



May 24, 2021

Dear Siblings in Christ,

As you may be aware, on June 6, 2021, St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church will open its sanctuary for in-person worship. This decision was made by the leadership of St. John's through faithful prayer, careful consideration, and respectful discussion. Importantly, this is not a *return* to the ways we worshipped in the past; instead, we are excited to be moving *forward* in our history. Rather than "re-opening," we are simply **open to all!**

You may have some questions about what worship will be like when we return--if you attended any of our in-person services in November of 2020, some things may be familiar to you. If not, please find a little more information below:

When will we begin in-person worship services?

In-person worship will begin on **Sunday, June 6 at 9:30 am**. For the duration of the summer, there will not be a second service, inside or in the parking lot.

Will there be Sunday Church School?

Not quite yet. At this point, we are limiting the number of volunteers, staff, and spaces that we need for Sunday mornings.

Will online worship continue?

Yes! We will continue livestreaming our worship services starting at 9:25 am on Sunday mornings. Recordings of the service will be available later that same day. You can view the service on our YouTube channel (St. John's ELC Boyertown) or on our website (stjohnsboyertown.org).

How will worship be different?

Worship will be different in that we will all have grown in Christ since last we gathered together; the challenges of the past year will lead us to new experiences, even in the same spaces as before.

In addition, we'll be participating differently in the service to minimize interpersonal contact and the spread of COVID-19. For instance, we will not be singing as a congregation, passing the peace, passing offering plates, or reading liturgy responsively. We appreciate your commitment to caring for each other and mitigating the spread of any virus while we are together.

What safety measures can I expect to see?

- Hand sanitizer available throughout the building
- Increased cleaning frequency
- Masks must be worn, covering your nose and chin, at all times (worship leaders may remove their masks for clarity while reading or speaking)
- Everyone will be asked to enter and exit promptly, waiting outdoors rather than inside the building

How will we enter and exit the building?

You can enter through the main entrance on N. Reading Ave, or at the elevator on the parking lot side. We ask that you maintain distance between yourself and other groups, making your way promptly to the sanctuary and to your pew as directed by an usher. Please keep any jackets, bags, hats, and other items with you rather than putting them on the coat rack.

After the service, please remain seated until directed to leave by an usher. You can exit through the same doors you came in (main entrance or elevator door).

Where will I sit?

Seating will be a little different than it was back in February 2020 - certain pews will be blocked off to allow for physical distancing between groups. This means your usual pew may not be available. Ushers will direct you to an available pew, which you can share with your family or anyone else with whom you're comfortable sharing germs.

Anything else I should know?

Yes: we need your help! If you are planning to attend worship, sign up on our website (stjohnsboyertown.org), call the office at 610-369-1024 or send an email to somlor@stjohnsboyertown.org. This way, we know we have room for everyone who wants to attend, and we'll be able to comply with contact tracing efforts to notify anyone potentially exposed to COVID-19.

We also need your help in using the honor system. If you are not feeling well, please do not attend worship. Please gently remind your friends and fellow siblings in Christ to practice healthy behavior, waiting to use common areas such as restrooms or elevators, wearing masks properly, and listening to ushers as they instruct you on entering and exiting the building to ensure everyone's safety.

I still have questions.

Don't worry, we all do! Science and guidelines on dealing with COVID-19 are constantly changing. Our goal is to worship - to be unable to hold back our praise - and to do so while ensuring the safety of our loved ones and our community, to the best of our abilities. While we may not know what the future holds, we put our faith in the One who does.

If you have any further questions or concerns, don't hesitate to email me at memmert@stjohnsboyertown.org.

We can't wait to see you in person for worship! With open minds and open hearts, we open our doors to God and to all of God's children.

Peace in Christ,

Mason Emmert

Director of Worship & Music