



Pastor Mike's Mash:

"Therefore, I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine, and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance infect and pollute others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence." —Martin Luther, 1527, during an outbreak of the Bubonic plague in Wittenberg that closed the University where he taught and in response to the request by city officials that he flee for his own safety.

²⁸ One of the teachers of the law... asked Jesus, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" ²⁹ "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these."—Mark 12:28-31

By now I am sure that you will have heard that we have set a tentative date for a return to in-person worship in our building. We are aiming for **Sunday, August 9**. It is a tentative date inasmuch as there very well could be factors beyond our control that might necessitate changing that date. Climbing state-wide infection rates could impact decisions by the MN Department of Health and Governor Walz to roll back our public life. The presence of the virus within our community would call for wisdom and caution. This decision has not been one that has come quickly or easily. Our Reentry Team has been meeting since the end of May to talk and pray about what's going on around us; the directives of our government and public health officials; and the advice and recommendations from the ELCA and our Northeastern MN Synodical bishop Tom Aitken. **I want to thank that group of people from the bottom of my heart: Heather Druar, Bob Minks; Kenny Neumann; Lynda Lee Peterson; Kelly Sexton; Patty Thul.** Their eyes, ears, minds, and advice have been invaluable.

On Tuesday, July 14, we began sending out both in the mail as well as online the council-approved plan guiding us back toward in-person worship. (You can find that plan posted on our website at <http://www.trinity-princeton.org/mission--ministry-in-a-covid-19->

[world.html](#).) While too lengthy to include in this mailing, here are the main features of that plan: We would advise against attending worship (or any public gathering for that matter) if you...

...are feeling ill or exhibiting any kind of respiratory symptom (coughing, sneezing, etc.) or any symptom associated with Covid-19 (fever, shortness of breath, chills, muscle aches, loss of taste or smell, etc.);
...have knowingly been exposed to or tested positive for Covid-19 over the previous 14-days;
...are at higher risk for severe illness (elderly or underlying health conditions) or have a compromised immune system (chemotherapy patients, etc.); or
...are at a higher risk of exposing others (i.e., nursing home employees, etc.).

Masks will be required for all occupants of the building, covering both the mouth and nose. Cloth masks are available in the church office, and disposable masks will also be provided.

Physical distancing of at least 6-feet will need to be maintained, which means we will only be able to accommodate about 100 people in our sanctuary. Our seating will be arranged in groups that include single chairs, pairs, etc., though worshipers will be encouraged to move chairs to accommodate the family members with whom they live while still maintaining that 6-foot physical distancing from others.

Our HVAC system is being worked on to be able to provide a constant exchange of fresh air and to eliminate recirculation.

We won't be singing or responsively reading as a congregation. Instead, a single "cantor" will provide music and will be arranged in the sanctuary that he/she (along with all of our musicians) is closest to the open, external door in the northeast corner of the sanctuary. Hymnals, offering plates, and other "handleables" will be eliminated, and our communion practices will be adjusted so that we are receiving from an arm's length distance from both the pastors and recipient. Only one person may occupy a bathroom at a time. A thorough cleaning and sanitation regimen will be established for after worship, and we will need volunteers to help make sure that happens.

These are the main points of our reentry plan, though there will likely be some adjustments and additional practices we haven't even thought of.

Even with this thoroughness, I would advise anyone against thinking these are 100% effective. Indeed, even as CDC and MN Dept. of Health guidelines have changed and been adjusted a number of times since

March—which is what the scientific process does as research is conducted in real time—the **only foolproof technique we presently have in protecting ourselves and others from the Covid-19 virus, short of a vaccine, is not to be in the presence of those who are or may be carriers of the virus. FOR THAT REASON, WE WILL CONTINUE TO LIVESTREAM OUR WORSHIP, AND IT MAY EVEN BE THAT THIS HAS BECOME A PERMANENT FIXTURE IN THE WAY WE MINISTER TO OUR CONGREGATION AND WORLD.**

Of course, the longer our ordeal continues, the less realistic and mentally healthy that isolation becomes, especially from the standpoint of the social people God has created us to be.

