



October 15, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

After much prayer, deliberation and preparation, the leadership of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church has reached the decision to reopen our sanctuary for in-person worship.

When will we resume in-person worship services?

- In-person worship begins on **Sunday, November 1 at 9:30 am** and will follow PA Guidelines for Indoor Occupancy Limits.
- Sunday Church School will also resume on November 1. Families will begin worship together at 9:30 am in the sanctuary. Children will be dismissed from worship and escorted to their classroom. Children will be brought back to the sanctuary prior to the conclusion of worship.

Will online worship continue?

- We will be streaming our services live starting at 9:15 am on Sunday mornings. Recordings of the service will become available later that same day. You can view the service on our YouTube channel (St. John's ELC Boyertown) or on our website (stjohnsboyertown.org).

How will worship be different?

- While we will not be able to enjoy congregational singing, responsive liturgy, passing the peace, being greeted with an outstretched hand, the passing of offering plates, or anything else that might significantly increase the likelihood of a virus being spread, we know that you appreciate our concern to mitigate the potential spread of any virus including the flu.

What safety measures can I expect to see?

- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the building.
- Increased cleaning frequency.
- A mask, covering your nose and chin must be worn at all times. Worship leaders may remove their masks for clarity while leading worship.
- Everyone will be asked to promptly enter and exit the building.

How will we enter and exit the building?

- Everyone will enter through the main entrance door on N. Reading Avenue, or at the elevator on the parking lot side. We ask that you maintain distance between yourself and other groups. Please promptly make your way to the sanctuary and sit in the pew as directed by an usher. Everyone is asked to keep your jacket, hat, etc. with you rather than putting them on the coat rack.
- When the service has concluded, remain seated until directed to leave by an usher.
- Exit through the same doors as entry (main entrance or elevator entrance on parking lot side).

What's happening with seating on Sunday mornings?

- Seating will be different. There will be designated seating areas (each seating area accommodates up to 4-6 people) with six-foot sections between seating areas to allow for proper social distancing. This means that your usual pew may not be available.
- Each seating area is available for those who wish to share germs. This might be a family, a group of friends, or perhaps one person depending on your level of comfort.

We need your help!

- **Please let us know ahead of time if you are planning to attend worship or Sunday Church School.** Send an email to somlor@stjohnsboyertown.org or call the office at 610-369-1024 or sign up on our website.

This helps us accomplish two things – (1) make sure we will have room for everyone who wants to attend worship in person, and (2) comply with Contact Tracing to notify anyone potentially exposed to coronavirus.

- If you are not feeling well, please do not attend worship.
- A mask, covering your nose and chin must be worn at all times.
- Everyone will be asked to maintain at least 6 feet of distance while entering and exiting the building. Obviously, we are an honor-system based organization.
- We ask that everyone cooperate by waiting to use common areas like restrooms and the elevator.
- Please listen to the ushers as they instruct you on entering and exiting the building to ensure everyone's safety.

We don't know what the future holds – but we worship the One who knows the future.

- Science, wisdom, and advice on dealing with COVID-19 is constantly changing.
- Our goal is do things well and in meaningful ways.
- These decisions were not made easily or lightly but only after consulting the recommendations of the CDC, State of PA, our insurance company, the wisdom of other churches and clergy, and after a lot of prayerful deliberation.
- Our leaders are always available for healthy and helpful conversation.

Yours in Christ,

Congregation Council