

**FALL MINISTRY SEASON**  
**First Christian Reformed Church, Sioux Falls, SD**  
**August 2020**

The Lord's love endures forever. First CRC has experienced His generous love throughout her 97-year history, including during our current coronavirus era. We anticipate His continued love as we begin the fall ministry season.

In our "May 2020 Reopening Worship" communication, the Council stated: "Moving forward in a spirit of gospel confidence and hope, we will continue to carefully open more ministry throughout the summer in anticipation that we will be open for full regular ministry in the Fall." That is still our answer. Our fall ministry schedule, with appropriate adjustments, will go into effect beginning on **Sunday, September 13**. We move forward with this confidence because in life and in death we belong to and serve our Faithful Savior, Jesus Christ (Philippians 1:21-26). He is our Mighty Fortress (Psalm 46).

**WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM FIRST CRC**

We continue to provide as much as possible a sanitized, safe and secure ministry environment. You can expect the following:

- The Church has been and will continue to be properly cleaned prior to each major event.
- The Church will provide 10 hand sanitizing stations in the following areas:
  - 1 station between each of the entrances to the sanctuary (2 total)
  - 1 wall station at each main upper level entrance (2 total)
  - 1 station at each welcome center desk in the Narthex and Café Connection (2 total)
  - 1 station at each entrance to the Activity Center (2 total)
  - 2 stations in the lower level for Children's Ministry
- The Church will provide worship and fellowship support in the following ways:
  - Touchless entry and exit
  - Verbal mutual greeting
  - Multiple touchless offering options
  - Appropriately spaced seating in the sanctuary and narthex
- The Church will provide face coverings at the sanitizing stations for those who desire to use them

**WHAT FIRST CRC REQUESTS FROM YOU**

Biblical worship and ministry is intended to be public and communal. It is important, therefore, to reaffirm and embrace the Biblical emphasis that each person make good and responsible personal choices for the sake of the common good. They include:

- Participate, according to our Baptismal and Profession of Faith vows, in the mutual encouragement, edification, and equipping of our communal life in Christ
- Exercise personal responsibility and self-care for the sake of the common good – washing hands regularly, practicing good hygiene, staying home when sick, and practicing physical distancing when possible
- Assess one's own risk tolerance – while the Church is regularly and thoroughly disinfected, it is impossible to ensure complete protection from any virus, anywhere, at any time. Therefore, online worship continues to be an excellent option
- Each person and family are encouraged to practice communal understanding, mutual respect, and care with regard to face coverings. In order to help protect at risk members and guests First CRC recommends and encourages the use of face coverings; however, will not require them.

**CALLED TO THE PRIVILEGE OF WORSHIP**

Ordinarily, we are privileged to gather together in-person to humbly bring praise to the Lord (Psalm 84, Psalm 100, Hebrews 10:19-25). God's invitation is that His children should "regularly attend the assembly of God's people to learn what God's Word teaches, to participate in sacraments, to pray to God publicly, and to bring Christian offerings for the poor" (Heidelberg Catechism, LD 38).

We also pastorally recognize that we are in the midst of a pandemic and that each person and family must decide their own health and personal risk tolerance. To provide for proper social distancing during a time of anticipated increased attendance and to be as accommodating as possible, First CRC will be implementing the following schedule to begin our Fall ministry season:

- Three Morning Services: 8:00 am (traditional), 9:30 am (alternating traditional and contemporary from week to week) and 11:00 am (contemporary)
  - Spaced seating in the sanctuary and narthex (to not exceed 50% capacity)
  - Nursery available during each service
- One online worship opportunity available through Facebook, the Church's website, and Livestream: 9:30 am
- Afternoon Psalm Study/Worship: 5:00 pm
  - Spaced seating in the Fireside Room (or sanctuary, if needed)

### **CALLED TO THE PRIVILEGE OF DISCIPLESHIP**

We are also privileged to teach the core convictions of Biblical faith, to nourish growth in faith-filled living, to nurture our individual and communal gifts, and to bring the gospel throughout our community, region and world. We will continue to move forward with all discipleship ministries.

A few adjustments, however, will be made in the Children's Ministry during our present COVID-19 environment.

- To minimize congestion issues on Sundays, the following schedule will be implemented:
  - Sunday School (At-Home Curriculum with parents providing primary discipleship at home)
  - Children's Church for ages 3-5 (Sunday mornings during Worship Services)
  - K-2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Bible Lesson and Games/Activities (Monday early evening – 1 or 2 times per month)
  - 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade GEMS & Cadets (alternating Wednesday Evenings)
  - Junior High Ministry (Sunday evenings)
  - High School Ministry (Wednesday evenings)
  - Adult Discipleship Ministries (various regular times during the week)
- First CRC will provide new security and check-in procedures for the Wednesday evening ministries (more information will be forthcoming)

### **CALLED TO THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVICE**

The Church is dependent on volunteers for the successful implementation of daily ministry. We ask that you prayerfully consider how you are able to serve in the following ministries (LD 21, QA 55):

Worship  
*(sound, screen, video, and musicians)*  
FIRST Impressions  
*(ushers, greeters, valet, kitchen/coffee, frontline)*  
Nursery Attendants  
Children's Church Leaders  
Sunday School Teachers  
High School Ministry Small Group Leaders  
Transportation

### **WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT IN THE FUTURE**

The Council, through the Administrative Board and Staff, will continue to monitor the circumstances regarding COVID-19 and its impact on the Church and Sioux Falls communities. The pandemic is fluid and requires from all of us a spirit of flexibility and adaptability! Regardless, we continue to move forward in a spirit of Christ-centered confidence and hope

Sincerely,

The Council