

St. Paul's News

June 2020

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 156, 215 North Warren Street
Orwigsburg, PA 17961
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PASTOR'S MESSAGE

On Friday, May 22, 2020, Governor Tom Wolf announced that effective the following Friday, May 29, 2020, Schuylkill County would no longer be under the Red Phase of the COVID-19 precautions but could move to the Yellow Phase. This came as a great surprise to me as perhaps it did to many of you. Many of us felt that we had been the Red Phase for so long and had observed the stay-at-home orders for what seemed like such a long time that transitioning to the Yellow Phase might never become a reality. But Schuylkill County is now quite "yellow," and while we need to continue take COVID-19 precautions seriously, new opportunities are opening up to us.

Following our decision to refrain from in-person worship on March 17, 2020, I, like many other pastors, began to read a great deal about how a church could safely open in-person worship under COVID-19 precautions. The Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod (NEPA), the Wisconsin Council of Churches (WCC), and many other authorities provided up-to-date guidelines for the reopening of in-person worship. Using these guidelines, a draft document was prepared by myself and several members of this congregation with the idea that it might one day form the basis for our return to in-person worship when we were prepared to do so.

On Monday, June 1, 2020, our COVID-19 Task Force, consisting of Council President Chris Long, Pastor Mike Petresky, Worship & Music Acting Chair Justin McClure, Property Chair Greg Sklar, Moderator Danielle Richards, Legal Counsel Mary Timpany, and COVID-19 Contact Person Tina Butler, met to discuss and revise the draft document provided. Social Media Mgr. Jessica Swick also participated in this meeting. Those in attendance had previously received guidelines for the reopening of in-person worship from the CDC, ELCA, NEPA, and WCC as well as related correspondence from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA, and Bishop Samuel Zeiser, NEPA-ELCA. Many useful revisions to the draft document were made during the Task Force meeting. In addition, the Task Force recommended that Sunday, June 28, 2020 be the date for our return to in-person worship at St. Paul's.

On Wednesday, June 3, 2020, our Council met to discuss the revised draft document for our return to in-person worship under COVID-19 precautions approved by our Task Force. Several concerns were voiced during the discussion, but in the end the St. Paul’s COVID-19 Plan and Guidelines were unanimously approved without substantial change.

This is a summary of the many changes that you may encounter when we return to in-person worship on or following Sunday, June 28, 2020 and includes explanations of why they are necessary.

CHANGE REQUIRED	EXPLANATION
We return to in-person worship with only one worship service/week in the sanctuary on Sundays at 9:30 A.M.	COVID-19 precautions require that the worship space be cleaned after every worship service. Additional cleaning and additional services are not possible at this time.
Designated places to sit in the sanctuary will be marked according to six (6) foot social distancing.	COVID-19 precautions require this change.
A Greeter will greet each member and record his/her designated seating location. An Usher will then meet the member and direct him/her to a seat.	This change is recommended under COVID-19 precautions. It avoids excessive foot traffic up and down the aisles.
Each Member may choose an available designated seating location in the sanctuary. When worship is over, members at designated seating locations will be released by an Usher from the back of the church to the front. Members who require the use of the ramp to enter the sanctuary may be released by the Usher first when worship is ended.	COVID-19 precautions require this change. It avoids crowded aisles and excessive foot traffic.
As we begin, worship attendance will be limited to no more than 30 people per service.	This number is based on designated seating locations available in the nave under social distancing requirements and reasonable caution under COVID-19 precautions.
Any member who is considered “at risk” to COVID-19 infection (because he or she is over 65 years old and/or has serious health conditions) WILL NOT be barred from in-person worship. However, such members should consider whether it is in their best interest, their family’s best interest, and their community’s best interest to participate in worship at this time.	COVID-19 is a serious disease which can easily be spread with precautions. It can result in hospitalization and even death.