Finally, as followers of our Lord Jesus Christ, I want to invite you to meditate on the heart of our caution. When asked about the greatest commandment, Jesus doesn't bat an eye in focusing his followers on love, loving God with our whole heart, soul, strength, and mind AND loving our neighbors as ourselves. **The way Jesus sums these commandments up, however, is the most important of all: "The is no greater COMMANDMENT [singular] than THESE [plural]." In other words, the TWO COMMANDMENTS—to love God AND to love the neighbor—are really just ONE COMMANDMENT.** We love God BY LOVING THE NEIGHBOR.

At times, I have heard it suggested that we need not be afraid of this Covid business. Sometimes it has seemed the implication even is that any sort of caution is fearful. Indeed, I have seen more than one article claiming that the Bible contains the phrase, "Fear not!" 365 times, or one for every day of the year. Truly, fear causes us to act and react in ways that are often less than the loving way Jesus calls his followers to live. I suspect that the general discord that has become the fabric of our culture is based in this fear. So our decisions to practice the utmost caution when it comes to being physically present in worship will continue to be couched in terms of love for God through love for our neighbors. And, that is a life-giving way to be in our daily lives, as well.

May this spirit and practice of love guide and keep your hearts and minds whatever your response may be to our tentative return to in-person worship.

If you have not taken the opportunity to respond to our poll about returning to worship on August 9, please do so. **We need to know if our numbers on that Sunday are going to approach 100, and if they are, do we need to make plans for an additional service for that day and beyond?** Thank you to those who have completed this survey.

In Christ—Pastor Mike



Worship This Weekend— Sunday, August 9

On July 15, we sent out both a digital and hard copy of a survey to help us gauge what the response would be to the potential for a return to in-person worship. Perhaps not too surprisingly at this juncture of our realities with covid, the responses were over 2:1 in favor of "not returning at this point."

Please note: the survey was not a vote to do worship or not.

Our main concern was

(a) to make sure that our seating capacity of about 100 could accommodate the survey's response; and
(b) if not, to add additional in-person opportunities for worship, as needed.

As of this E-Trumpet, we are well within our capacity to accommodate those who responded that they would be attending worship.

This Sunday (August 9), we will be offering TWO worship opportunities.

9am Livestream—with Drive-Up Holy Communion

10:30am IN-PERSON WORSHIP—WITH HOLY COMMUNION

MORE DETAILS ABOUT THIS SERVICE AND FOLLOWING WILL BE COMING

We can only accommodate about 100—seating will be physically spaced but chairs can be moved to accommodate those within your household.

OFFICE HOURS



- **Monday: 9am – 1pm** Liz only, except for Council Mondays (2nd Monday of the month), when at least one pastor will be present. (Mondays are typically the pastors' day off.)
- **Tuesday – Thursday: 10am – 2pm** Liz will mostly be present in the office. At least one pastor will be in at least TWO of those days.
- **Fridays**—Summer office hours; the office is closed.

OTHER THINGS TO NOTE ABOUT OUR MODIFIED OFFICE HOURS:

Please call ahead if you are planning to come by the office--as we begin to welcome back small groups who meet in our building, there will be times when Liz and the pastors may not be in the building, simply to limit exposure to people.

- During posted office hours, if Liz is not present in the office, the office phones are forwarded to her cell phone.
- After posted hours, your call will be directed to a voice mail box, and someone will return your call as soon as is possible.
- Office doors will remain locked for the time being until, as with worship reentry, we experience 14 days of declining case numbers.
- **If you can continue to conduct business with the office via phone, PLEASE DO.**
- We will continue to encourage you who might be in higher risk categories to stay home and conduct business by phone.
- Pastoral emergencies can still be directed to either Pastor Mike or Pastor Kari by contacting them directly on their cell phones.
- The pastors will beginning to develop strategies for conducting home visits in a safe, physically distant way (i.e., at least 6 feet away, outdoors, through a slightly opened window, etc.) but will continue to use their phones for most connections and checking in.
- **PLEASE, out of care for our staff, do not come to the office for any reason.....if you are feeling ill or exhibiting any kind of respiratory symptom (coughing, sneezing, etc.);...if you have knowingly been exposed to Covid-**

19;...if you have a compromised immune system (chemotherapy patients, etc.); or...if you are at a higher risk of exposing others (i.e., nursing home employees, etc.).

IF YOU DO COME TO THE OFFICE...

