

Zion Lutheran Church
A Member Congregation of Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ
15 South 4th Street, Harrisburg, PA 17101
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PASTORAL LETTER & UPDATES for July 10, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of Zion,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. - Philippians 4:9-11

Members of Zion's council and I continue to pray for Zion's future plans for worship. I want to thank many of you for taking time to engage in conversation with me. I have also been in active discussion with colleagues and Christian sisters and brothers, from a variety of Christian denominations. As you may be aware in speaking with those around you, there is currently great diversity in how congregations are gathering for worship, including: some returning to patterns very close to before COVID-19 (in the building with varying levels of protocols), some gathering in parking lots or for outdoor worship, and others who continue to worship online. All congregations are unique - different physical plant (for example, a large parking lot or yard for outdoor worship) and differences in ages and health profiles. These characteristics impact a congregation's individual discernment regarding worship planning.

Several issues have led me to reconsider the plan to return to in-person worship on Sunday morning August 9th, broadcasting on youtube and with a call-in service. 1) Several members are not planning to return then, even with protocols in place, due to health concerns. 2) The in-person Sunday worship would likely be spoken only, with no sung music or anthem. 3) The quality of worship and fellowship of the current Zoom Sunday worship service would not be present for online worshipers and for the pastor.

I am therefore suggesting the following **alternative proposal**:

Sunday 10:15am Worship will remain online via Zoom. Communion on the 3rd Sunday.

WOW (Worship on Wednesday at 12:10pm) will remain online via Zoom as planned. Communion on the 1st Wednesday.

In-Person Evening Worship with Communion on Wednesday Evenings, beginning August 5

The service could begin around 7:00pm (7:15, or 7:30pm, depending on what time would work best for those planning to attend). The service would be a spoken and brief version of evening prayer and would conclude with Holy Communion. There would be the opportunity for those who would like to serve as eucharistic ministers to their households/neighborhoods to take consecrated elements with them at the conclusion of the service.

As I have prayed for wisdom and discernment in worship planning, I propose that this plan would maintain the quality of worship and fellowship we are currently enjoying safely online on Sunday mornings, and it would allow those who are ready to return to in-person worship an opportunity to worship together and to commune.

Your feedback is welcome! Please email or call the church office. Deitra will monitor and gather the responses. Please respond before the July 27 Council Meeting.

Possible Questions to Consider:

Do you agree or disagree with the proposal? Why?

Would you attend an in-person Wednesday evening service?

If so, what protocols are important to you? What start time would work best for you?

Do you have other suggestions regarding planning for worship at Zion?

Your prayers for Zion's ministry and for council members and for me are truly appreciated as we seek to be faithful leaders in these unprecedented times.

In the peace and love of Christ,
Pastor Karin

Office Hours: Mondays 9-11am

The office administrator, Deitra Jones, is now regularly in the office on Monday mornings to answer phone calls, sort mail, and to facilitate pick-up or drop-off of items to the building.

Pastor Karin & Todd Taking Vacation Time: July 13 – 16

Pastor Keith Eslinger will be available for pastoral care. His contact information is available from the church office. WOW, Worship on Wednesday, on July 15 will take place with Catherine Germann administering Zoom, and Judy Atticks providing prelude. Pastor Karin will pre-record the service and homily. There will be live fellowship before and after the service.

Mark your calendars the following event:
3rd Friday Fallout Shelter Inspirational Coffee House ZOOM PARTY!!!
Friday, July 17, 6:30pm—8:30pm

For those seeking spiritual refreshment at the end of the week, come join us for live music, poetry, prayer, and more. Online open mic opportunities for those wishing to share their talent in meaningful and uplifting ways.

The guideline for participating live at the Zoom Party is Ephesians 4:29 "Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." At the Zoom Parties over the past two months, we have been blessed to hear from returning favorites and new participants. We welcome newcomers and encourage the forwarding of this invitation! The link and call in information to attend will be emailed next week, and can also be found on Zion's website: www.zionharrisburg.org

Riverboat Sunday, July 26

Currently, CCU is planning to hold the Riverboat Worship Service on Sunday, July 26. Registration details will be provided closer to the event. Pastor Karin Pejack will be leading worship and Judy Atticks will be serving as pianist. Zion's regular Sunday 10:15am Zoom Worship Service will take place with Pastor Keith Eslinger providing worship leadership and preaching.

From CCU's website (www.ccuhbq.org):

The Pride of the Susquehanna is now operating with reduced capacity of a maximum of 40 guests to accommodate social distancing. **Masks will be required for all attendees.** To be assured there is room for you on the boat, you must register on our website.

Registered guests should arrive by 9:45am to be guaranteed a spot on the boat. Walk-on guests who haven't registered will only be accepted if there is still room on the boat at 9:55am. Registered guests arriving after 9:45 am will not be guaranteed a spot on the boat.