Members who reside together can sit together at worship.	COVID-19 precautions allow this. Accordingly, more than one person can be seated at each of the designated seating locations in the sanctuary.
PLEASE READ THIS CAREFULLY: Members with last names beginning “A through L” will be welcomed to attend worship on the opening Sunday and “M through Z” on the following Sunday. These two last name groups will alternate for an interim period. At some point, all members will be able to worship each Sunday.	This is necessary to avoid “signing up, calling in, or registering” for worship. It will also keep our weekly attendance to under 30 people/worship. In time, it will allow us to determine how many members we can reasonably expect every Sunday during the summer months so that we can prepare to host larger groups in the future.
Exceptions to the “last name” groupings will be allowed under certain circumstances.	Some exceptions are permissible under COVID-19 precautions. Families who house members with different last names will be granted an exception. Other exceptions will be considered. Please call the church office ASAP to request an exception.
There will be one designated entrance (main or Church Street door) into the sanctuary and one designated exit (ramp door) out of the sanctuary. Any member who requires the use of the ramp to enter the sanctuary may do so	COVID-19 precautions require this change. As noted, a medical exception will be allowed.
Almost everyone will wear a cloth face mask while in the church. Donated face masks will be available in the designated entrance. If any member who wishes to attend in-person worship cannot wear a face mask for medical reasons, he/she should contact the pastor as soon as possible.	COVID-19 precautions require this change. The Pastor (and Organist) will not have to wear face masks while in the chancel. Some accommodations may be possible.
Visitors are welcome to join us for worship. They will be treated as members, wear face masks, and be seated in available designated seating locations.	We will continue to welcome visitors and will meet their needs as we are able.
Members should be prepared to arrive at the church 15 minutes before worship (or by 9:15 AM).	It is likely that it may take additional time to greet and seat members at least as we begin these changes.
Members should sanitize their hands as they enter and leave the church.	COVID-19 precautions recommend this change. Hand sanitizers (or hand sanitizing stations) will be available at the designated entrance and the designated exit.

<p>The pastor will refrain from intoning, and the congregation will refrain from singing aloud, and reciting Scripture and/or the Creeds during worship. The Lord’s Prayer may be quietly prayed by the whole assembly during worship.</p>	<p>COVID-19 precautions strongly recommend this change. Since the virus lives in the lungs, raising our voices to speak or sing indoors as a group is dangerous even with a face mask. In addition, it is believed that once a face mask is wet, it is nearly useless for protection.</p>
<p>Holy Communion will not be shared during our in-person worship <u>at this time</u>. Hopefully, this may change in the future.</p>	<p>Based on current COVID-19 precautions it is difficult to share the Sacrament during worship without risk of infection. Members should not touch their face masks while there are gathered for worship.</p>
<p>The Sunday worship will be shortened so that it will last only about 30 minutes.</p>	<p>COVID-19 precautions warn against gathering for long periods of time in an enclosed area which has little or no outside ventilation. Since Holy Communion will not be shared worship will be shorter.</p>
<p>If possible, opportunities for outdoor worship (e.g., Albright’s Woods Pavilion, etc.) will be added to our calendar.</p>	<p>At this point, no outdoor worship has been scheduled for the immediate future. Please check our bulletins, Facebook, web page, or call our church office for more information.</p>
<p>Online worship videos will continue and may be expanded in the future.</p>	<p>Our online outreach has been a blessing to many members in our community and many people outside of our community during this pandemic. If you have not done so before, please watch our videos on Facebook, our website, or YouTube, and tell your family and friends about them!</p>
<p>If any member who has worshiped with our congregation during the past two weeks finds that he/she has contracted COVID-19, he/she should share this information with the Council President and/or the Pastor as soon as possible. The church will notify everyone with whom that member had worshiped that they may have been exposed to COVID-19. The name of member who has contracted the virus will not be disclosed unless he/she chooses to share that information with the congregation.</p>	<p>COVID-19 precautions recommend this change. The Greeter will gather designated seating information for each worship service for this purpose. This information will be maintained in the church office.</p>

OTHER IMPORTANT CHANGES IN THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

