

**New Covenant Lutheran Church**  
**Regathering FAQs**  
*September 20, 2020*

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At New Covenant Lutheran Church, we've often talked about the fact that the church is not just a building. That has certainly been underscored the past several months as we've been unable to meet in person, due to COVID-19.

But the good news is that the body of Christ is alive and strong in many different ways!

As we regather for in-person worship, you may likely have some questions. Here are answers to some of the questions we've heard and are anticipating. If your question isn't answered here, please email [office@newcovenantaz.org](mailto:office@newcovenantaz.org) or call 480-860-0169.

*Our emphasis as we regather is prioritizing health and safety and love for our neighbors. When we care for one another, we care for God.*

**1) When will New Covenant regather for in-person worship?**

We will begin with an evening prayer service beginning at 7 p.m., Wednesday, September 23. Attendance will be limited to 10 people.

Our Sunday in-person worship services are scheduled to resume at 10 a.m., October 4. Attendance will be limited to 50 people. There will be an announcement in the eWeekly prior to the Sunday Worship service.

**2) Since attendance is limited, will I need to make a reservation?**

Yes. To ensure we can retain social distancing, reservations will be required. This will guarantee you a reserved seat in the sanctuary. To make your reservation, please go the link in the eWeekly. You may also send an email to Mary Cole at [office@newcovenantaz.org](mailto:office@newcovenantaz.org).

You will be able to sign up for a Prayer service or Worship service in advance using the reservation system. You will be asked your name and how many attendees will be joining you. There is also a health screening section that you must sign off on before completing reservation, very similar to the health screening forms you sign at your doctor's office. This is to ensure your safety and the safety of your church family.

Please remember, Prayer services will allow for 10 attendees, and Worship services will allow for 50 attendees.

**3) Will I be required to wear a face covering?**

Yes – you will be required to wear a face covering. If you cannot or do not wish to wear a face covering, please continue with online services.

**4) Are there other requirements for attending in-person services?**

Please consider your safety and make the choice that is right for you, your family and your brothers and sisters in Christ. We are following the latest CDC guidance, which

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states that COVID health risks increase with age and for those with underlying health conditions.

And, of course, please do not attend if you are experiencing any COVID-like symptoms, have been exposed to anyone with COVID or have traveled domestically or internationally within the past 14 days to an area where the transmission of COVID-19 is widespread.

**5) What is being done to ensure health and safety within the sanctuary?**

For those choosing to regather, please know that everything possible is being done to ensure your safety – required face coverings, social distancing, hand-sanitizing stations and enhanced cleaning after each service.

**6) What's changed for in-person worship – as compared to “the way it used to be?”**

- You will be greeted by a Worship Host who will confirm your reservation, explain procedures to you and guide you to your seat(s).
- The Pastor will do the readings, as opposed to a layperson reader.
- Our beautiful music will continue, but with no congregational singing.
- We will share peace with virtual hugs and by waving!
- There will be a donation box in the Narthex for weekly giving instead of passing the basket.
- We will still celebrate weekly Holy Communion using pre-packaged juice and wafers. The Pastor will guide you through Communion as you remain seated.
- You will leave the church through one door, maintaining social distancing.
- We will not be able to have fellowship time at the end of service, until a later time to be announced.

**7) What will the Wednesday Prayer Service be like?**

The prayer service will focus on a time of private confession and then a Scripture with a homily on our need to call on God. We will pray for the church, for one another and for God's healing for this world, from this virus. This will be a 30 to 40-minute service.

The first two services will be Wednesday, Sept. 23 and Wednesday, Sept. 30. After that, the prayer service will continue on a monthly basis on the third Wednesday of each month.

**8) If I'm uncomfortable or unable to attend, will I still be able to access services online?**

Yes. The Sunday worship service will continue to be on Facebook Live and can be accessed via our [Facebook page](#). You do not need to have a Facebook account to access the service.

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**9) What about programs for my children and grandchildren, such as Sunday School and Confirmation.**

For now, these will all be offered via Zoom on Sundays – Sunday School will be at 11:15 a.m. and Confirmation will be at noon.

**10) When will we be able to resume our regular church gatherings?**

As we continue to monitor COVID benchmarks, we will carefully make decisions for future steps toward in-person gatherings. We appreciate your continued patience as we navigate through this time.

**11) What will happen if COVID cases spike again in the Fall or if a case is reported among service attendees?**

The Board of Ministry and Regathering Taskforce monitor COVID positivity on a weekly basis. If there is a spike, a decision will be made to pause in-person gatherings.

If we learn that someone has contracted COVID, we will notify service participants and the congregation-at-large, and also pause services.