

The Process, Questions and Decisions Concerning Re-Gathering

Thank you for your patience and for your feedback as we begin a process to address all the issues and concerns related to reopening the building, and as we continue moving toward future opportunities to regather. Like you, I can't wait to be together again. And like you, I want us to do this well, because we only have one chance to give this our best effort. As people of God who embody the grace of Christ, we do this together, in community, with the love of God, love for each other, and love of our neighbors at heart. Sadly, we've heard the news of churches that regathered too quickly. Some of those congregations have now closed buildings a second time because of new outbreaks of COVID-19 among their membership.

Under Council's direction, a First Lutheran Regathering Task Team is being formed. The Council Co-Chair will be FLC Chair of Congregational Wellness, Margaret May, who is also a registered nurse. The Staff Co-Chair will be FLC Director of Administration, Dan Basinger. Other FLC members, including Healthcare Professionals are being invited to take part. Please continue to send Dan (dan@firstlutheran.com) or me (jay@firstlutheran.com) your questions, concerns and ideas.

Yesterday afternoon, on Sunday, May 31, we received new information from our NC Synod Re-Gathering Task Force. Here's a summary of their guidelines for congregations, below. You can click <https://files.constantcontact.com/f75ec257001/33b91dbd-256c-4e21-94e9-6ff7d737b3ef.pdf> to read the full statement. The full statement provides a great deal of detail along with further explanation that is quite helpful. I encourage you to read the full statement if you have any questions or want more information beyond the brief summary below.

Thanks for your partnership in Christ's ministry, as we continue to "be church" for each other, for our neighbors who are suffering, and for God's world, and as we wait patiently and faithfully for the time in our future when we are able to gather together again, safely.

~ Pastor Jay

Grounded in our vision and core values, the North Carolina Synod Council makes the following recommendations for the congregations of the NC Synod:

1. Standing in solidarity with our North Carolina ecumenical partners in the Episcopal, United Methodist, AME Zion, and other traditions, we will refrain from in-person gatherings of more than 10 people indoors and 25 outdoors until the NC governor moves us into Phase 3.
2. We will postpone any in-person gathering with children or youth until September 1, when additional recommendations will be available from our school systems.
3. We will develop in-person gathering protocols and an implementation plan in writing prior to gathering.