



The Lihu'e Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hawai'i

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To the our Ohana,

On behalf of the worship planning committee, in collaboration with the church council, we would like to announce that we have formally developed a comprehensive plan, with protocols, to reconvene worship on June 14, 2020.

We will host (1) worship service at 9:00am and we will host worship via Facebook Live. This will give you 5-options to participate in worship in a way that is most meaningful and comfortable to you.

1. **Facebook Live @ 9:00am**
2. Worship in the **chapel** (we ask that you arrive 15-minutes early to be greeted and seated by our ushers who have been specifically trained with CDC and local government guidelines for worship)
3. Worship in the **fellowship center**
4. Worship on the **lawn** – BYOC (bring your own chair)
5. Worship in the **parking lot** from the comforts of your own car

In preparation for worship, the worship planning committee requests that you practice **self-accountability**. This means that you first, worship in a way that feels most comfortable and appropriate for you. This can include staying home and joining us via Facebook Live. *Just because we are reconvening does not mean you have to be "here."* We encourage you to practice self-accountability and join us in the space that feels most comfortable to you. Second, this means that if you are sick, feeling ill, have traveled within 14-days, or are hosting someone who has traveled within 14-days, that you attend worship via Facebook Live. We understand that the governor has lifted the 14-day interisland self-quarantine but our

leadership team here believes it is in our best interest to support a 14-day self-quarantine for anyone who has traveled or is hosting someone, like a guest or family member, who has traveled. We request that you do not come to church within 14-days of either traveling (off island or inter-island) or hosting a traveler.

In addition, we ask that you:

- 1) **Arrive** 15-20 minutes early so that everyone can be greeted and seated in a timely fashion,
- 2) **Bring** your own water bottle, or water container,
- 3) **Use** the restroom before you arrive – to limit and reduce exposure and contact,
- 4) **Bring and wear** appropriate facial coverings,
- 5) **Practice** social distancing (at least 6-feet),
- 6) **Allow** the ushers to greet and seat you in a designated location,
- 7) **Let your usher know** how many people are in your group so you may sit together,
- 8) **Raise your hand** if you need hand sanitizer or other sanitary supplies – and all other needs,
- 9) **Wait** to be escorted out of the worship space by your usher,

We ask that you **RSVP** for the June 14 worship service so our worship planning committee can ensure the necessary and required accommodations are in place for the safety and comfort of everyone.

RSVP's may be made directly to Noreen Javinar @ lihuelutheran@gmail.com or via phone (808) 635-3550. Please indicate 1) your name, 2) how many individuals will be sitting with you, 3) if you require any special accessibility assistance, 4) which location you intend to worship from:

- a) The church
- b) The fellowship center

- c) The lawn
- d) The parking lot in your car

If do not feel comfortable wearing appropriate facial coverings, practicing social distancing, and abiding by the protocols we have set in place for the safety and comfort of all, we ask that you stay home and worship with us via Facebook Live. Should there be an issue we are prepared to offer the level of care that is required to ensure the safety of all. That being said, if, for medical reasons, you are unable to wear a facial covering, you may worship with us via Facebook Live, from the lawn on the church premises, or from your car in the parking lot. We ask that all individuals practice **self-accountability** and work together with us to take the necessary steps that will ensure the safety and comfort of all.

For those who may attend and not wear a facial covering, please practice **self-accountability** and be mindful and aware that others may not feel comfortable socially interacting with you. Be considerate and practice social distancing; and consider only engaging those who approach you.

If you would like to meet the pastor on campus, he will be in a designated area. Please wait for your usher to escort you from your seat to the exit. A **walk through** will be hosted via Facebook Live on *Saturday, June 13* around 1-2pm. We will walk through the expectations and procedures for worship. For those who are unable to watch the live video or recording, please review the “Helpful guide to worship” in the pages below.

On behalf of the worship planning committee and the church council, we thank everyone for your patience in this time. This has not been an easy process, and has required a great deal of planning, organization, prayer, and collaboration. Please bear with us and operate out of a “grace-first” approach to any difficulties that may arise.

Mahalo in advance and we look forward to seeing you on campus or via Facebook Live.

May the Lord bless you,

Pr. JP Paxton

A Helpful Guide to Worship, June 14

Overview

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Introduction

Dear friends, grace, mercy, and peace be with you.

