



Gethsemane Lutheran Church  
409 East Baldwin Street  
Hackettstown, New Jersey 07840  
(908) 852-2156  
e-mail: gethsemanehtown@gmail.com  
website: gethsemanehtown.com

June 12, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ at Gethsemane,

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

I trust that this letter finds you all well and in good spirits. This pandemic has been a long and sometimes difficult road, and our prayers go out for all those affected. We also pray that God would continue to spare us from further pandemic, bless the efforts of those in medical fields who treat those with the disease, and grant success to those in research for a cure. We especially thank the Lord that the threat has lessened and that we can now gather for Sunday morning worship.

*"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'" (Psalm 122:1)*

On June 21, Gethsemane Lutheran Church will resume regular Sunday morning worship following the rules for indoor gatherings as outlined in New Jersey Governor Murphy's Executive Order No. 152 of June 9, 2020.

- + There will be two abbreviated services on Sunday morning held at **9:30** and **10:45**, each **limited to 40 persons** plus the organist and pastor.
- + Members must **reserve attendance prior to worship** by contacting the Church Office (908) 852-2156, Monday-Friday mornings, 10:00-12:00.
- + During worship services, members will need to **maintain proper distancing** and **wear face coverings** except where a health condition prohibits it.

Please follow any additional guidelines that may be posted in the church in addition to those listed below. Your understanding, cooperation and support are greatly appreciated.

The following items are for your reference:

**1) Consider Your Health:**

- + The health and welfare of Gethsemane's members are of primary importance.

- + Please monitor your own health and act accordingly. Do not take any risk. If you have not been feeling overly well, feeling like you may be catching a cold, or feel that you are at high risk, please refrain from attending worship services.
- + Pastor is available for private visitations, please do not hesitate to ask.

## **2) Before Coming to Worship:**

Please refrain from attending worship *if within the last two weeks...*

- + You have tested positive for the COVID-19 virus, or have been in the presence of anyone who has tested positive, even if asymptomatic.
- + You have had an elevated body temperature, flu-like symptoms, nausea, persistent diarrhea, a sudden rash on your lower legs or feet; or, have been feeling lethargic with an unusual loss of appetite.

## **3) While in Worship:**

- + Wear a face covering, unless you have a health/respiratory condition that prevents you from doing so.
- + Maintain a proper social distancing of six feet.
- + Sit in every other row of pews, with no more than three persons to a pew evenly spaced; exceptions are for members of the same family or related persons, who may sit closely together in the same pew.
- + Please refrain from coughing or sneezing. If you cough or sneeze, please be sure to cover your mouth and nose; if it is persistent then please leave the worship area.

## **4) Receiving Communion:**

- + Communion distribution will be done in a continuous flow.
- + In coming forward to receive communion, approach in the center of the main aisle and please continue moving forward while maintaining proper distancing.
- + Use the hand sanitizer in the main aisle prior to receiving communion.
- + Maintain your face covering until you receive the host and wine, then recover your face.

- + Only in-hand distribution of the host will be made with no hand to mouth distribution, and individual plastic cups will be used for the wine. Please dispose of the plastic cup in the receptacle after receiving the wine.

#### **5) Leaving Worship:**

- + Please take home the service order bulletin and do not leave anything behind in the pews.
- + Dismissal will be from the pews in the rear of the nave, those closest to the exit.
- + In leaving, please wait until the pews behind you are empty, and the main aisle is not congested. While exiting be sure to maintain proper distancing with anyone in front of you.
- + Please exit the church building as soon as possible after worship. After services there will be no fellowship/coffee hour.
- + Please do not congregate inside the building after worship. You may remain outside for conversation if you wish, but observe distancing and face coverings.

These precautionary measures are only *temporary* and will only remain in place until public health emergency measures are lifted. Moving forward, we may make changes or adjustments as necessary to improve the safety and flow of worship. We look forward with anticipation to the day when we can resume worship and fellowship together with no restrictions. Again, thank you for your understanding, cooperation and prayerful support!

In passing, with the resumption of regular Sunday morning worship, pre-recorded online video devotions will no longer be posted. However, GLC will be exploring other alternatives for an online presence.

And now may the Lord of the Church bless His body at Gethsemane as we gather in worship beginning June 21!

Blessings and peace,  
Pastor Tim Drawbaugh

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”*

-1 Peter 1:3