

2-10-21 COVID-19 Response Letter

As we approach the season of Lent, we begin a journey where we recognize our own frailty and need for God's grace. This season ends with the hope of Easter. I am writing you this update letter recognizing our own frailty during these times, but we continue to move forward with hope in Christ.

As our ministry moves forward, here are a few updates about our upcoming events and policies to go along with them.

Our worship services are changing. *Beginning on Sunday, February 28th, we will have two in-person services on Sunday morning – our 8:45am traditional service in the Sanctuary and our 11am contemporary service in the Christian Life Center.* Both of these services will also be livestreamed on our church Facebook and YouTube pages. You'll also be able to participate in these services online after the fact, if you are unable to make it when they are live. www.fpcfd.org will get you all the links you need to find these pages. We are asking all people to wear masks and continue maintaining social distance practices. We are continuing to offer monthly communion and sing during the services, while we seek to keep the services as touchless as possible.

Moving forward, we are planning to have both in-person and live streamed versions of our services available, recognizing that all of these venues provide opportunities for us to worship God together. We will plan our in-person services with our online participants in mind, hoping to include as many people as possible.

If you are interested in volunteering or helping to make any of these services happen, either online or in person, please let us know in the office.

Speaking of **the office**, it continues to be open and we are available to meet upon request.

Children's and youth programs have started back up again after the new year. We are getting plans together for summer camp with Lakeshore Center at Okoboji, so please stay tuned for more information about summer camp.

KidZone is still open and operates with its same drop-off and pick-up procedures. All staff wear masks and children wear masks as they are able.

Committee, board, and staff meetings continue within the church, in hybrid format – some are via zoom while others are in person with proper social distancing. If you are serving on a team, please check with team to chair to see where you are meeting.

We've recently launched our church podcast! Do a search of "The Light Is Still On" in Spotify or the Apple Podcast app to find it. This podcast includes sermons from each week, and will feature stories from people in our church and community. We'll also have devotionals and other content in our feed. If you subscribe, it's a great way to have church content come right to your phone without having to search it out yourself.

Mark your calendars for these upcoming event dates:

- 2/17/21 – Ash Wednesday Service
 - 5pm pancake take-out dinner from 4th Ave North (south side of CLC)
 - 6pm Ash Wednesday service in person in the Sanctuary and online
 - After the service takeout pancake dinner for in-person participants
- 2/21/21 – Annual Congregational meeting
 - 8:45am in-person sanctuary and live-streamed on Facebook and YouTube
 - 10am in-person sanctuary and ZOOM congregational meeting
 - Hear from program staff about how we've seen God working in our congregation through this past year
 - Take home the annual report and our new 2020 narrative budget
 - 2-28-21 snow make-up day. We will push this event back one week if needed
- 2/28/21 – Sunday Worship Service Schedule Change
 - 8:45am in-person sanctuary and live-streamed traditional service
 - 11:00am in-person CLC and live-streamed contemporary service

I am very excited about these changes, and I continue to be thankful to partner with you in ministry.

Blessings,
Austin D. Hill
Lead Pastor