Over the past three weeks, a planning collaborative has been underway as we consider, reconsider, and then further consider the logistics of reconvening worship. Please note, this is not something we have taken lightly. Instead, we have, with all seriousness, checked, double-checked, and triple-checked CDC guidelines, local and state guidelines, and sought wisdom from our Synod as we consider how to reconvene worship. In fact, the decision was made to delay reconvening worship after a meeting with the bishop because we were uncertain how to properly address aerosol contamination that may come from singing and responsive reading. After taking two additional weeks to consider and think through the logistics and requirements for “best practices,” we feel that we are ready to take the first step.

Please note, this is only a *first step*. As a first step, we ask that everyone practice what the leadership team has defined as, “self-accountability.” We ask that everyone, first and foremost, worship in the way they feel most comfortable. *You do not have to come to church!* That sounds weird to say, but you do not have to come to church. Just because we are reconvening does not mean that you have to come. Take your time, be self-accountable, and worship in a way that you feel most comfortable. If you do come, please be self-accountable and abide by the policies and protocols that we have outlined in this handout.

Acknowledging the roller coaster and a “new normal”

The week of May 24 we were planning to reconvene worship for Pentecost, May 31. Then, after a meeting with the Bishop, precautions arose that we, the church council, did not feel 100% comfortable with. The biggest consideration we faced was how to address possible aerosol contamination through responsive reading and singing in areas that are not as well ventilated – like the church.

After the church council voted, we decided to delay reconvening worship and reconsider the right time on a week-to-week basis, with the hope of reconvening mid-late June. It is helpful to acknowledge that *a lot has happened in a very short amount of time*. Decisions have been made that have delayed and moved us forward toward reconvening. For some, this may feel disjointed, clunky, or like a roller coaster ride, with it's up and down movements. While we aim to achieve flow, or a smoothness, in our leadership, when it comes to COVID-19 precautions, we want to consider, reconsider, and then reconsider again. When it comes to the safety of our ohana and kupuna, we are compelled to take this necessary measure. Therefore, if we discover or uncover something we had not previously considered, or run into a road block, out of consideration for our ohana and kupuna, we were willing to yield and take the necessary steps to make sure we would *only move forward if we were ready*.

I wish things were easier, smoother, and clearer, but they are not. In the short time we have become aware of COVID-19, even the CDC and local governments have gone back and forth expressing what they do or do not know about COVID-19. This uncertainty can make it really hard to “get back to normal,” so it creates a “new normal.” We name and acknowledge this “new normal” as something that has not been easy and has required flexibility, patience, and grace as we figure out how to move forward safely.

An overview of the precautions we have taken

During the pandemic our leadership team has carefully considered every decision. Beginning with the first, on March 18, we decided to delay worship locally and move to Facebook Live. Since then, we have carefully followed CDC and government/local guidelines. Though we were planning for a May 31 reconvening date, we wanted more time to think through aerosol contamination and did not have a responsive protocol in place that we felt met the CDC and local government guidelines that was appropriate for our context. Having had two more weeks to prayerfully work through these considerations, our worship planning committee feels that we can sufficiently meet all considerations to reconvene worship on June 14. To ensure we have exhaustively considered every CDC and state/government guidelines, we have taken the following precautions:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of CDC and local/government guidelines
- Develop protocols to respond to the possibility of aerosol contamination with responsive readings and singing Identify members to serve on a sanitization team and ensure they are equipped and properly trained to meet CDC sanitization standards
- Develop a timeline for new sanitization team members to be comprehensively trained and equipped to sanitize the worship space
- Develop a response protocol for if or when an active case 1) occurs on the island of Kauai and 2) occurs in our congregation
- Identify appropriate worship spaces that can support parishioner self-accountability and equip them to worship in a space they feel most comfortable
- Outline and organize the worship space into clearly marked, socially distanced seating
- Identify spaces that increase risk of exposure and isolate or close these locations with clearly marked signage
- Develop guidelines for parishioner ride sharing

- Identify individuals to serve as a support team to ensure active participation with social distancing and facial covering guideline Institute organizational strategies to ensure appropriate and comprehensive signage is clearly marked and accessible to all parishioners at the appropriate locations
- Ensure the worship planning committee is equipped with sanitization materials to uphold CDC standards so the worship space may be sanitized immediately after Sunday worship
- Collaborate with the Monday morning cleaning crew to ensure additional cleaning can occur on a consistent (weekly) basis
- Develop and distribute information that will help parishioners know what they will need to bring to worship, what steps or guidelines they will need to follow once they arrive to the church, who they can speak to if a need arises during worship, and all other pertinent information related to safely reconvening for worship

