

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

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Greetings Good Shepherd Family,

In this time of continued uncertainty, we pray that you are feeling strengthened and sustained by the love and presence of God. As we navigate these unprecedented times, we have come to the point where we must begin to think about how and when we will resume in person worship at Good Shepherd. According to government regulations churches are now allowed to hold services as long as distancing practices are maintained and attendance is kept under a certain number.

Over the last week, the Synod has met with clergy and lay leaders and has shared a detailed set of guidelines for how to best plan a return to in person worship. The Synod understands that churches and their members are eager to resume services but they believe that it is essential to take a cautious and measured approach. The Synod believes that we have a responsibility to care for our members and for those in our communities. So, they are encouraging churches to be very careful and very deliberate as they contemplate holding services again. The synod is encouraging churches to abide by the group limits in place for non-church gatherings as opposed to the higher numbers beings allowed for churches because it is vitally important that we make decisions with the best interest of the wider community in mind. The synod is hoping that churches who have been having virtual worship will continue that for the foreseeable future and will consider a return to in person worship, with all of the necessary safeguards in place, later in the summer or early in the fall.

Even when we do return to in person worship at Good Shepherd we will need to continue with virtual worship as well because there will not be room in our sanctuary for all of us to gather together and have distancing measures in place. There is a great deal of planning that needs to be done before we can responsibly hold services again and there will be lengthy discussions had between the Synod, Pastor Munye, the CMT, the worship committee and members of the congregation. In this vain we will reach out to you and ask that you share your views, concerns, and desires so that we can move forward together as we plan.

We eagerly anticipate the day when we can gather again in the sanctuary of Good Shepherd and worship together in person, but we must take the proper steps so that we can continue to care for the world and for each other as we have been called to do. We will continue to update the congregation as more information becomes available and please reach out to us if you are struggling in any way at all during these difficult times.

May we continue to be persuaded, like the Apostle Paul, that even when we feel separated from one another because of this pandemic, nothing "will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Peace be with you,

Nathaniel Gibson
CMT Chairperson

Munye Mtata
Pastor