



Dear Governor Walz and Attorney General Ellison,

On behalf of the Minnesota North District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Minnesota South District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, we are reaching out to alert you to the attached correspondence that we have sent today to Lutheran churches across Minnesota. The letter indicates to our Minnesota churches that they may begin to reopen on Tuesday, May 26, with the first Sunday worship services occurring on Pentecost Sunday, May 31.

As evidenced by our correspondence with your offices and other state agencies over the past several weeks, we are eager to work with you to safely reopen our churches. We have submitted to your office the protocols we have developed in accordance with state and federal guidelines, and we have followed your announcements about the plans for reopening businesses in Minnesota in anticipation that those plans might include us.

We were disappointed to find that instead, you allowed retail and other non-critical businesses to open, setting a plan in place for bars and restaurants to reopen while limiting churches to meetings of ten people or fewer. In the absence of a timeline or any other assurances that churches will soon be able to reopen, we find that we must move forward with our religious exercise in a safe manner.

We have been praying for you and your administration throughout this crisis. Because we have the best interests of Minnesota and its people at heart, we suspended in-person worship services as soon as we realized the threat and before we were required by your executive orders. Now that you have deemed it safe to reopen non-critical businesses in Minnesota, we believe that the essential business of caring for the spiritual needs of our flocks with in-person meetings must also resume in a limited capacity.

Please let us know if we can discuss the contents of this correspondence with you further.

Respectfully yours,

Rev. Dr. Donald J. Fondow,
North District President

Rev. Dr. Lucas V. Woodford
South District President