



ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

148 S. Chestnut St.
Belle Plaine, MN 56011
952-873-6492
office@stjohnbelleplaine.org
www.stjohnbelleplaine.org

June 9, 2020

Dear St. John Member,

We want to reach out to you with an update on what’s happening at St. John during these unusual times. Minnesota has just entered Phase 3 of re-opening. For St. John, it is not as simple as opening our doors. As a faith community charged with caring for our neighbor, we need to ask not only “can” we do this, but “should” we do this right now? We have a number of older members who are still encouraged to stay home. We need to not only consider our own health but the health of others.

Along with these important considerations, there are practical and logistical questions. Under Phase 3, we are limited to 50% capacity, 6 feet apart, wearing masks, no singing, maintaining strict protocols around lanes of movement, increased sanitation and hygiene measures, etc. With this limited capacity, another question is who gets in and who is turned away? In addition, how are people ushered into the worship area and safely arranged and spaced? These are just some of the considerations.

As you know, this is an evolving situation. We will be looking at ways to caringly and responsibly continue to respond and grow through it. In the meantime, here are some updates on what we have been doing and some things we are planning.

Recorded Services

We have been recording our regular worship services each week, and they are available on our Facebook page and Website. We have included all parts of the service, so viewers can not only watch but also participate in the service, including Holy Communion.

If you have internet but don’t have Facebook you can still see everything on our Website, including our worship services. Go to www.stjohnbelleplaine.org. You’ll find our service on the right side of the page under “Church Updates.” See the picture below:

If you don’t see it:

1. Move cursor to the “Church Updates” column and scroll down.
2. Click on “load more” to see more posts.
3. Below the service click “View on Facebook.”



Local Cable Access

Our services used to be broadcast on Monday morning over our local cable access channel, but the city changed its broadcast equipment requirements. We have updated our recording equipment to comply with this, and we needed an update anyway. We are currently working with the city to bring back our local cable service broadcast. Stay tuned!

Called to Worship | Committed to Serve | Connected in Faith

Drive In Worship Service

With limited capacity and a lot of protocols for indoor worship, we are beginning the easier, safer approach of a drive-in worship service. Anyone who wants to can come in their car. We will broadcast our service over your FM radio. We will have all of the regular parts of the service (including Holy Communion). We will also continue recording and posting these services on Sunday morning.

Our services will be on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m., rain or shine. Folks are gone a lot on weekends. Please arrive early to give our ushers time to help everyone get parked so that we can begin at 6:30. Please note that there will not be bathroom facilities available and all who attend must stay in their cars. We plan to start on Wednesday, June 17, at the Stier bus parking lot. If we need more space, we have another option available. At the end of the drive-in season, we will be in a better position to assess indoor services. We look forward to seeing you there!

Baptisms / Weddings / Funerals

Under current restrictions we cannot open these events to the broad public. However, we can allow limited family groups, 6 feet apart, and masks strongly encouraged. Follow-up meals cannot be permitted at this time.

Weekly Scriptures & Devotional Studies

Each week we have been e-mailing "Daily Discipleship" (a devotional study on Sunday's Gospel reading), as well as the Scripture Readings and Prayer of the Day to those for whom we have current e-mails addresses. If you have not been receiving these, we do not have your current e-mail. Please send us your current e-mail at office@stjohnbelleplaine.org. Some members have been receiving these by mail. If you have not been receiving these and would like to, please call us at 952-873-6492.

Newsletter

Our April - June Newsletters are all available online at our Website. Click "Connect" on the top menu bar and look for the "Newsletter" drop down. Click on that to find it.

We are resuming, in a limited capacity for now, mailing our Newsletter. If you are not receiving it by mail and would like to, please contact us.

Prayer Chain / Personal Calls

We have not been naming personal names for prayers in our recorded services because we are online in such a public format. However, we continue to pray for all of those on our prayer list at our regular staff meetings.

Our WELCA women are also working on putting a prayer chain together, as well as enlisting members of our congregations to make personal calls to check in with each other. In these ways we can continue to maintain and nurture our communication and care for each other during this time when we remain physically apart.

Continuing Support

We have not been passing an offering plate right now, but we also need to continue to meet our current responsibilities. Your support is needed and appreciated. There are a number of ways you can continue to provide your offering:

- Drop it off at the church
- Mail it to us at: St. John Lutheran, 148 S. Chestnut St., Belle Plaine, MN 56011
- On our Website: Click "Online Giving" to see easy, safe, and regular ways to make your offering.

Please call if you have any other questions or feedback.
Thanks for being a partner on our journey together!

The Lord be with you!

Pastor Mark and Pastor Sarah