<p>Chairpersons of groups or committees will coordinate their activities and meetings through the Council President and the Pastor. Groups or committees are encouraged not to meet in-person in the church throughout the summer. However, if necessary, no more than twelve (12) members may meet in the gathering place around a table marked for social distancing. They will be responsible to clean the table and their chairs before they leave the church.</p>	<p>COVID-19 precautions recommend this change. During the summer months it may be advantageous for groups or committees to meet outdoor, perhaps on someone’s patio or backyard. While face masks may not be needed during such gatherings, social distancing should be maintained.</p>
<p>Any persons who enter the building when worship is not in progress should do so through the designated entrance. They should sanitize their hands and sign a logbook located in the narthex. The date, time, and reason for the visit should be noted. When they are ready to leave the church, they should note on the logbook what rooms in the church they had entered and the time of their departure. They should also sanitize their hands before they leave. On such occasions, they may exit through the designated entrance. The logbook will be kept with records maintained in the office.</p>	<p>COVID-19 precautions recommend this change. If a member reports that he/she has contracted the COVID-19 virus, a well-kept logbook may help indicate touch points in the church which need particular attention.</p>

Please take COVID-19 precautions seriously in your day-to-day activities -- and especially when you are in the church. If you are ill or sick or have recently spent time with other people who were ill or sick, please refrain from attending worship at this time.

I have no doubt that many of the changes to our in-person worship required by COVID-19 precautions will not be easy for everyone to bear. Let us move forward believing that all things are possible through Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord!

Grace, Peace, Love, Hope, & Joy
Pastor Mike Petresky

P.S. Please contact me or our Council President with questions and concerns about our return to in-person worship plan -- as soon as possible.

P.P.S. Please read “A Message from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton – 06/05/20” which follows.

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON – 06/05/20

In Psalm 118 we hear, "Out of my distress I called on the Lord." We are a nation in distress. We are a church in distress.

The coronavirus has killed a hundred and three thousand of us. The virus of racism has taken hundreds of thousands more throughout our history. Now these two deadly viruses converge. Under this distress, the veneer of equality has cracked, and we see the pain, anger and frustration of those who had been denied the rights and dignity many of us expect and take for granted.

I have heard it said that slavery ended with the civil war and people say, "Why don't people of color just get over it?" Here is the question we need to ask, how do you get over something that isn't over?

The extrajudicial killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor and George Floyd that we have seen, laid open the wound in our country that has never been fully dealt with and has never healed. The officers knee suffocating the life out of George Floyd reminds us that blatant acts of intimidation hatred and violence continue.

Continued peaceful protests, vigils and demonstrations are not only legitimate but essential to move this country and this church to honest and deep self-examination.

Just as the body of Christ is COVID positive, so is the body of Christ infected with racism and white supremacy. We cannot turn away from this truth. To deny it is dishonest and dangerous.

Let us stand with those peacefully protesting and acting responsibly. Looting and destruction of property does not further the cause of justice. Government has a role to uphold civil order while also to a role to respect peaceful protest.

There are those in law enforcement who are acting wisely even while others have acted irresponsibly. I ask you to support the many people including those in our church who are working to de-escalate tensions between law enforcement protesters and the community.

Psalm 118 continues, "I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation. The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing. It is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it."

Christ the cornerstone has already broken down the wall that divides us.

The time is now. This is the day.

ONLINE GIVING

The mission and ministry of St. Paul's continues amid the coronavirus pandemic. You can still support St. Paul's by sending your offerings to the church by check through the US Mail OR give to St. Paul's securely online. Here's how to do that:

- Go to our website: www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org
- From the home page, click the Online Giving tab at the top of the screen.
- A Give Now box will appear on your screen.
- Select General Fund from the menu.
- Keep One Time selected (or create a secure account to set up recurring payments)
- Enter the dollar amount you'd like to give with NO decimals.
- Click Add Donation.
- Click Next, then enter your Name, Address, and Credit/Debit Card information.

Optional items:

To receive an emailed receipt, check the box and enter your email address.

To help offset the online processing fees, check the box.

- Click Donate Now to complete your transaction. You will receive a confirmation number.

Thank you for your continuing generosity! Your kindness makes it possible for us to continue our sharing of the Gospel and reaching out to others with the love of Christ!

