



Pastors: Jennifer Beamsley, Robin E. Caldwell, Evan Mayhew

May 14, 2021

Beloved Community,

Talk about surprises!

Yesterday afternoon, I was ~~gardening outside~~ doing church work when my daughter, Anna, texted me this news: fully vaccinated people can ditch the mask both indoors and outdoors!

It felt wonderful, hopeful, and very surreal. More on that in upcoming weeks.

For now, I've been imagining the days ahead, and what it may feel like to "let go" of things we did to care for one another and ourselves during the pandemic; things that fundamentally changed the way we interacted with one another for fourteen long months.

Everyone feels different when pandemic stuff changes. Some feel over-the-moon hearing yesterday's news, they are ready to let it ALL go. Some feel hesitant after "practicing" caution for so many months. Some will want to wait and see how this all plays out before taking any new steps. Some *need* protocols to protect themselves or their family because they are immunocompromised or caring for kids and/or family members unable to get the vaccination, even if they wanted to. No matter where you are on the range of reactions, I hear you.

I, for one, feel hopeful, and grateful, and at the same time, my heart is all over the place. I'm also thrilled to be writing new pandemic updates under these circumstances (I hated writing the cruddy ones at the beginning of the pandemic).

What's the next step? Well, the next step is to take a few days to thoughtfully consider our faith community as a whole, which our Council will do on Tuesday. We want to consider our children. We want to consider our healthy, vaccinated *and* unvaccinated adults. We want to consider people who are cancer survivors, or immunocompromised. We don't want to create



St. John Lutheran Church
2650 Plainfield Road
Joliet, IL 60435

☎ 815-439-2320

☎ 815-439-0575

🌐 stjohnjoliet.org

✉ stjohn2650@stjohnjoliet.org



Pastors: Jennifer Beamsley, Robin E. Caldwell, Evan Mayhew

situations that unintentionally shame anyone. We want to celebrate and move forward in ways that enrich our worship and ministries. We want to stretch ourselves to let go of practices we might not need, as long as we do so with the whole community in mind.

Certainly, there are no “perfect” answers, but there will be faithful ones. We ask for your prayers as we faithfully discern our next steps. It feels so hopeful to be at this point.

To be sure, you’ll be hearing from me in the upcoming week with another update! Stay tuned and for now, plan on signing up for worship and wearing a mask when you are in the building.

I’ll be in worship this Sunday, you can catch me between services if you want to talk more. Enjoy this weather, and I’ll see you at Sanctuary or Home worship!

Peace,

Pastor Jen



St. John Lutheran Church
2650 Plainfield Road
Joliet, IL 60435

☎ 815-439-2320

📠 815-439-0575

🌐 stjohnjoliet.org

✉ stjohn2650@stjohnjoliet.org