

June 17, 2020

Dear Calvin Family,

**On Sunday, July 5<sup>th</sup> we will have the first of our four outdoor worship services this summer** (the others will be on July 19<sup>th</sup>, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, and August 16<sup>th</sup>). This first outdoor worship service and the August 2<sup>nd</sup> service will be Communion services. In order to avoid the hotter parts of the day, **please note our outdoor services will be held at 9:30am.**

In order for us to maintain appropriate physical distancing at these worship services, **you must RSVP to attend.** You can RSVP on our church website – [www.CalvinChurchRI.org](http://www.CalvinChurchRI.org) – by clicking on the “*Outdoor Worship*” link and filling out an RSVP form for each respective worship service.

**If you are unable to RSVP online,** please call the church office at 333-0355 to RSVP with your name, phone number, total number of people attending the service and their names, and the worship service date(s) for which you wish to RSVP.

The worship service will be held on the front lawn of the church, which will be set up with 25 spots. Each spot will seat 1 or 2 people (if they are in the same household). So, for example, if you are a household of one, you will have one spot; if you are a couple, you will likewise have one spot; if you are a family of three or four, you will have two spots, and so on.

As we do have a limited number of spots, **you must RSVP by the Thursday before** (e.g, for the Sunday July 5<sup>th</sup> service, you must RSVP by Thursday July 2). If the service is already full, you will be notified that you are on the wait list. If needed, we will add a second service for that particular Sunday (time TBD).

**The outdoor services will be held rain or shine,** so please dress appropriately, bring an umbrella if necessary, etc. Chairs will be set up ahead of time, but if you would like to bring your own, you are welcome to do so. You will be given your particular spot(s) based on order of arrival on Sunday morning – we will be filling in beginning with the front rows.

For those unable to attend, the outdoor service will be recorded and the videos put on our church website as soon as possible that Sunday.

A few other things to keep in mind:

- **The church building will not be open;** please do not plan on using the bathroom, etc., at the church.

- All relevant RI State regulations will be followed. Masks will need to be worn at all times (except for partaking of Communion), and a 6 foot minimum distance will need to be adhered to.
- Remember that those over the age of 65, and those with other underlying health conditions are at a greater risk. Please make responsible choices.
- If you are sick, running a fever, have any symptoms of a respiratory illness, or have been in contact with someone in the past two weeks who has tested positive for COVID-19, please do not attend. This is part of how we care for one another in this time.
- If you have RSVP'd for a service but are then unable to attend, please let the church know.
- Please remember, *this is new for all of us*. There will no doubt be some hiccups. We ask your patience with this process as we all grow and learn.

Finally, please keep in mind that some of us in the congregation will be unable or not ready to attend these four outdoor services for any number of reasons (health, living situations, or general comfort level), or who simply feel it is still too soon. And there are others of us in the congregation who will feel that our process is too restrictive. Please keep in mind that whatever your concerns may be along these lines, you have brothers and sisters who have valid feelings and concerns in the other direction than you do. And as *a Christ-centered community*, striving to *welcome all in hope and grace as we worship God, grow in faith, and serve one another*, we are called to look to not just our own needs, but the needs of others.

On the Sundays when we have outdoor, in-person worship, there will be those in our congregation who are frustrated and lamenting the fact that they are unable to fully participate in that week's worship service. On the other Sundays when we have online worship only, there will be those in our congregation frustrated and lamenting that there is no in-person option for them to participate in. And in fact, there are those in our congregation who are unable to fully participate in either one simply because of the circumstances of this pandemic. **These are your sisters and brothers in Christ.** Let us therefore hear and remember these words of Scripture:

*“I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg y'all to lead a life worthy of the calling to which y'all have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as y'all were called to the one hope of y'all's calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.”*

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Kevin