

PREPARING TO RETURN TO IN-PERSON WORSHIP

Our congregation is preparing to return to in-person worship on Sunday, September 6, 2020. We will continue to offer worship materials and recordings on our congregational website (www.zionstratford.com) for persons who do not feel comfortable attending worship in-person at this time. We will continue to stay connected with our congregation through all means at our disposal during this time of transition.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has changed many aspects of our lives, there will be some changes to our worship life when we open our doors in September:

- We will offer one worship service at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays. Seating capacity is limited due to social distancing guidelines. We will consider adding additional worship services should the need arise.
- We ask persons interest in attending worship to contact the church office by phone or email to reserve a seat at worship. Reservations will be accepted until Fridays at 1:30 pm.
- Two entrances will be open for Sunday worship: the main entrance on Erie Street and the ramp entrance on St. David Street.
- Worshipers will check in with greeters at the entrance doors. Questionnaires may be required for screening.
- Ushers will escort worshipers to designated pews in the Sanctuary. A printed order of worship will be distributed (hymnals will be removed from the pews).
- There will be no congregational hymn singing in the service. Music will be provided by instrumentalists and soloists.
- Offering plates will be available at the entrance doors. There will be no passing of offering plates.
- Sharing of the peace will exclude any physical contact, including hand shaking.
- Holy Communion will include only the distribution of the communion host. Worshipers will be instructed by the ushers and proceed down the centre aisle in a single file. The Pastor will prepare the altar for worship and will be the only person at the altar for consecration.
- Worshipers are encouraged to refrain from congregating with each other at the end of worship. The Pastor will not be able to greet worshipers either before or after the service.

Other congregational gatherings (including Sunday School, weekday classes, coffee hour, and meals) will not resume at this time. We will continue to monitor future announcements from the Eastern Synod and Huron Perth Public Health regarding possible expansion of congregational programs.

We encourage everyone with smartphones to download the COVID-19 app from the Canadian government (www.canada.ca/coronavirus). This will assist our congregation and community in tracking possible exposure to the virus and help keep each other safe.

We continue to hold each other in prayer as we continue to worship and serve our Lord, either in person or online. Wherever we are, however we worship, we are the Church of Jesus Christ,

called together *“to proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.”* (1 Peter 2:9).

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Jeff Laustsen