



**Trinity Evangelical
Lutheran Church**

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*Our Mission is to help
people of all ages
become active and
engaged followers
of Christ.*



October 28, 2020

Dear Trinity Members:

The Re-opening Team met October 26th and made the decision to postpone in-person worship services at Trinity that were scheduled for November 1st until a later date.

Please note: There will be no in-person worship service at Trinity on November 1st.

Further information regarding this decision is in the newsletter as well as the back of this letter.

Please pray for our congregation, our community and all those affected by COVID-19.

In Christ,

The Re-opening Team

Josh Pudlowski

Kevin Eggers

Rich Reitz

Eva Mahner

Sheryl Seefeldt

Derek Westphal

Josh Hanold

Pastor Tim Vadis

Change of Plans for In-Person Worship

The Re-opening Team had set Sunday November 1, 2020 as the date when we would begin in-person services at Trinity Lutheran. **However, due to current conditions in our area, the team determined that we need to wait to re-open.**

Several factors went into making the decision to delay re-opening. First, the cases in our Rhinelander community are increasing. The **“Infectious Disease Response and Reopening Plan”** that was put together under the direction of Environmental Health and Safety Services notes on **page 9**, “In order to continue down the path of reopening safely, the level of community transmission should continue to show a downward trend.” (A PDF of this document can be accessed on our website homepage.) **Currently we are not in a downward trend in cases but rather an upward trend.**

Second, we noted that two of our local elementary schools have had to shut down because of the impact of people with positive COVID or other staff needing to quarantine because of exposure to someone who is positive. This staffing reality was highlighted for us when we reached out to those who are on our usher list to see who would be willing to help with these duties for in-person services. We sent out asks to 32 ushers and received 25 No, 5 Yes, and two have not responded as of this writing. An usher training was held on Sunday, October 18 for those who might be willing to help but only 3 people attended the training. **Right now we would not have the volunteers needed to hold weekly services.** In addition to the shortage of ushers we felt that the number of “No” responses was also a reflection that many of our members are not ready

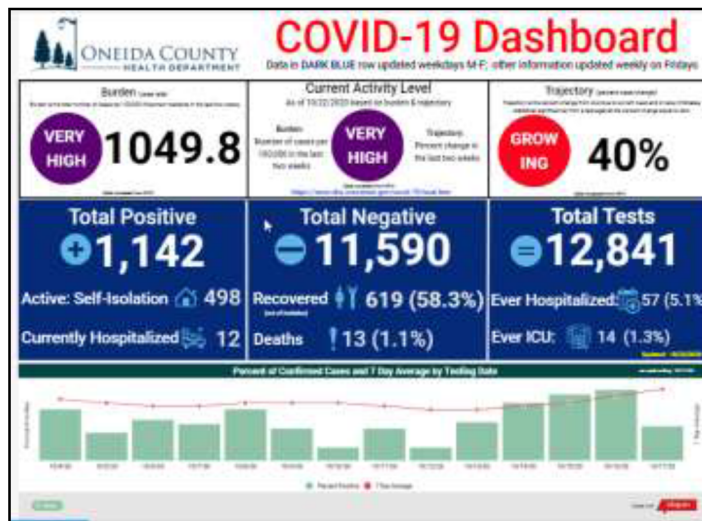
to attend in-person worship services inside the building right now.

Lastly we noted how close the virus is hitting to our church family. **Members of Trinity are experiencing positive cases of COVID.** We also noted how some families in our congregation have lost a loved one to COVID now.

The decision to suspend in-person services was a significant step the Re-opening Team had to make in

when they are in the building with the church office by contacting Pam.

- Each room has sanitizing wipes and a checklist that groups are to use at the end of their meeting to help us stay ahead of cleaning.
- We have installed UVC lights in the air handling system that kills the virus.
- We have trained our custodian in cleaning protocols.



With small group sizes and limited capacity we will continue to allow access to our building and ask all people coming into our facility to follow the protocols in place for your safety and the safety of others.

The change of plans is pushing us to adapt our ministry to this new environment. One of the next biggest challenges for the Re-opening Team will be to figure out what we can offer for Christmas Eve Worship. The team is hard at

work to explore some promising leads and looks forward to sharing plans with you in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, we ask you to join in prayer for our congregation and other congregations who are seeking to do faithful ministry in these trying times. We are going to continue experimenting with technologies and ways to connect that are available to us. One option we are developing is a **digital version of the Trinity Connection Café**. We are looking to use a combination of our Youtube Posting and Zoom Meeting Platforms for a time to gathering online after the worship service. It will simply mean clicking on the Zoom Link we provide at the end of the worship service livestream. It is a small step but one that we hope will help us connect better at Trinity.

light of the current situation in our community. We are not putting out a date when we plan to re-open but rather will monitor the case trends in our community. As the written plan states we need “to show a **DOWNWARD** trend,” in order to move to in-person services.

We are going to continue to allow groups of limited capacities to use the facility. We have put many protocols in place to help us manage the limited building use. These protocols include:

- We require EVERYONE to wear a face mask whenever they enter the building.
- We only allow one group in the upper level and one group in the lower level at a time.
- All groups need to schedule