



May 26, 2020

Dear LCC and Trinity Church Families,

A few weeks ago, we joined together to create a joint Advisory Team to facilitate conversations about gathering as long as the risk of Covid-19 is in our midst. This team is made up of Laura Blesse-Hampton (LCC), Amy Daso (LCC), Steve Fesko (Trinity), and Katie Stadler (Trinity). These are people with both medical and strategic wisdom. As pastors, we are also present in these meetings.

We will look to this team when making decisions about large-group worship, small group gatherings, weddings and funerals, and any other gathering in our building for the foreseeable future. In these conversations, we are holding science and love of neighbor at the center.

As a team, we are in agreement that we will follow the indicators from the CDC to make decisions about gathering small, medium, and large groups:

- 2 week decline in the number of infections
- Adequate testing
- Implementation of contact tracing

At the present moment, we have not met any of these conditions, and we are cautiously realistic that we don't anticipate these conditions being met in the coming months.

We want to be very transparent with you that the research we are seeing through our denominational bodies, partners, and advisors suggests that we should be preparing to hold virtual gatherings until there's a vaccine. We hope that smaller, social-distance in-person opportunities will happen before that time, but we trust we will "know when we know," and we know that time is not yet. Regardless, we know we're in for the long haul with producing strong, meaningful virtual opportunities.

The reality is that Lakewood is the most densely-populated suburb in Ohio and religious gatherings are considered highly contagious events. The singing, the familiarity, the multigenerational community—the things that make our congregations so special—also create more risk for spreading the virus. Take comfort that we continue to "Be the Church" even when we cannot be in the same physical space.

We also want you to know that we are in regular conversation through the Lakewood Ministerial Association and are, at the present time, consistent with most other Lakewood churches.

Many of our groups have chosen to meet via Zoom. If you would like instructions or support in making this happen for your group, please reach out. If you need a list of phone numbers for your group or access to the church directory, please reach out. If you have something on the calendar that you would like to promote to the church, please let your church office know. We want to help you and support you in getting your group functioning as well as possible while social distancing, but we need your help to know what your needs are.

Stay well, stay safe, stay connected.

With much love,
Pastor Joanna and Pastor Sara