- Masks will be required.
- Pastor Mike will receive visitors in his office, provided they can maintain a physical distance of 6 feet. (We'll invite people to come to Pastor Mike's office through the sanctuary entrance.)
- Pastor Kari's office is too small, so she will receive visitors elsewhere in the building where physical distancing and privacy can be maintained.
- In the event that visitors are received for pastoral care, a thorough sanitizing process will occur, wiping down all surfaces contacted by visitors after they have left.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING, PATIENCE, AND SUPPORT

MASKS ARE STILL AVAILABLE THROUGH THE CHURCH

As we continue to look forward to a day when we can gather for in-person events at the church, it seems highly likely



that masks will continue to be a part of our practice for the foreseeable future. While not 100% effective—there probably isn't anything that is—when it comes to slowing the way that the coronavirus is spread through airborne aerosol spray that we human simply naturally emit when we speak and certainly when we cough, sneeze, or even sing, the introduction of a barrier simply makes good sense. This is true whether we are talking about a quick trip to the grocery store or whether we are talking about a worship service.

We have a handful of masks for both adults and kids at Trinity and have requested more. If you are in need of one, please contact Liz.

Thank you to all who donated and helped with Princeton Day Of Kindness

We had a great turn out of volunteers and recipients! Care packages of toilet paper, tooth brushes/toothpaste, laundry vouchers and Laundry soap were given out curbside to 98 people! We couldn't have done it without each and everyone of you!



The Care for Creation Team is offering regular suggestions and information

about how we can be stewards of our environment. Please use the information that is helpful to you to care for what God has given us.

An idea to make Zero Waste Kitchen:

Cleaning Supplies: Instead of buying individual bottles of water, you can buy a filter affordably these days and fill a reusable bottle. If you prefer flavors, that's easy too. Infused water is delicious, and adding things like lemon may even have some great health effects.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY TO THE MISSION & MINISTRY GOD HAS GIVEN OUR CONGREGATION!!

We continue to be astounded and grateful for your generosity!

Our faithfulness to God's calling, even in this time, is to be responsible for our financial commitments, not least of which include our ministry partners (like the Synod and Camp Onomia); our buildings (including, of course, our mortgage on Trinity Crossing); and of course, our staff! Be we cannot be faithful to that calling without your trust and faithfulness in your generosity.

There are still any number of ways to give:

- **By Mail**—we have a reliable process for making sure that all offerings are out of the building every single day and deposited right way. It is safe, even with our mostly shuttered building.
- **Drop Off**—If you are out and about, there is a mail slot to the right of the front doors. You can safely and securely drop your gift off there.
- **On-line**—go to our website (www.trinity-princeton.org) and look for the picture of the offering plate like the one above. This is THE most efficient way of signing up for Simply Giving, which is administered by Vanco, one of the most secure e-commerce companies in the industry.
- **Automatic Withdrawal**—Contact your bank.
- **By App**—Both the Apple and Google Play app stores have a free app called "GivePlus." Once downloaded to your device, simply search for "Trinity Lutheran Church, Princeton, MN"; follow the directions for registering; and set-up your giving in whatever way works for your faithful generosity, one time, recurring, or whatever.

Thank you again for supporting God's mission for us, even in these times of separation and uncertainty.

NEWS FROM PRINCETON PANTRY: NEED FOOD?

Please tell anyone who is in need of food the Princeton Pantry locations 1) 104 6th Ave. south city lot behind K-Bob and 2) Fresh Market in the mall near the Pizza Barn are

open normal hours Monday's 1-3, Wednesday's 1-3, and Fridays 9-11 am every week. Senior Meals or frozen meals on wheels are also available in the Fresh Market free to anyone over 60. Please use both locations as each site has different offerings. You may pick up and deliver for a friend. Call [\(763\) 389-2777](tel:763-389-2777) or [\(763\) 631-3578](tel:763-631-3578) to arrange a convenient time.

WANT TO HELP?

Please tell anyone who would like to help the Princeton Pantry that the Minnesota Shares drive is continuing through April 30. Donations can be taken to the pantry at 104 6th ave. S. Princeton man 55371 during hours, dropped in the mail slot, mailed, or given electronically through the website at www.princetonpantrymn.com.

