



Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish



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Protocol for Returning to In-Person Worship During Pandemic

Approved – Immanuel Lutheran 6/11/20

Approved – First Lutheran 6/15/20

Statement - As communities of faith, we believe that our relationship with our Lord and with one another as brothers and sisters in Christ is strengthened as we gather together for worship. Thus, we acknowledge a strong desire to resume in-person worship. However, as Jesus said, “By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another,” it is our love for one another expressed through our concern and care for each other’s health that will guide our decisions on returning to in-person worship.

I. When?

- a. When Illinois moves into phase 4 of the “Restore Illinois” plan, Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish (HOILP) will conduct in-person worship with the restrictions and procedures stipulated below
- b. Should Illinois recede back to phase 3 after moving into phase 4 of the “Restore Illinois” plan due to new spikes in the corona virus, in-person worship at HOILP will be suspended.
- c. Once in-person worship is resumed, should any individual who has worshipped at HOILP test positive for Covid-19, in-person worship will be suspended for a minimum of two weeks from the time that individual was present in worship, and appropriate notification will be made to each person present so that proper precautions and self-quarantines can take place (maintaining confidentiality of the affected parishioner[s]).
- d. When Illinois moves to phase 5 of the “Restore Illinois” plan, the restrictions on size of gathering and social distancing will be lifted with ongoing guidelines as suggested by the IDPH, CDC and ELCA being instigated.

II. How?

- a. Schedule
 - i. Sunday worship schedule during phase 4:
 1. 8:30 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. at one congregation
 2. Alternate weeks between Immanuel & First
 3. If two services are filling up, we will explore adding a third worship opportunity on Sunday evening or a weeknight evening
 - ii. Schedule during phase 5:
 1. 8:30 a.m. at Immanuel
 2. 10:30 a.m. at First
- b. For love of one another and our neighbor, we will follow the guidelines of 50 or less gathered by...
 - i. We will request that the members contact the Immanuel office by the end of business hours on Friday (1:00 p.m.) to indicate what time and how many will be attending worship
 1. Phone: 815.539.6567
 2. Email: immanuelutherancompton@live.com
 3. Should you miss the Friday deadline please text either Debbie Rebholz or Pastor Jeff to make sure there is still space in the service you plan on attending.
 - ii. Members will be asked to be flexible in the event a service is full
 - iii. A service will be considered “full” when 45 members have signed up, this allows five spots for visitors

- iv. Note - All are reminded that this procedure of signing up for your worship time is a temporary necessity during the time of pandemic and will be abandoned as soon as reasonable.
- c. For love of one another and our neighbor, we will maintain social distancing and contact practices by...
 - i. Each congregation will mark their pews with blue painter tape to indicate where people can sit to maintain proper social distancing
 - ii. Each congregation will develop an effective procedure to disinfect between worship services
 - iii. Worshippers from the same family/living unit are welcome to sit together in the designated seating area, but are asked to maintain the six-foot recommended distance from other worshippers
 - iv. Worshippers will be required to wear masks
 - 1. The expectation will be that worshippers bring their own mask
 - 2. Each congregation will have masks available at the door for those who forgot to bring one with them
 - v. Ushers will fulfill the following jobs:
 - 1. Open the door for worshippers as they enter and exit, thus eliminating risk of virus transmission from one of the highest contact areas of the building
 - 2. Hand out masks to those who forgot to bring one
 - 3. Note – ushers will wear gloves
 - vi. The pastor or worship leader will...
 - 1. ...lead the service from behind the communion rail in order to maintain a healthy distance
 - 2. ...dismiss worshippers at the end of the service pew by pew so that proper social distance can be maintained while exiting the building.
- d. For love of one another and our neighbor, we will use the following liturgical guidelines...
 - i. The service will be projected and there will be no bulletins
 - ii. Congregational singing will be suspended during worship until phase 5 of the “Restore Illinois” plan
 - iii. Offering plates will not be passed. A basket will be placed at the exits where worshippers can place their offering as they enter or exit.
 - iv. Communion – initially, there will not be communion at the in-person services. But as the in-person worship experiences progress we will discuss and consider ways to make communion available to all members in a faithful and safe manner.
 - v. Sharing of the peace will be via waving and gesturing from your seats. The practice of handshakes and hugs will be discontinued until complete recovery has occurred.
- e. Other
 - i. Coffee and food fellowship time before and after worship will be suspended until phase 5 or the “Restore Illinois” plan.
 - ii. Social visiting with other worshippers should take place outdoors where there is greater safety (social distancing should still be maintained).
- f. On-line worship
 - i. During in-person worship in phase 4 of the “Restore Illinois” plan, on-line worship will continue to be offered for those who don’t feel comfortable and/or safe gathering in large groups
 - ii. Portions of the video used for online worship will be used during the in-person worship such as the song leaders singing the hymns, the lectors, etc.