-19 Protocols**

#### **Deciding to Attend Church Worship and functions**

People are to stay home if they are not feeling well; or, if they have been exposed to anyone who has Covid-19 within the last 12 days. This will also include household members who live with them. In the case of possible exposure to Covid-19, persons should stay away from church for 12 days after the day of exposure.

People who do not yet feel safe in going out may choose to stay home.

Our on-line worship services will continue on Facebook for your benefit. Go to facebook.com and search for: Redeemer Lutheran Church NALC. Pastor remains available for meeting you at church or at your home for Holy Communion.

#### **Entry into the churches**

Both parking lots are open for use. All doors will be opened. But will continue to be locked during service for security reasons.

We need to continue to keep track of who is in attendance, so please continue to sign in before you go into the sanctuary. Sign in will be located at the sanctuary doors.

If there is a report of someone being diagnosed with Covid-19 (if so diagnosed, make a timely report to Pastor George), and they have attended worship within the last 12 days of being infectious, church membership will be informed of such. However, at this time, in-person worship services will continue to be held. Members, having been informed, are free to make their own decision as to whether or not to attend worship for the next one or two Sundays.

Temperatures will not be taken.

### **Inside the Church Sanctuary and the Facility as a Whole**

One back-side section of the sanctuary will continue to be roped off for those who want to continue with social distancing during worship. You may seat yourself there if you so choose. All others are encouraged to sit in the remaining pews out of respect for those wishing to utilize this back-side roped off section.

Masks are optional for entering the church and for worship. Please be respectful of each other's decision on this matter. The church will continue to have some masks available. We encourage members to bring their own masks if they choose to wear them.

Social distancing is optional. Here again, please be respectful of each other's personal or medical decision on this matter. This will require an on-going sensitive awareness in order to respect another person's needed sense of space. Ask before hugging or shaking hands. In time we will get a sense of the preferences of our fellow church members.

Hand-sanitizing stations through out the church ll continue to be made available. Please continue to make regular use of them.

There is no limit on the number of people in the restrooms at any given time.

### **Our Worship Setting**

Bulletins, hymnals and Bibles will be put back into use. Even so, all of the service will continue to be posted up on our screen. A person will be free to choose not to make use of a hymnal or Bible.

The service will continue to be abbreviated.

While our liturgy will continue to be spoken, two hymns/songs will be added at this time. The words of the songs will be posted on the screen. Anyone is free to put on a mask when singing takes place, if they so desire (and they can wear it for awhile after the singing is done).

Holy Communion will continue to be done as we have been doing; one pew or house hold at a time. Pastor will continue to wear a mask over the Communion table. The temporary practice of On-line at Home Holy Communion will come to an end on the first Sunday in July. Members are encouraged to return to worship. If there is still a hesitancy regarding being around other people and you continue to stay at home, then call the Pastor to arrange a time for him to bring you Holy Communion at your home or to meet him at church for Holy Communion in the Sanctuary.

Offering plates will continue to be placed in the entryway of the sanctuary for members to drop their offerings into.

An usher will dismiss people in the roped off section of the sanctuary first, one pew at a time. Then the front section of the sanctuary will be dismissed as a whole at the indication of the usher.

The use of worship assistants and acolytes returns to normal. Yet, the Communion service continues without assistants.

Prayer Ministers may return to praying with people at the end of the service. If the person they are to pray with is wearing a mask, you too should wear a mask (come prepared). Make sure to ask if the person wants a degree of social distancing, and have them tell you what that distance is.

Pastor is free to move about at the front of the sanctuary.

Bell Choir may return to normal, establishing for themselves as a group their practice of mask wearing and social distancing.

Voice Choir remains on hold at this time.

### **Other Items**

Fellowship time will continue as is scheduled: servers will continue to serve the food and drinks. Masks and social distancing are optional. Again, this will require an on-going sensitive awareness in order to respect another person's needed sense of space. In time we will get a sense of the preferences of our fellow church members.

Christian Education, Christian Life activities, and Church Council and church committees, may return to regular practice; following the above guidelines.

The church will be open for funerals and weddings. We will follow the guidelines that are in place at that time.

### **Concluding Word of Caution**

This is a virus that continues to be dangerous. Recent studies show that the majority of those who have been hospitalized with Covid-19 suffer "long-covid" symptoms up to 6 months later. The same is true of a minority of those not hospitalized. So, if Covid-19 conditions (variant mutations, infection rates, need for booster vaccinations, etc.) raise to a level of local concern, or if state mandates are put in place; then, following our own considerations by our Covid Committee and our Church Council, these guidelines may be adjusted.

How thankful to God we are that the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have been working so well in terms of prevention and lowering the severity of covid symptoms. A true blessing. Thanks be to God!

And we are very appreciative of all of you for your on-going understanding and cooperation. Again, Thanks be to God!