



## GATES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1049 Wegman Road • Rochester, NY 14624

(585) 247-5292

E-mail: [office@gatespres.org](mailto:office@gatespres.org)

Web: [www.gatespres.org](http://www.gatespres.org)

Rev. Laura Bachmann, Pastor

May 13, 2021

Dear Members and Friends,

***The lilacs are opening . . . and so is Gates Presbyterian Church!!***

***GPC will return to in-person worship on Sunday May 30<sup>th</sup>!***

It is hard to believe that it will have been 62 weeks since we last gathered for worship. In that time we progressed from cobbled together pre-recorded worship services to live-streaming. Through it all we have stayed connected. Zoom, email, phone calls, texts, parking lot parades, FB, and snail mail have served to help us maintain the core strength of our congregation – our love for and support of each other and our mission.

The current plan is to gather for worship outside on May 30<sup>th</sup>. We will gather on the front lawn so bring your blankets or camp chairs if you have them (chairs will be provided if needed). In the case of inclement weather, we will worship in the sanctuary. This first service back will be a less formal gathering, with a time set aside to share with one another. Members will be invited to offer one or two sentences of lament (what they have missed, losses they have experienced during this time) and/or thanksgiving (unexpected gifts of this time, hopes for the future). If you would like to contribute something but prefer not to speak in person, feel free to email or bring your written words for one of the worship leaders to share, either anonymously or with attribution.

For those who aren't ready or able to return to in-person worship, efforts are underway to assure that we can continue to live-stream as well. We are grateful for the expertise of Evan Mikoll and Craig Henderberg to keep us connected. The Zoom connection for virtual fellowship following worship will also continue to be accessible.

While we are delighted to be able to gather, it's important to realize that the experience will be very different from when we were last able to do so. The information below details current plans and requirements. Please note that these are subject to change.

- We are glad to know that many of our GPC family have been vaccinated. Please note though that having been vaccinated is not a requirement to attend in-person worship services.

- Masks and social distancing will be required.
- No hugging or handshakes. (Lead us not into temptation.)
- One-way traffic will be maintained as you enter and exit the building. Please follow directions provided by Ushers and/or signs.
- Temperatures will be checked, and hand sanitizer will be available at the entrance. Those assigned to provide entrance services will also note the names of those attending to facilitate contact tracing if necessary.
- Ushers will seat attendees to assure recommended distancing between individuals or families. Ushers will also release attendees by row following worship.
- Hymnals and Hospitality Registers have been removed from the pews, and Bulletin info will be shared on the screen rather than handed out. (We are working on how worship service details will be shared for our outdoor service on May 30<sup>th</sup>.)
- Singing has been determined to be a "super spreader" of the virus so we will sing in our hearts for now. Be assured that our worship team is diligently exploring ways to keep music a vital part of our worship experience.
- Child Care: We are not able to offer Baby & Toddler care during worship at this time.
- Joys & Concerns: Ushers will come to you and will hold the microphone while you share.
- Offerings: As we cannot pass offering plates, they will be available at the entrance and exit doors of the sanctuary.
- Communion will next be celebrated on June 20<sup>th</sup>. (Note that date has changed from June 6<sup>th</sup>.) You are most welcome to bring communion elements with you to worship. The Public Worship team will be procuring individual chalices containing bread and juice which will be distributed upon arrival. Please dispose of containers as you exit the sanctuary.
- Fellowship time following worship remains on hold. Coffee/punch and cookies will not be served. Virtual fellowship via Zoom will continue via the existing link (Meeting ID: 857 8343 6016 and Password: 228147).

Please join us in extending our great appreciation to our Re-Opening Task Force for all the work and research they have done on our behalf. This group has served with dedication and grace to determine the best possible means of assuring the health and safety of our congregation and all who use our building. This group took on a task that no one would have expected would become what it has, and we are profoundly grateful for their care and persistence. Our sincere thanks to Tom Ward, Ed Coons, Ben Olsen, Janice Phillips, Roy Smith, Bridget Wohlers, Bob Staszewski, John Kubiniec, and Rev. Bachmann.

We are so looking forward to seeing you – masks and all!

Grace & Peace,

GPC Session