

Dear Family of Trinity Lutheran,

“How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, yes, faints for the courts of the Lord; my hearts and flesh sing for joy to the living God.” (Psalm 84:1-2)

God’s people long to worship the living God, and our souls long for the gathering and fellowship in the “courts of the Lord.” Like the Psalmist above, it’s acknowledged that the family of Trinity longs to worship together again and rightfully so.

Governor Reynolds’ proclamation on Monday opened the possibility of worshipping together after nearly six weeks of separation. Leaders of Trinity gathered on Wednesday evening, April 29, to discuss our response to the long-awaited opportunity.

After open and honest discussion, the decision is a unanimous decision pastorally and among church leadership present with a response of “not yet.” The health and well-being of every person here matters to us, as does the ability for individuals and families to be able to worship with the peace and confidence of knowing every aspect of our approach to a safe and sanitary gathering has been taken care of to the best of our abilities. While we can never absolutely assure safety in any circumstance, it was felt that it was too early after the decree to fully measure the impact, and on top of that we felt there was insufficient time to adequately prepare and adjust. So, worship together at Trinity continues to be delayed for the time being. Your leaders will meet again in sufficient time to review our response and consider resuming worship together.

Please know this has not been taken lightly. It’s an instance where just because we can do something, doesn’t mean we should if the feeling and timing doesn’t seem right. With everything we do in regard to our congregational life together, we do it out of love for the Lord and out of love for our church family to sincerely want to do what is best for everyone’s health, peace, and well-being physically, emotionally, and of course spiritually. Other churches may respond to this opportunity differently, and we fully respect their decisions in light of their own circumstances and dynamics. Our responsibility here though is to determine, “What is best for the family of Trinity Lutheran and the Cherokee community we’re blessed to be part of?”

As we wait, a number of individuals have expressed a longing for Holy Communion. Arrangements for a safe and sanitary private Communion for you and your family can always be made. Please contact the church office to make arrangements. In the meantime, our preparations and plans for safe public Communion celebration in our future worship together will also be well-planned for logistics and safety.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers. As we patiently wait to gather in “the courts of the Lord,” please:

- + Pray for leaders in our world, country, and community, to respond wisely, compassionately, and creatively to the continuing crisis.
- + Pray for our church leaders that they might seek solutions and adjustments that fit the needs and circumstances of our congregation in this unique time, while also continuing to serve the needs of membership and the community around us.
- + Worship with us using the wonderful means God has provided. With thanks to Fuller Digital Solutions/KCHE, we’re able to record worship weekly and post to Trinity’s website (trinitycherokee.org). In the future it would be worth our own investing in the equipment to do this on a regular basis. As we currently don’t have the technology to execute it well on our own, we’ll continue to hire them per service to make online worship possible. Stay informed in other ways through our Facebook page (TrinityCherokee) with announcements and resources, and use other LCMS worship opportunities such as Main Street Living every Sunday at 10:30 on KCAU-9.
- + Treasure your personal and family devotion times. “Portals of Prayer,” the hymnal, and other resources are available. If personal/family devotional needs are had, please let me know and I’ll strive to equip with resources and ideas.
- + Thank you to those who have continued to respond regularly and generously with financial support. Many aspects of our mission and ministry and our financial commitments continue and your faithful support is needed and appreciated.
- + Watch for worship and ministry updates. The church office continues to be open to inform you and support you along the way. Future communication will have information about safely preparing to our assembling together again.

Safe together in the care of the Good and Perfect Shepherd,

Pastor Riggert

ADDITIONAL NOTE OF THANKS FROM HEALTH AND HUMAN CARE COMMITTEE:
As the world we live in today causes fears, anxiety and concerns, we have a God that continues to bless us with opportunities to serve him with a joyous heart. God has blessed the food pantry at Trinity with many wonderful gifts in the past few weeks including cash, food items, and willing and joyful helping hands to organize and serve. These have been not only from within our church family, but from the community as well. We give praise and glory to God for all that he provides and thank Him for allowing us to serve many in need. We are sending thank-you notes to the ones we know have given, however we know there are many we have missed or perhaps not witnessed their giving. If you have helped the food pantry in any way and we have failed to send a thank-you to you (either in person or on paper), please forgive us and know that you truly are a blessing and we give thanks to you for sharing your gift of God’s love.