



## St. Luke's United Church of Christ

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**July 9, 2020**

To: The Congregation of St. Luke's United Church of Christ

From: Greg McLard – President of Church Council.

Re: Church reopening June 19, 2020.

St. Luke's U.C.C. will be open for in-person service at 9 am on Sunday July 19, 2020. This is contingent on no new 'Stay at home order' being put into effect by Jefferson County, the State of Missouri or U.S.A. on or before that date.

The Church Council and members of the Board of Elders and Board of Christian Education met Monday July 7, 2020 to review and discuss the Survey replies received from our congregation. 50 replies were returned. Two-thirds of those who replied believe we should be open now and would attend if we were holding services. The group in attendance voted to follow the wishes of our congregation and reopen for in-person service.

Specifically, the group decided to continue to follow the phased reopening plan suggested by the Missouri Mid-South Conference U.C.C. but waive waiting for 4 weeks of declining new cases in our area. Also altered is the maximum number of people allowed in the Sanctuary for service. This number will be based on the number of people per attending family and the physical constraints of our Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall to ensure social distancing of 6 feet.

The issue of liability of the Church in the case that COVID-19 virus is transmitted between service attendees at our Church was also discussed. All agreed that those who will attend service will need to fill out a waiver prior to entry to attend service. This waiver will be mailed to the congregation and emailed to those on the email list. A signed copy will be required for each member and/or each person who wishes to attend. Only one signed waiver is required per member/attendee. The waiver will be kept on file and confirmation as such will be provided to the ushers at each service for reference.

Consistent with requirements that have been shared before, everyone will be expected to observe the following:

1. You will be asked to call, text or e-mail Tricia, our church secretary, by Wednesday evening at 5 p.m. to let her know you intend to come and how many of your family will be with you. Online scheduling software is also being looked at for reservations but may not be in place initially.
2. You will be required to wear a mask. Please bring your own, but we will have single use masks available.
3. There will be sanitizer available for your use upon entry and exit. An usher will dispense it.
4. You will need to enter through the handicapped access door, which will be propped open.
5. If it is a Communion Sunday. Please bring your own bread and juice/wine. Please also bring a zip-lock bag or container to carry out any disposable items.
6. The offering plate will be at the entrance to receive your offering.

7. Social distancing is required. We will not be shaking hands or hugging outside of our family groups. Pastor Vicki will not leave the chancel (the front area of the sanctuary). If you wish to visit with her in her office, social distancing (6 feet of separation) will apply and only one person will be allowed in at a time.

8. If we do overflow to Fellowship Hall you will be asked to enter through the downstairs door and exit through same. All the above will apply.

As stated above, social distancing of 6 feet is required in both the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall. Due to the spacing of our pews we will have every third pew available for seating. We have 10 pews per side of the Sanctuary, so pews #1, #4, #7 and #10 per side will be used to maximize seating. The balcony is also available. The chancel was not approved for additional seating at this time. Chairs will be arranged in the Fellowship Hall to ensure the 6-foot spacing and view of the television. Let Tricia know if you have a preferred pew when making a reservation, but please understand it is first come, first serve.

The Hymnals, Bibles and Friendship registers have been removed from the Sanctuary to further reduce the possibility of spreading the virus. The bulletin will include necessary passages for service, but you are encouraged to bring your own Bible.

The only restrooms open for use will be those in the Educational Building. The upstairs restrooms will be available for those in the Sanctuary. The downstairs restroom will be available for those in the Fellowship hall. The Church Office will be available for ushers. Pastor Vicki's office will be available per her invitation. The remainder of the Church will be restricted areas at this time.

If an attendee of any service going forward tests positive for COVID-19, they will need to alert the Church immediately. We then can alert all other attendees of that service. At the same time, the Church will be closed for 14 days. The attendee who tested positive for the virus must show proof of testing negative of the virus prior to re-entering the Church.

We request that anyone who travels out of state please refrain from attending Church for 2 weeks after returning home for the safety of the congregation.

Pastor Vicki's weekly sermons and Children's time will continue to be uploaded to YouTube. The easiest way to reach these is still through the Church's website here: <https://stlukesuccimperial.org/sunday-sermon>

Tricia, our Church Secretary, will continue to manage the Church Office tasks remotely. Emails and phone calls will be answered and attended to just as they have these past few months. We thank Tricia for her work keeping the Church Office duties up to date while navigating this shut down.

Members of the Church Council, Board of Elders and Board of Christian Education have put much thought and time into when and how to reopen our Church. We understand that our next service will not be the same as that when we last came together to worship. We believe the plan presented above is the best attempt to bring our congregation back together while restricting the spread of the COVID-19 virus at the same time. We will make adjustments to our plan as needed according to new details concerning this virus. I look forward to seeing you all.

Sincerely,

Greg McLard  
President, St. Luke's U.C.C. Church Council  
314-570-3605