



HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Dear Siblings in Christ,

It truly is hard to believe it has been 6 months since our last in-person worship service at HTLC. Although we are providing an online worship service, many, including myself, miss the intimacy of gathering together in person. I long for the day we can all walk into the church building not needing masks or social distancing from each other. I know it will come, but not soon enough.

On Tuesday, September 15th the church council met for its monthly council meeting. The council reviewed the cases in the city of Dubuque, reviewed the churches Pandemic Reopening Directive and decided to remain closed until the next council meeting. Per the Pandemic Reopening Directive, the council is waiting for a steady decline of cases over a 28-day period before we begin to reopen in a limited capacity.

Currently the new sound system is scheduled to be installed at the end of September. Once installed, and a few weeks of working out the issues we may run into, the new sound system will be ready to record and live stream the worship services. Our hope is to have this ready when we begin in-person worship so that we do not exclude anyone from our worship services.

We are also planning a Saturday “Parking Lot Worship Service” that will be held at Wartburg Theological Seminary’s parking lot. Once parked in your designated space, volunteers will hand out baggies containing a bulletin and communion elements. Worship will be broadcast through an FM transmitter that can be heard through your car radio. I realize this is not the same as worshipping in our sanctuary, but it allows us to come together and see one another from the safety of our cars.

We have a few plans in the works on how to get us back together safely. In the meantime, I invite you all to join us for worship online and to continue to pray for this world and the community of Dubuque Iowa. As I write this letter, Dubuque was designated as a “Red Zone” once again. Cases have been going up and unfortunately, we had our highest number of positive cases in a 24-hour period on Friday September 18th with 113 new cases. Please keep all of our brothers and sisters in prayer and please stay safe in these troubling times.

I know this is a difficult time for you. In times like this I lean even more on the cross and upon the resurrected Christ. It is on the cross that death has been defeated. It is on the cross Christ

died the death that should have been ours and offers us forgiveness and life. It is on the cross God reached out to humanity and said, "I Love and Choose You". Although we may be socially distant from one another, God is not distant from you for Emmanuel, God with us, is here. We are God's beautiful children, held in God's love, mercy and forgiveness...forever.

Know that you are deeply missed by all of us at Holy Trinity and cannot wait for the day we gather together in person to worship our resurrected Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Josh