Self-accountability

One of the most important guidelines the worship planning committee has developed has been the term, “self-accountability.” Self-accountability is first and foremost doing what is in your best interest. This means if you, for any reason, feel uncomfortable coming to church, we encourage you to practice self-accountability and come when you feel ready. In addition, this also means, for those who come, that you practice self-accountability with others. This looks like wearing an appropriate facial covering, unless you have a medical condition that otherwise prohibits the use of a facial covering; practicing social distancing, though there may be a great temptation to hug, high five, or physically greet ohana; and staying at home if you are sick, feeling ill, or have recently traveled or are hosting someone who has traveled to the island. In cases of both inter-island travel and off-island travel, we ask that you self-quarantine for 14-days, even though Gov. Ige has lifted this restriction. This is a practice that our worship planning committee believe will best support the safety of our ohana and kupuna.

In addition, self-accountability also includes responding to frustration, hardship, changes, and difficulties, as they may arise, with compassion, grace, and understanding. This is a very difficult time, and sometimes the way forward is not always clear and certain. Let us live and conduct ourselves in ways that allow leadership to be a blessing and not a burden.

Things to bring

Before you come to church, we ask that you:

- Use the restroom in your own home.
 - This will decrease contact exposure at church and decrease the likelihood of contamination or contraction of COVID-19 or another illness.
- **Bring** a cell phone or tablet to download and use the virtual bulletin this will help us to save paper; also, this will allow you to interact with our ohana on Facebook Live and be a part of the full community gathered!
- **Bring** your own hand sanitizer and sanitization products that will help you to feel comfortable and safe in the worship spaces we have provided.
- **Bring** your own water bottle, especially if you will be worshipping from the lawn. The kitchen area will be locked and the water fountain will be closed to reduce the risk of contamination and exposure at these locations.
- **Other self-accountability items** that will help you to worship in the way and in the space that you feel most comfortable while you are here.

When you arrive

Bullet point overview

1. You will be greeted and seated by the ushers.
 - a. You will be asked how many individuals will be in your group so that you may be seated together when possible.
2. You will be asked if you would like hand sanitizer before you are seated.
3. You will be reminded that if you need anything during the worship.
service ushers will be:
 - a. At the front door
 - b. At the back door
 - c. In the sanctuary
 - d. At the fellowship hall
4. You will be shown which areas have been closed and are inaccessible for safety concerns
5. You will be shown how offerings may be made.
6. You will be escorted from your pew to the lawn for a socially distanced fellowship; please wait to be escorted so that our ushers may support social distance guidelines.

The role of the ushers

When you arrive, you will be greeted by one of four ushers. These ushers have been specifically trained to uphold CDC and local and state guidelines to best support your safety during worship. The four ushers will be located at the following places: 1) at the entrance of the church, 2) at the back door of the church, 3) in the sanctuary, and 4) in the fellowship center.

Where you will go and how you will get there

The greeting usher will ask you how many individuals are with you and seat you in socially distanced spaces in the church, the fellowship center, or out on the lawn. They will offer you hand sanitizer before you enter your worship space and be available to offer sanitizing products should you need them during the worship.

Should you need to use the restroom we ask that you practice self-accountability and limit contact with surfaces in those areas and wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. Please see clearly marked signage in the designated areas if this is unclear for further instructions.

At the end of worship, ushers will lead parishioners out of the worship spaces in limited numbers, preferably one party at a time. This is to ensure social distancing. If you would like to meet and speak with the pastor, he will be in a designated location on the lawn. Please practice social distancing if there are individuals already speaking with the pastor.

Facial coverings and social distancing

We encourage everyone to bring their own facial covering from home. Ushers will be available to support and encourage CDC guidelines and practices, providing gracious and friendly reminders where helpful. If individuals choose to disregard these safety protocols, after multiple gracious and friendly reminders, ushers may turn to a higher level of care to support CDC and local government guidelines for best practices.

Locations that will be closed

The following locations will be closed to limit the risk of exposure and the possible contraction of contaminants:

1. The kitchen
2. The water fountains
3. The pew closest to the lectern
4. The pulpit

We ask that you do not enter, inhabit these spaces, or use the facilities in the areas that will be closed and marked by signage. Should a need arise, please ask our ushers and they will be happy to assist you.

