



7 May, 2021

THIS IS AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE - PLEASE READ THROUGH

Dear members of Our Saviour Lutheran Green Bay,

We are wrestling with how to transition from full shutdown to a full and safe reopening. How and when to take these steps is a many sided discussion. The opinions, experiences and perspectives of our people vary greatly. But none of these various perspectives will get in the way of the harmony we have in Christ.

On April 12, the congregation voted to make some changes in our worship protocols. Out of our five weekly worship services, one became, *"Mask optional with social distancing"* (9:15 am Sunday), others maintain *"Full protocol"* (12:15 pm Thursday and 7:45 am Sunday), while others have transformed into *"No protocols"* (6:30pm Thursday and 10:45 am Sunday).

At that same voter's meeting, the congregation entrusted the Church Council to make future changes consistent with the best response to local conditions.

THE PEWS ARE FILLING UP!

Background story: On Sunday May 2 we had a confirmation service at 10:45am. As mentioned, that service is, "No protocol". The reports are that the pews were full. Yeah! More telling, was the preceding ever popular 9:15am service that day, the attendance was higher than normal. Even though Social Distancing was required, it is very difficult to maintain. Attendance at that service was at Social Distancing capacity. Also, many attendees had not pre-registered, making a bit of a bottleneck at the Welcome Center.

COMING TO A DECISION

Taking the above into consideration, the Church Council held a special meeting Thursday May 6th to discuss a proposed request of dropping the Social Distancing protocol for the 9:15am service. At that meeting the Council discussed the points below:

- If we require worshippers to comply with our Social Distancing requirement at 9:15am and we continue to have a larger than capacity attendance there, we will most likely reach our seating maximum and have to turn folks away. Ouch! No one wants that to happen!
- Do we have enough trained ushers to direct seating for proper Social Distancing? We do not.
- If we relax the Social Distancing requirement at the 9:15am service, are we putting folks at risk? If they are informed in advance, they come knowing the risks.
- And if that protocol were to be relaxed, would we have enough time to inform the membership? Yes, by email, website and an automated phone call.

- This coming Sunday is Mother's Day, which often draws a larger crowd than normal. If we keep and require compliance on the Social Distancing at 9:15am worship, we will most likely be turning people away from a worship service with their mom that they have been planning with deep joy. To turn them away would be hurtful at best.

Every point made by your Council had validity. Given the discussion above, after much discussion along every angle and avenue, the Church Council, authorized by the congregation on April 12, decided to drop the Social Distancing protocol at the 9:15 am service, beginning this Sunday.

ACTION ITEM: Please pass the word. The Social Distancing Protocol will be dropped at the 9:15am service beginning this Sunday.

PLEASE PRE-REGISTER  
(It is part of our protocol)

All of our worshippers are requested to pre-register for worship either by going to our website, or by calling the church office.

Online registration closes at 11:59pm on Wednesday for Thursday; it closes at 11:59pm on Thursday (the cut off was Friday) for Sunday.

As a whole, we have become lax in pre-registration and folks have been signing in when they arrive. **We ask that all of us make a renewed concerted effort to pre-register for worship. Thank-you!**

Pre-registration helps in several ways, for example:

- Knowing how many folks to anticipate for worship
- Knowing how many folks to prepare for Communion
- Recording who and how many communed

RESPECT YOUR NEIGHBOR

We all want to be careful and cautious toward our neighbor. We are still in the danger zone of this virus. We do not want to give the illusion of false safety. Some have survived this virus while others have not. Some have lost loved ones, others in our midst have suffered horribly through it. Be respectful of another person's space for their comfort and safety. Yet, worship with joy!

Finally, God has blessed us so richly, with a fine, wise and loving team of lay leaders! He has given us such a special family here!

On behalf of the Church Council,

David H. Hatch, Senior Pastor