PLEASE REMEMBER....

Our In-Person Worship will begin at 9:30 AM on Sunday, July 28, 2020.

Only members whose last name begins with A through L should plan to attend!

WHAT MAKES A DAD

God took the strength of a mountain,

The majesty of a tree,

The warmth of a summer sun,

The calm of a quiet sea.

The generous soul of nature,

The comforting arm of night,

The wisdom of the ages,

The power of the eagle's flight.

The joy of a morning in spring,

The faith of a mustard seed,

The patience of eternity,

The depth of a family's need.

Then God combined these qualities,

Where there was nothing more to add,

He knew His masterpiece was complete.

And so, He called it—Dad.

NATIONAL WELCA EVENT

The 11th Triennial Gathering in Phoenix, AZ has been rescheduled to August 5-8, 2021. St. Paul's will prepay the registration fees for two women interested in attending. Financial assistance will be given for travel costs, as well. We have one member who has shown enthusiasm in the event, but she would like to have another woman join her.

If you are interested, please place your name in "Noah's Ark" at the gathering place. Details are available on the internet at www.welcat.org, on the WELCA bulletin board, or on St. Paul's web page.

CHURCH PICNIC

On Sunday, September 13th, 2020, we will hold our annual church picnic! Join us for lots of food, fun, and fellowship at the Albright's Woods Community Picnic Grove at 12 Noon. Time flies, so mark your calendars now!

CLICK. LIKE. SHARE.

Greetings, St. Paul's! I cannot believe how well we've been able to stay connected online in these crazy, unexpected times. I'm thankful for all your comments and feedback. Through all of this, the online engagement has been one of the most encouraging parts of this ministry. We receive over 1,000 engagements per week: Facebook post clicks, reactions, comments, and shares. We are up to 316 Page Likes and have 331 Page Followers...WOW!

Social Media has continued to evolve and change since we started the Online Worship videos on March 21, 2020. We've gone "live" three times (Easter Bells ringing, our Hymn Request and Sing-Along, and Pastor presenting a prayer for the National Day of Prayer) and we've created and published 16 videos as of May 15th. Our videos and live events are the most liked and shared posts. THANK YOU for sharing them.

Now it's time to celebrate Dad! I'd like to acknowledge all fathers and those that have had a fatherly influence on your faith. Father's Day, Sunday, June 21, is quickly approaching, so I'll need your help!

Here are the directions:

1. Find a piece of paper (at least 8½" by 11", standard printer, or notebook-sized)
2. E Write ONE WORD (I know it will be hard to pick just one) that describes YOUR FATHER or someone who has had a FATHERLY influence on your faith.
3. Make sure the word fills up the paper so that it can be read on the video. Feel free to get creative.
4. Hold it up and have someone take a picture or you take a selfie of you with your word. Get those camera timers ready!
5. E-Mail or TEXT the picture to me by **June 18th**. (936-648-6809/jessica@stpauls-orwigsburg.org)

Have a great month and remember to
CLICK, LIKE and SHARE

ONLINE WORSHIP VIDEOS

Please continue to watch our online worship videos. These videos will be available by Saturday morning each week.

Before you watch, make sure the volume on your device (computer, smart phone, or tablet) is turned up for the best audio experience.

To access an online worship video:

- Go to our website: www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org
- From the Sermons, Bulletins & Newsletters tab, click on Sermons & Weekly Bulletins.
- The most current video available will be at the top of the list.
- Click View to watch the pre-recorded video.
- You can also go to YouTube directly and search for "St. Paul's Lutheran Church Orwigsburg, PA."

STEWARDSHIP IN CREATION - STiC!

Even though the committee has not met during quarantine, God's creation continues to foster us with beauty, healthful air, the joy of new growth, and renewed spring birdsong.

One of the members of the Schuylkill County Conservancy and a dedicated forest steward is Steve Zuk. He will be inviting interested folks for a guided walk through his wooded property. As he points out, we can social distance responsibly and be out in the sunshine in air cleaned by the trees.

Anyone who is interested in joining the walk can call or text Sue Reier at 570-621-3741 for more information.

