



EAST PALMYRA CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

2057 Port Gibson Road

Palmyra, NY 14522

June 5, 2020

Dear Congregation,

“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord.” (Psalm 122:1)

I am writing this letter to inform you that the Council of East Palmyra Christian Reformed Church has made the decision to resume Sunday worship services. With New York State now reopening and a relatively low number of confirmed Covid-19 cases in our region, we believe the time has come to prayerfully and carefully hold worship services again. We will begin doing so on Sunday, June 14, 2020.

The decision to resume worship services has not been one that the Council has taken lightly. While we certainly desire to gather for worship, we are also concerned about the health and wellbeing of our members. We recognize that Covid-19 can be a serious and, in some cases fatal disease, and that it can be particularly serious for those who are elderly or have underlying health conditions. We are also aware that any gathering will involve a certain measure of risk and that the extra safety measures we take will not make our gatherings 100% safe from this coronavirus. As we resume services, we want you to be aware of the risk that is involved and to consider your own health situation as you make a decision about attending. We understand that for health and safety reasons, some of you may decide to wait a while before returning to services.

To reduce the risk for those attending our worship services, the Council has decided to put in place the following safety precautions:

1. Two Worship Services: We will temporarily go to two worship services on Sunday which will be held at 9 am and 11 am. The purpose of this measure is to reduce the number of people in our sanctuary at any one time. The two services will be identical. Those who are of retirement age or who have more health concerns are encouraged to attend the 9am service. Those who are not of retirement age and families with children are encouraged to attend the 11 am service.
2. Masks: In keeping with CDC guidelines, we are asking attendees to bring masks and to wear them at least when moving about in the building (i.e. entering or exiting the sanctuary). Extra masks will be available at the entrance.
3. Sanitary precautions: When we come into the church building we should be mindful about physical contact (e.g. handshakes) and keeping a safe distance from one another. Hand sanitizer is available on the information tables in the fellowship hall. Pews and other surfaces will be wiped down in between services.

4. Seating: When you come to the service, please enter through the main door, and make your way to the sanctuary. The Fellowship hall should be considered a “pass through” area and not a place to congregate. The bulletins will be placed on the seats of the pews throughout the sanctuary. This measure is intended to help us spread out and use all the space in the sanctuary. Please take a seat where you find a bulletin and make sure that you maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from other worshipers.
5. Offertory: The offering baskets will not be passed during the service. Instead, the Deacons will place the offering baskets in a designated area for you to drop off your offerings.
6. Dismissal: Following the service, the congregation is encouraged to leave the church building promptly while maintaining a safe distance from other members. The side doors in the sanctuary will also be available for exiting. Please take your bulletin with you when you leave.

Please stay home if you have any (even mild) symptoms of sickness or if you have been in contact with someone who has been diagnosed with Covid-19. Sermons will continue to be posted on the church website and CD copies of the worship service will be made available to those unable to attend worship services at this time.

I am looking forward to our congregation gathering before the Lord once again. After all, it is the gathered church that is the Temple in which the Spirit of God dwells. In all the world, there is no gathering so significant and beautiful as the church assembled before the throne of God.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

May the Lord bless you.

Pastor Michael Saville

“How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God. (Psalm 84:1-2)