



St. Stephen's Lutheran Church

To Love, To Invite, To Serve

1301 N. Broom St. Wilmington, DE 19806



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

*The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtledove
is heard in our land.*

(Song of Songs 2:12)

May 26, 2021

Ninth Pastoral Letter – Summer Worship & COVID-19 update

My Dear Friends,

Depending on the day it seems that summer is upon us. Flowers are in full bloom and birds are singing (even if we cannot at the moment). That means it is time to brace for the Delaware heat and humidity. Someone asked me “what did *they* do in the summer when they built *this*?” (*They* referring to the founding mothers and fathers of our current church building...*this* obviously referring to the sanctuary of St. Stephen's).

Last night the Church Council discussed what we should do to keep our members and guests safe and comfortable this coming Summer. The chapel is air conditioned, but it is also a bit tight even for 20-30 people. Some of our congregation members do not come to church in the summer while we worship in the chapel while others are unable to come if we worship in the sanctuary. Council came up with a solution that, hopefully, will benefit all those that would like to attend (plus also spare Oksana and me from some of the heat in the sanctuary).

Starting June 6, 2021 through August 29, 2021, we will move our service time to

9 am to avoid the morning heat in the sanctuary.

You may opt to sit in the airconditioned chapel and view the service via livestream on the screen.

Council hopes these small adaptations to the summer will offer a more inviting and comfortable experience for all.

COVID Policy Update

The State of Delaware has relaxed its face covering/mask mandate. Most organizations, including LCS, have adopted some of their new policies.

St. Stephen's will, for the near future, continue requiring a face covering to be worn while in the building. **Fully vaccinated** staff members are welcome to remove their masks while in their personal offices.

There will no longer be a registration/sign in table for those visiting the church during the week.

Congregation members and guests will no longer need to sign in or register for services – and they are welcome to use any of the front entrances to the building.

Face coverings are still required in the church building for all guests and members on Sundays. Once seated in the sanctuary pew, **fully vaccinated** guests and members are welcome to remove their face covering.

As a common courtesy and recognition of each individual's preference, we ask that you do not pressure or guilt those that choose to continue to wear a face covering or mask.

Martin Luther faced a deadly plague, as did most of Europe in 1527. Over 40% of the population died. Martin Luther wrote "Whether One May Flee From a Deadly Plague." Luther urged the people to remember their duty to care for their neighbor. He also reminded government to protect and provide vital services to its people, and he cautioned the reader about recklessness. Most notably, Luther impressed upon us the importance of science, medicine, and common sense. We have a rich history of holding science, medicine, and faith as three realities that can coexist in unity and harmony. By the grace of God, we have a medical and scientific community working to keep us safe by recommending best practices and providing life saving vaccinations. If you have yet to be vaccinated, and are able, you can find a link to vaccination sites in the E-Courier.

For more information from our presiding bishop Elizabeth Eaton and the steps the church can take to continue staying safe, please visit www.elca.org.

I look forward to seeing you as we return to in person worship opportunities.

May you stay safe and may the blessings of God be always with you.

Pastor Jason