What to do if you need assistance

If, at any point in the worship service, you require assistance, one of four ushers will be available to assist you. They will be equipped with hand sanitizer and sanitizing solutions should they be requested.

Other questions you may have

What will we do if we develop an active case or see community spread?

We will respond by suspending worship for up to 30 days and return to worship via Facebook Live. We elected 30 days because this will provide sufficient time for an individual to recover and provide an additional time to see if there is evidence of community spread.

If a case develops in our congregation, we will suspend worship for up to 30 days and return to worship via Facebook Live. We will monitor the recovery of our ohana and reconvene worship *only if* they make a full recovery and we return to no active cases on the island. In addition, we will invite the previously recovered individual to join us via Facebook Live until we learn more about when a person is no longer contagious. This policy is open to change and will be discussed among the worship planning committee to take the necessary steps to ensure the safety of our ohana and guests.

How will you ensure the church has been properly sanitized?

Liz Kohl and Mark Murie are team leads for our sanitization crew. Liz Kohl, a Marriot Executive, was the team lead for hotel operations when her hotel hosted individuals with COVID-19. She held oversight for all staff and the safety and sanitizing protocols that were enacted. Drawing from her wisdom, and the wisdom of Mark Murie – who is also in charge of sanitizing a housing complex, our team leads will integrate CDC, local and state guidelines, and their own expertise to ensure the proper protocols are developed, followed, and that new volunteers are appropriately trained.

In addition, the church and other worship spaces will be sanitized Sunday morning *before* worship begins. This will ensure that the worship spaces will have been appropriately and thoroughly sanitized. In some cases, we have had visitors on Saturday evening. Sanitizing Sunday morning will ensure that all contaminants will be sanitized and support the safety of all. If you are interested in becoming trained and volunteer as a part of our sanitization team, please contact Liz or Mark. Volunteer dates will begin on June 28; training will occur

the week of June 21 and volunteers will be invited to “shadow” our current sanitization team.

What if I don't feel comfortable coming to church yet?

That is 100% okay! Reconvening worship will unfold in slow and steady steps. We encourage you to take the first step *when you are ready*. As the worship planning committee has stated, you do not need to come the first week! You can wait, see what happens, and come as you are ready and feel comfortable. In addition, to help our parishioners feel as comfortable as possible, we have identified four worship spaces (1) Facebook Live, 2) Church, 3) Fellowship Hall, 4) Lawn – BYOChair) so that individuals may practice self-accountability and worship in the spaces they feel most comfortable.

What if I disagree with the reconvening date?

We understand that there are many different perspectives on reconvening worship. We welcome and appreciate this diversity. Disagreement is normal, healthy, and necessary for growth. If you would like to talk to the pastor, please send an email to jpaxton@ses.plts.edu. In addition, we encourage everyone to practice self-accountability. If you disagree with the reconvening date please worship in the space that you will feel most comfortable. Whether you are on Facebook Live or in one of our other three worship spaces, we look forward to “seeing” you!!

When will church groups be able to reconvene?

This will be the next step that our worship planning committee will address. We have divided church groups into two categories: church groups and church-sponsored groups. We will prioritize and seek to facilitate church groups to reconvene at a date when we will be able to ensure sanitization standards can be met and supported (this will require volunteers so please reach out to Liz and Mark). Church-sponsored groups like Codependency anonymous, Al Anon, Hawaiian language course, etc., will reconvene at a later date. Currently, we do not have the volunteer support or sanitization procedures in place to ensure the safety and CDC guidelines of our guests, but we are working to develop plans towards reconvening gatherings among these groups.

What about contact spread in the bathroom?

When you use the restroom please wash your hands for 20 seconds using soap and water. Based on updated CDC information contact spread of COVID-19 is low. We are working with Tony Kmente and the church council to discuss the purchase of touchless faucets for our bathrooms. If you are concerned about contact spread at the restroom location, please try to use the bathroom before you come.

What steps are you taking to ensure we have the proper type and amount of sanitization supplies?

Jerry Nishek has access to industrial grade sanitization supplies. We want to take this step-by-step to see what we will need and how our current sanitization supplies meet our needs. Currently, we are using Lysol disinfectant spray and we have Pinesol disinfectant solution and Clorox solution. We are reticent to use Clorox because we don't want anyone to get bleach on their clothes.