



# EAST PALMYRA CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

2057 Port Gibson Road

Palmyra, NY 14522

August 16, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Council would like to inform you of a decision that was made at the Council meeting on Wednesday August 12<sup>th</sup>. The Covid-19 virus has impacted all of our lives, and especially as it relates to our worshipping as a congregation. We have gone through a time of not being able to meet in which we relied on messages prepared and streamed online. Back in June, we began to meet again by holding two worship services in order to limit our numbers in the building at one time and follow capacity guidelines. Although we have been grateful for this, there is no denying that it is not the most ideal situation for our congregation and for our spiritual welfare. The Council has decided that beginning with the worship service on Sunday August 23<sup>rd</sup> we will return to one service at 10am. The Council believes that given the capacity of our sanctuary and the number of worshippers, we can return to one service and be well within the capacity guidelines established by the New York State Government.

So, what does this mean going forward? The Council has determined that a return to one worship service requires us to implement a stronger policy on the wearing of masks. When we return to one service, we will be asking that masks be worn at all times including during singing. (The only exceptions would be for small children and those for whom masks present a health risk). We understand that this will not be pleasing to some and that there are differing opinions on the necessity and effectiveness of cloth masks. However, we believe that this policy is necessary if we are to have more people in the sanctuary and be in compliance with state guidelines. We ask for your cooperation and understanding as we implement this new policy.

The question may arise as to why we are making this decision at this time? The Council knows there is no right or wrong time to make this change; however given the current rate of infection in our area, we believe that this an appropriate time to return to our practice of having one worship service. We ask for your prayers as we continue to guide and oversee the congregation during this unusual and very challenging season.

If you have any questions or concerns, we encourage you to speak to a Council member.

In Christ,

The Council of the East Palmyra Christian Reformed Church