



*Living in God's
Amazing Grace*

Bethany Lutheran Church

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pastor@wbbethany.org

August 19, 2020

Dear Beloved Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

The council convened Monday evening and again evaluated the current state of our life together, primarily of whether to open the building or not. Many factors go into this decision, but the key determination is whether positive cases of COVID-19 in Cedar and surrounding counties have remained consistent or declined for 14 consecutive days. We have not yet achieved this milestone and thus the difficult decision was made to continue in keeping the building closed.

It is important to keep in mind the church is not closed. Outdoor worship services continue, and God has blessed us with some beautiful Sunday mornings. We will continue to stream worship via Facebook and cameras were just installed in the sanctuary, which will better assist us to permanently stream worship online and proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to a broader scope of people moving forward. Vacation Bible School while offered in a different format was a success and reached over 50 children and families. A small group is meeting to grow in our understanding of race, culture and ethnicity. Those gathered every Monday to discuss the upcoming gospel share in fellowship and new insight into the living word of God. Gathering for confirmation outdoors is in the works and plans for our younger children are being evaluated. "God's work, our hands" Sunday is September 13th and information will be forthcoming on this annual event. A plan to safely celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion will be communicated soon. There is much to rejoice in and celebrate! God is good!

We do recognize it has been just over 5 months since we closed the doors to our building, which is a sacred space for us. It is a place where the presence of Christ is made known and felt. Many of you have fond memories over the years of a baptism, wedding, confirmation, Christmas Eve or Easter worship service in our beautiful worship space. The altar is a source of comfort and constancy in the turbulent and uncertain times we find ourselves in. Indeed, this is our small boat in which Jesus sits alongside. While we are not yet prepared to worship together in that space, we want each of you to enjoy that space if you wish to do so. If sitting in the stillness of the sanctuary assists your spiritual well-being, then contact Paula (blcsecretary@lcom.net or 319-331-9456) or call the church (319-643-5998) and we will reserve a time when you or your family can come in privately and safely.

The sanctuary is also open every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon from 1:00-4:00 PM. We ask that no more than 3 people be present and face masks be worn by all.

Blessings in Christ,

Bethany Council