

GUIDELINES FOR GATHERING

Platte Christian Reformed Church -- May 2020

To be observed until further notice for indoor corporate worship

In-person, indoor worship will reconvene this coming Lord's Day, May 24, 2020 at Platte CRC. We give thanks to the Lord for His care over our nation and community. While we lament with those in our nation and world who are suffering and have suffered loss of loved ones, we are grateful that many worst-case scenarios have failed to come to pass thus far. We move forward with a renewed sense of gratitude for our building and for the fellowship that comes with meeting our brothers and sisters in person. At the same time, the *ad hoc* Church Health Team has met to discuss how we move forward in wisdom, knowing we live in a state of elevated risk.

Both of our worship times will be open to all, at 10am and at 6pm. In addition, we recognize that not everyone is ready to return to in-person, indoor worship. For that reason, **all services will continue to be broadcast live via audio to radio scanners and video to plattecrc.org.** Especially for those most vulnerable or at higher risk, we hope that these means will continue to be a blessing to you for the time being. We thought it important to allow everyone to exercise Spiritual wisdom in deciding their own health and personal risk tolerance.

When you come to worship, here is what you can expect from Platte CRC:

- **Masks:** though we are not *requiring* worshipers to wear masks in respect of personal wisdom and freedom, masks can be one great way to love your neighbor during this time. Therefore, we are both *encouraging* their use, and *providing* them for you (to keep as your own and to reuse as needed). They will be outside the entry as you arrive.
- **'Masked' spaces:** for those who desire the fellowship of coming to church, but in a space where *everyone* is masked, the family room will be open, with worship televised, and with the requirement that anyone present there wear a mask. When our fellowship hall carpeting project is complete, that space will also be opened to the auditorium, with masks required for all present.
- **Cleanliness and sanitization:** worship spaces will be disinfected after our morning worship, and then closed off after evening worship. In addition, hand sanitizing stations will be placed in the entryway for your arrival and exit.
- **Nursery:** there will be no nursery attendants; however, the space will be open with worship televised for any young families to use, cleaned after morning worship, and closed after evening worship. Anyone making use of the nursery will be asked to bring their own toys, as toys will not be supplied until further notice.
- **Hospitality:** There will be no greeting, ushering or coffee times until further notice. There will also be no valet, but we suggest that those who might normally use our valet service simply park on the curb near the front door, and those who are physically more fit to leave parking spots closer to church open. There will be no mutual greeting in worship.
- **Offerings:** Instead of passing the plate, deacons will be collecting offerings as you exit.
- **Doors:** doors will be propped open to allow 'contactless' entrance and exit.

And here is what Platte CRC expects from you:

- To engage in personal responsibility and self-care by washing hands regularly, practicing good hygiene and staying home if feeling unwell, especially if you experience any of the following symptoms: *a temperature above 100(F), dry cough or sore throat, shortness of breath, recent loss of smell or taste, chills, new/unique muscle aches, gastrointestinal upset and diarrhea*. You also ought to stay home if you come to know you've been exposed to someone with Covid-19 in the past 14 days.
- To respect differing views regarding the realities and risks of Covid-19. Much about this disease remains unclear, and even experts have come to differing conclusions about the appropriate response. Let's not separate what Christ has brought together!
- To find a seat with your family group upon entering the auditorium where no one is seated in the bench directly behind, directly before, or within six feet in the same bench.
- To enjoy the fellowship of mingling and gathering *outside only*. We are inviting any worshipers to come early and stay late in order to reconnect, *provided that you mingle either in the parking lot or on the front lawn spaces*. After worship, we will be dismissing sections progressively and encouraging fellowship *only after moving directly outside the church*, and adhering to 6-foot physical distancing guidelines. \
- To consider bringing your own Bible from home to worship
- To assess your own priorities and risk tolerance: as stated previously, our hope is to balance two priorities - the physical priority of our community's well-being and the spiritual priority of assembling as the body of Christ for worship and fellowship. Each of you will need to assess this for yourselves before the Lord. The first priority requires wisdom, and the second priority may require some courage. We understand the elevated physical risk associated with assembling, and yet there is at the same time elevated spiritual risk in allowing anxiety an undue place in our hearts.

These guidelines will remain in place, and the *ad hoc* Church Health Team will not be meeting, until further notice. If you have questions, observations, or suggestions, please talk with your district elder or deacon or submit them to the church office. Prepare for worship by reflecting on the words of Psalm 138: *"When I called, you answered me; you made me bold and stouthearted. May all the kings of the earth praise you, O Lord...though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life; you stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes, with your right hand you save me."*

On behalf of the Church Health Team, and in grace and peace,

Pastor Drew

Church Health Team
Pastor Drew Hoekema
Elder Leon Sprik
Deacon Bob Middendorp
Dr. Jerome Bentz, MD
Dr. Darrel and Mary Kraayenbrink