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**Updated – June 2021**  
**(Recent Changes are Highlighted)**

Dear Faith Lutheran Family, Friends, and Guests,

We have already come a long way from when the challenges of COVID-19 first started. We thank God for the various blessings, lessons, and patience, which He continues to provide during this time. We are also thankful for the gifts and efforts He has provided through others, including medical professionals, leaders, and more.

The Board of Directors, Pastor, and staff continue to meet regularly to pray and to discuss and adjust our practices based on current situation. Out of respect for the authorities God has placed over us and the safety of our neighbor, we continue to monitor and try to act based on the recommendations of the CDC, Porter County Health Department, and the Governor's office. "Having been given a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." (2 Tim. 1:7 ESV) we are confident "that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28)

**CURRENT COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

**General expectations in the church building:**

Please...

- **Mask Policy**
  - Masks are no longer required in **Most** of the building
  - We do recommend that those who are **not yet vaccinated** continue to wear a mask, until 2 weeks after are fully vaccinated.
  - Those who prefer to be in a **Masks Required Environment** during worship have the option of attending in the Parlor/Cry Room.
- Practice **social distancing**
- Practice **good hygiene**
- **DO NOT enter the building...** If you feel sick, or have been around someone diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last two weeks.
- **If you not vaccinated and you are over 65, are at higher risk, or are hesitant to come to worship or other activities...** it is recommended that you consider enjoying the Drive-in radio broadcast in our parking lot (99.1fm), the streaming services online, or other remote activity options, for your own safety.
- Since the VCA continues to meet during the week, **Please DO NOT enter the Preschool wing.** (Please, note that only those with proper authorization should be in the preschool wing during school hours at any time, even during non-pandemic conditions.)

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## Worship:

- Faith Lutheran's sanctuary is open for our weekly 9:00am worship service.
- Please, try to maintain six-foot social distancing (except by family units) during worship by spacing out in the pews. When sitting down, please move all the way down the pew to allow another person(s) to sit at the opposite end of the pew, when distancing allows.
- If the sanctuary pews fill up, overflow seating will be available in the Narthex, Parlor/Cry Room, and downstairs.
- We will continue to broadcast to the parking lot (99.1fm) and Live-stream on YouTube to accommodate those who might not feel comfortable gathering together or need to worship with us from home. This also allows the service to be heard throughout the entire church for the overflow seating. Information and links to service videos can be found at [faithvalpo.org](http://faithvalpo.org)
- Our cleaning staff will continue to regularly clean and sanitize the sanctuary and bathrooms.
- Our worship service continues a no handshake of peace or greeting at this time.
- Communion will be on the first, third, and fifth Sundays using careful safety practices. (Anyone wishing to remain in the parking lot during service and still receive communion should make arrangements with pastor in advance, so that we are aware of your desire).
- We will not be passing an offering plate during services, you are invited to drop your offering in the basket in the back of the sanctuary or use our online giving option.

## Additional Activities/Resources:

- Pastor Schoech remains available for pastoral care and visitation by phone and in-person by appointment. In case of pastoral emergency, please call (do not text) his cell phone or call the church office at any time to be instructed on how to reach him.
- Links to Worship Services, devotions, and other information and resources are available on our Facebook page and web page: [faithvalpo.org](http://faithvalpo.org).
- Sunday School and Sunday Bible Class should observe the previous safety precautions when meeting.
- All in-person activities in the church facilities, other than those previously mentioned will be limited and approved on a case-by case basis until further notice. This includes facilities usage for members and non-members. Please contact the church office if you have an activity or event you would like us to consider. Specific guidelines will be provided at that time.
- Small groups are encouraged to meet virtually or off site with proper social distancing.
- Since we are working to keep the building sanitized, we ask that you limit your access to the building outside of scheduled/approved activities. If you need to be in the church, we ask that you let the church office know so that our cleaning staff can act accordingly, or you can be given cleaning instructions. This will help with the safety of all involved.

We know that many of us have strong feelings about what we should be doing during this time. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding in all of this. Please know that these decisions continue to be made after much thoughtful discussion and prayer, and with careful consideration for our members, our neighbors, and the many ways in which God has called us to be faithful.

You are welcome to contact Pastor or the board with any further questions regarding our plans going forward. As more information develops we will continue to contact you to update you with our response as a church. Until then remember: we are held in the hands of an incredible God who continues to care for us all. He loves you and so do we.

**Pastor Eric Schoech**

**Faith Lutheran Board of Directors**