

To the congregation of Bethel CRC,

The Education committee of Bethel has met to determine procedures to be able to conduct our fall education programs at church. We are excited to be able to offer in person opportunities to our youth. We believe there is great value in being able to conduct these ministry programs in-person in order to foster relationships, discipleship, and community. We also take very seriously our responsibility to provide these programs in a setting that provides for the safety and well-being of participants. The guidelines given in this letter reflect our best effort to maintain a balance of those two principles at work in church ministry opportunities.

These guidelines may change as information on this pandemic changes. We ask that you be willing and flexible with us during these transitions. Bethel is working to follow the Governor's and county mandates and directives. We are also basing our guidelines on what local schools and the church has already decided are best practices.

Each group will have a few different protocols as described below:

**Sunday School:** Sunday school is planning to begin Sunday, September 13, and it meets at 9:00 on Sunday mornings. There will be no group singing this year. All students will meet in their respective classrooms. Classrooms in the education wing will be labeled. Please watch as some rooms will be moved around from prior years.

Masks will be required entering the building, in halls and into the classrooms. Once inside the classroom or arranged space we will work to provide social distancing when possible. When distancing, masks may be removed. However, if your child prefers to wear one during class time, that is acceptable.

We will have hand sanitizer available for use throughout the facilities. We will try to limit the sharing of supplies when possible by giving each student their own supply packet. If your student wants to bring their own packet of supplies, that is acceptable. (pencil, crayons, markers, glue, etc.). It may not always be possible to limit supply sharing, when that is the case we will try to clean when possible. If you have any questions, please contact Melinda Flikkema.

**Children's Worship:** Children's worship is planning to begin Sunday, September 13. Masks are not required since participants are under the age of 5. Please note that children will go to children's worship during offering once we are back to worshipping indoors, but as long as worship is outdoors children can be dropped off for children's worship before the service begins and picked up at the conclusion of worship. If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Fountaine.

**GEMS:** Gems is planning to begin in late September, for Grades 2-3 in the afternoon and Grades 4-8 in the evening on Wednesdays. Similar to Sunday school, masks will be required while entering the building, but adequate spacing will be utilized in the various activities on a

given afternoon or evening so that masks will not be required most of the time. If you have any questions, please contact Julie Bussis.

**Cadets:** Cadets is planning to begin in mid-October for Grades 3-8 and will meet Wednesday evenings. In order to provide for the safety of participants of the Cadet program, boys will be asked to wear a face shield (or mask) since distancing is difficult to maintain in the Cadet building, especially while working on projects. Face shields will be provided for any Cadet who does not already have one. If you have any questions, please contact Mark Kimm.

**Youth Group:** Plans for Youth Group are still in the works. Since Kyle DeBoer has answered the call to attend seminary, the leadership for High School Combined Youth Group will look a bit different. The leaders are working out a plan to offer youth group in a space that is safe and provides opportunity for spiritual growth and fellowship. Youth group will likely begin in October. Please be watching for further information as it becomes available. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Steve.