

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

PASTOR MATTHEW RYAN GONZALEZ
PASTOR EMERITUS JOHN R. HANNAH

July 1, 2020

My dear Family of Faith at Trinity,

“Cast your burden on the Lord, and He will sustain you” (Psalm 55:22).

It is easy to be anxious in uncertain times. COVID-19 has become a cause of concern and fear. The psalmist reminds us that we are to cast all our burdens on our Lord, for it is His promise which sustains us. As your pastor, one who cares deeply for you, I write to share with you some thoughts and further plans as we deal with COVID-19 while remaining united as a Family of Faith.

Here are the recommendations from the CDC (CDC.gov):

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

Since the best method of preventing the transmission of the virus is washing hands, I encourage you to remain diligent in keeping your hands clean, either by washing your hands or utilizing hand sanitizer.

Currently, our plan is to return to in-person worship on Sunday, July 12, 2020 at 10:30AM. Of course, I always want to see you in worship as we gather together. Still, if you are feeling ill or have a fever, please stay home and rest. By doing so, you also keep others safe by preventing any spread of illness. Again, if you are feeling ill – PLEASE STAY HOME as we seek to love our neighbors and know that YOU ARE LOVED and we are praying for you.

We will be making a number of adjustments to the way in which we worship. Firstly, our in-person worship services will return for OUTDOOR WORSHIP ONLY. This means that we will need to be aware of weather conditions and make additional adjustments. Attached to this letter is a clear listing of adjustments that we will make as we offer the opportunity to return. Saying this, if you are not comfortable with any of these adjustments, then we encourage you to remain home until you are ready to return.

As much as we all desire to be together, we understand how challenging this time is and we want to have people feel encouraged and uplifted as we worship, not anxious about safety. We will continue to offer our digital worship services, as well as “curbside” home visits for the reception of the Holy Eucharist during this time. Please refer to the attached list to gain a helpful understanding of what to be prepared for as we plan to return on Sunday, July 12, 2020.

Dwelling in this uniquely challenging time, we are called to recognize the reality of the situation while not allowing anxiety or fear to control us. We always live in the grace of God as His chosen children. Therefore, cast your burden on the Lord and He will sustain you, just as He promises. We give Him great thanks for the strength and unity of our Family of Faith, especially as we cling to His forgiveness together. I am keeping you all in my prayers and I ask that you join me in praying for one another, our community, our city, our state, our nation, and the world. I encourage you to reach out if you have further concerns and would like to speak with me directly.