FLAG DAY

Sunday, June 14, 2020 is Flag Day. During this deadly pandemic and amid outpourings of protest, let us pause to honor our flag. It reminds us of the men and women who gave their lives so that we can enjoy what is best about America. Let us always strive to make this nation – one nation "...with liberty and justice for all."

GOD’S WORK, OUR HANDS

Our second annual “God’s Work. Our Hands” Community Health Fair is scheduled for Sunday, September 20, 2020 at the Orwigsburg Veterans Memorial Building. Coordinators for this event are Sue Reier and Tina Butler.

Weather permitting, we will gather outside of Sue Reier’s home at 10 Crestview Drive, Pottsville, on Monday, June 8th at 6:30 pm to share thoughts and insights and ask God’s guidance in how Our Hands can most lovingly respond. In case of inclement weather, this meeting will be rescheduled.

Please call Sue Reier at 570-617-3741 for more information.

FLOWER AND BULLETIN SPONSORS

After notes, emails, and calls to our March and April donors, I have (re)scheduled all the altar flowers and bulletins from those months, as well as the two sets of chancel flowers which had been ordered for April. A handful of people cancelled, saying that they will sign up again, later in the year, but the others were happy to choose new dates in July, August, and September. All of these changes are noted in the green book which is now located in the church office. If we are not able to hold any of our June services, I will be in touch with the May sponsors first.

If you have any questions, please call me at 570-386-2647, shoot an email to dukesue@hughes.net, or send me a Facebook message. I appreciate everyone’s continued patience and hope to see you soon!
Thank you, Sue Schenck

ADULT FORUM NEWS

Beginning Wednesday, June 17, 2020, our Adult Forum will meet via Zoom meeting at 7 PM. Please call Barbara Lafko at 570-366-1208 or contact her at blafko@yahoo.com if you would like to join our Adult Forum or for more information.

JUNE, THE MONTH OF ROSES

The Rose is one of the oldest flowers known to man and still one of the most popular...[She] is the flower of love [and] was created by Chloris, the Greek goddess of flowers, out of the lifeless body of a nymph which she found one day in a clearing in the woods. She asked the help of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, who gave [the Rose] beauty; Dionysus, the god of wine, added nectar to give her a sweet scent, and the three Graces to give her charm, brightness, and joy. Then Zephyr, the West Wind, blew away the clouds so that Apollo, the sun god, could shine and make the flower bloom. And so, the Rose was born and was immediately crowned Queen of Flowers.

(from [The Language of Flowers](#) by Sheila Pickles)

HERITAGE

Let us not forget the religious character of our origin. Our fathers were brought here by their high veneration for the Christian religion. They journeyed by its light and labored in its hope. They sought to incorporate its principles with the elements of their society and to diffuse its influence through all their institutions—civil, political, and literary. Let us cherish these sentiments and extend this influence still more widely in the full conviction that this is the happiest society, which partakes in the highest degree of the mild and peaceable spirit of Christianity. – Daniel Webster

SERVICE SCHEDULE FOR JUNE

We will return to in-person worship with COVID precautions at 9:30 AM on Sunday, June 28, 2020. Greeters and Ushers for that worship service have not yet been announced and a Communion Assistant and Lector will not be needed for that worship service.

However, Kathy Miller and Connie Teter are scheduled as Altar Guild members in preparation for our June 28th worship service, and Connie Teter, Jean Premich, and Barb Sterner are scheduled to be Counters following that worship service.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Lori Elser, W David Lafko,
Mary Muntone, Kevin Blair
- 3 Austin Heydt
- 5 Cindy Henry, David Witman, Sr
- 6 Marisa Horbal, Doug Travor, Connie Teter
- 7 Julianna Witman
- 8 Madelyn Krause, John Sassaman
- 9 Jonathan Phillips, Melanie Rarick, Susan Williams
- 10 Shelby Zehner
- 11 Kathy Huntzinger
- 12 Braiden Fessler
- 13 Jimmy Withers, Scott Ludwig
- 14 Lynn Kramer, Mary Timpany
- 15 Bob Sattizahn
- 16 Courtney Keyworth
- 18 Colton Baer
- 19 Katie Williams
- 20 Leon Long, Jr, Christopher Miller
- 21 Debbie Bolinsky, Robert Frampton
- 22 Joel Ritschel
- 24 Barb Lafko, Morgan Hannaway
- 25 Ralph Martin, Connie Aregood, Andrea Kline
- 26 Joyce Beneck
- 28 Eva Young
- 29 Tina Butler, Nan Eisenhuth
- 30 Matt Olmes

