



*"Do not fear, for I am with you,  
do not be afraid, for I am your God;  
I will strengthen you, I will help you,  
I will uphold you with my victorious right hand."  
Isaiah 41:10 NRSV*

July 2, 2020

Dear Saint Andrew members and friends,

We give thanks to God that strong ministry continues with your participation, prayers, and support.

The "Plan to Gather" task force has assembled and is working on the needed supplies and procedures that must be in place before we can resume gathering in person. Member Outreach Ministry continues to assess how we might connect with members who are not able to join us for worship online. The Faith Formation Ministry is working to adapt our approach to VBS and beginning to make considerations for fall programming. The Worship, Finance, and Personnel Ministries have met to keep their finger on the pulse of how we operate. Church Council remains committed to reassessing the "when" we will again gather – while the Plan to Gather Task Force works through the long lists of requirements provided by the CDC, the ELCA, and our insurer, Church Mutual. The staff is continuing to provide meaningful worship, pastoral care, weekly communication, hospitality, and ensure that necessary work is being done to continue the mission we share: to be open to all through Jesus Christ.

At our June Church Council meeting, the Plan to Gather was again received "as is" while moving us gradually from Safer at Home to Phase One of the plan. Here is what Phase One means for us in our life together:

#### Worship

- Devotion continues online on Thursdays at 12:15 pm and worship on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am.
- A permanent, high-quality system is in place to live stream worship from here on out. This project was fully funded by the many who have shared undesignated memorial gifts in honor or memory of a loved one. Video options are being explored for permanent installation in the Sanctuary to provide hybrid in person and online worship experiences simultaneously.
- Volunteers are invited to participate in on-line worship by joining the Stream Team to help with worship production and technology, provide pre-recorded singing, and scripture readings.
- The Task Force is exploring possible outdoor worship later this summer. Communion ware and practices are being reassessed.

#### Pastoral Care

- Pastoral care continues to be available via video chat, phone, or e-mail; pastoral care may also take place in-person in communal spaces by appointment.
- In person hospital and home visits have not yet resumed and may be provided on a case by case basis.
- Baptisms are taking place by appointment with ten people or less in attendance and will be announced in the live stream the following Sunday. The baptism font will be emptied, cleaned, and refilled after each baptism. Live streaming may be available upon request.
- Weddings and funerals are arranged with pastors in advance and available for ten people or less in attendance. To allow for greater numbers of family to be present, a host and musician will not be provided. Live streaming may be available upon request.

### Usage of Building

- Those who are not feeling well are asked to refrain from entering the building.
- Anyone entering the building will need to sign in and sign out in the Narthex and will enter and exit by the southeast doors (by the office).
- Personal use of the building is not yet allowed by individual members (showers, family groups, etc.)
- Ministry groups may now meet in the building if socially distanced and masked. These gatherings are pre-arranged with staff, are conducted for the essential functioning of church, and when fewer than ten people are in building.
- The building use agreement form is being updated by the Plan to Gather Task Force to include language about usage during the time of COVID-19.
- AA is the only external group that has been given permission by council to meet on premises but not yet in the building. Access to the west bathrooms has been permitted with proper cleaning procedure.

### Office Hours and Procedures

- The staff continues to work the regular hours allotted to them and may work from home or the office with the assumption that they are working from home.
- Phone calls that are not immediately answered will be returned as messages are left. Mail is being received and opened in a timely fashion.
- The office is closed to the public at this time.

Our commitment to you and to the mission of Saint Andrew continues to be strong even as we long to be together for worship, learning, witness, and service. While waiting to gather is difficult, we believe that this is yet the safest approach for our community and for Saint Andrew. As the work of the task force progresses, we expect to find new ways to pursue ministry that are both creative and safe, even as we get closer to gathering in person. While we may not get this perfect, we will continue to focus on the One who is.

In Christ's love and care,

Rev. Jenn Collins

Rev. Justin Smoot

Kerry Fehrman  
*Council President*

Russ Van Skike  
*"Plan to Gather" Chairperson*