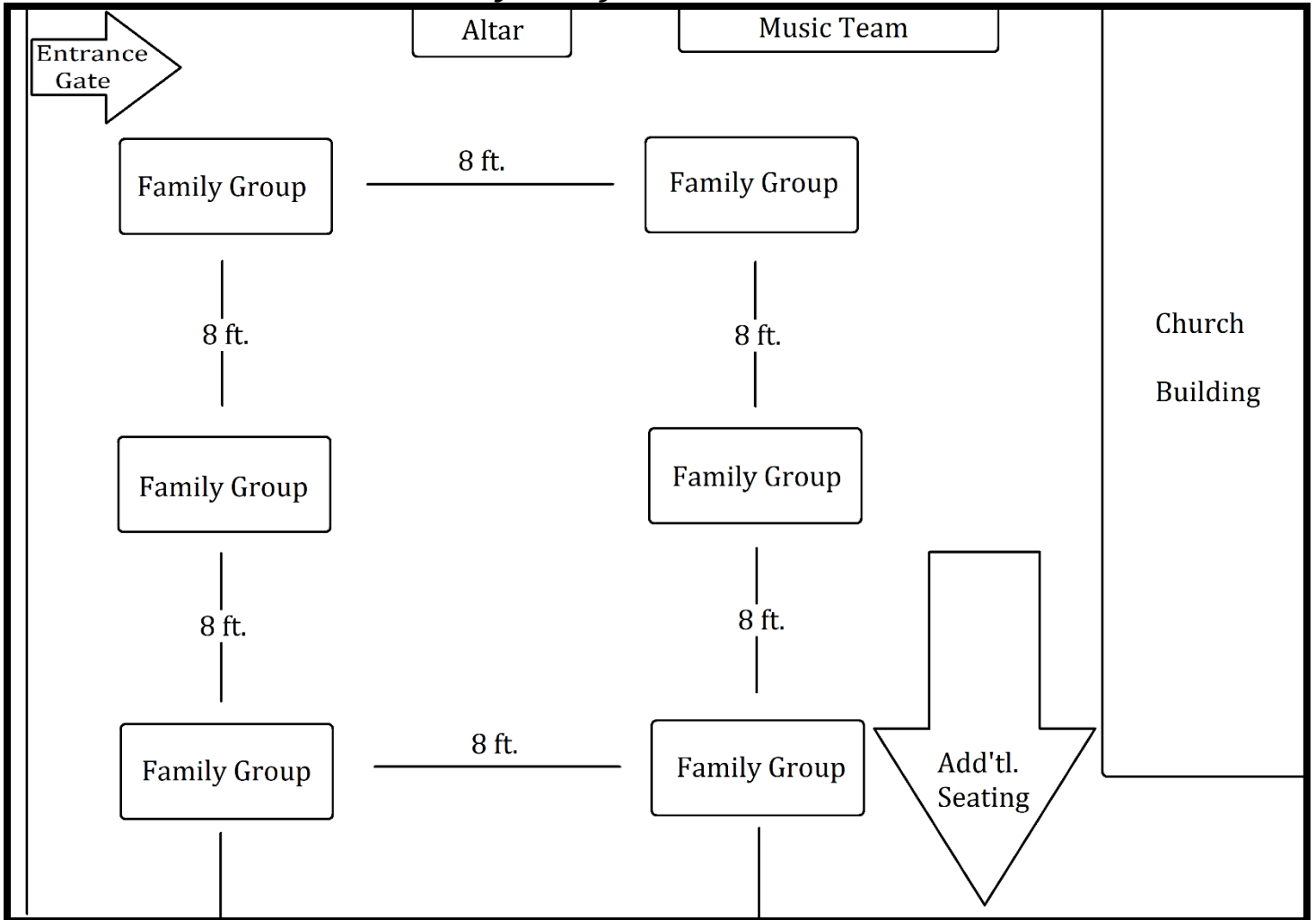
Peace & love in Jesus,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Gonzalez".

Pastor G.

ADJUSTMENTS FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP *(OUTDOOR ONLY)*

Layout of Outdoor Area



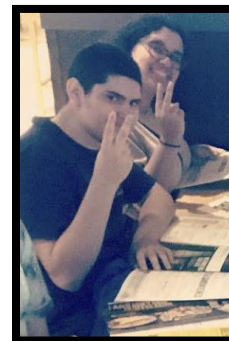
ARRIVAL:

- All attending in-person worship will enter through the outdoor gate. MASKS ARE REQUIRED & must be worn covering your nose and mouth. If you do not have a mask, we will have extras available. Hand sanitizer will also be available.
- Tables with chairs will be available for each "household"/family group to sit together. If you need additional chairs to sit with your family, please grab the appropriate number of chairs from the additional chairs lined against the fence.
- If you have already visited with family and feel comfortable sitting with extended family, this is fine. We simply ask that groups maintain 8ft. of physical distance from one another (*see "layout" above*)

DURING WORSHIP:

SHARING OF THE PEACE:

- All attending in-person worship will be able to share the peace in a usual fashion with their “family group.” To maintain physical distance, we are encouraged to share the peace making the sign of peace (*seen here*) with other Family of Faith members.



HOLY EUCHARIST:

- During the distribution of the Sacrament, Pastor & those assisting with communion will disinfect their hands before distribution.
- After the Order of the Eucharist, Pastor will intinct (“dip”) the bread/Body into the wine/Blood, then place the number of needed hosts for each family on a small plate. The plates will then be carried to each table, where families will be able to receive the Body & Blood of Christ. The plate will then be returned to the altar for proper disposal.

LEAVING (AFTER WORSHIP):

- At the end of worship, there will be a time for anyone who desires to leave immediately following worship to exit first after announcements. Following this time, those who are comfortable gathering are welcome to do so.

FROM PASTOR G.

We will respect, love, and give thanks for all who attend in-person & for all who continue to worship through digital means, no matter their preference. PLEASE DO NOT TAKE OFFENSE at the different ways that people may greet one another in-person. ***If you are concerned that you might be easily offended, please speak with Pastor so that we may consider whether you are comfortable returning to in-person worship.***