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

- 2 Wayne & Ruth Ann Withers,
Brent & Katie Stramara
- 7 Jeff & Gail Rarick
- 9 Al & Krista Callaghan
- 10 Rick & Cindy Muntone
- 12 Tammy & Dan Mosher
- 14 Joe & Vicki Cable, Stan & Deb Bolinsky
- 19 Doug & Melissa Wilson
- 21 Scott & Sandy Ludwig
- 25 Scott & Trisha Bachman
- 26 Harry & Lorie Myers
- 27 George & Cindy Henry
- 28 Charles & Deb Trubilla,
Jim & Joanne Emerich

JUNE FLOWERS

JUNE 7

Altar: In honor of Gail's and Jeff's anniversary by their family.

Chancel: In honor of our daughter, Victoria Spittler, by Tina and Scott Butler.

JUNE 14

Altar: In memory of Jack Taylor by Skip and family.

Chancel: In honor of James P. Withers by Wayne and Ruth Ann Withers.

JUNE 21

Altar: In honor of my grandchildren, Isabella and Xavier, by Barbara Lafko.

Chancel: In memory of Charles A. Pitts, Jr. by Wayne and Ruth Ann Withers.

JUNE 28

Altar: In memory of Guy and Francis Lengel and their sons, John and G. Roger, by James Lengel and family.

Chancel: In honor of our daughter Heather's birthday by parents, Barry and Dana Jenkins.

JUNE BULLETINS

JUNE 7

In memory of our grandparents, William R. and Lottie Lengel, by the James Lengel Family.

JUNE 14

In memory of LeRoy Shoener's birthday, May 3rd, by Kathy Miller and family.

JUNE 21

In honor of Nathaniel D. Dixon's 20th birthday by grandparents, Stu and Danielle Richards.

JUNE 28

In memory of Russel Carl Zehner by Sonny and Connie Teter.

JUNE 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 Council 7:00 PM @ Gathering Place	9	10	11	12	13
14 FLAG DAY	15	16	17 Adult Forum via Zoom Meeting 7 PM	18	19	20
21 FATHER'S DAY	22	23	24 Adult Forum via Zoom Meeting 7 PM	25	26	27
28 Worship 9:30 AM (A thru L Only)	29	30				

Reverend Michael T Petresky 570-366-2316 - Ext 11 pastormike@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Justin McClure, Organist/Choir Director 570-573-4076 justin@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Juli Schenck, Office Support Staff 570-366-2316 office@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Carl Heintzelman, Sexton 484-408-5152
Karen Travor, Treasurer 570-366-8757 karen@stpauls-orwigsburg.org
Wayne Lutsey, Financial Secretary 570-366-8766
Jessica Swick, Social Media Manager 936-648-6809 jessica@stpauls-orwigsburg.org

**OUR IN-PERSON WORSHIP WILL BEGIN AT 9:30 AM ON
 SUNDAY, JULY 28, 2020. ONLY MEMBERS WHOSE LAST NAME
 BEGINS WITH A THROUGH L SHOULD PLAN TO ATTEND.**

JUNE 2020

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PERMIT NO. 52

OUR IN-PERSON WORSHIP WILL BEGIN AT 9:30 AM ON SUNDAY, JULY 28, 2020. ONLY MEMBERS WHOSE LAST NAME BEGINS WITH A THROUGH L SHOULD PLAN TO ATTEND.

Visit our website: www.stpauls-orwigsburg.org

Find us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/StPaulsOrwigsburg

Call the church office: 570-366-2316