

Greetings, First English Family.

“... lead a life worthy of the calling to which you 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.” – Ephesians 4:1-3 (NRSV)

It has been a crazy and confusing few weeks. The Covid numbers in Marathon County were going down. So, we decided to return to in-person worship. 2 Sundays later, the numbers went up again, so we had to suspend. We apologize for the confusion and lack of clarity in how we’ve made these decisions.

We are basing our decisions on the criteria presented to us by the Wisconsin Council of Churches. The WCC is a group of different Christian denominations of which our East Central Synod of WI is a member. Below are the latest criteria we received in January and which were updated in March.

We were heading into the “Make It Safer” range in mid-March when we decided to re-open for worship. By early April, we were back in the “Unsafe To Gather” range – and we decided to suspend in-person worship. This information, and much more, can be found on the WCC website: www.wichurches.org - search for “Returning to Church.”

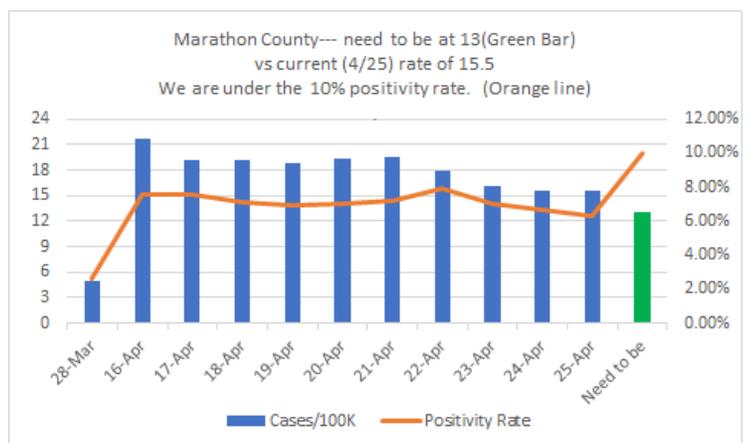
UNSAFE TO GATHER	MAKE IT SAFER	SAFEST
Vaccination rates <50%	Vaccination rates 50-70+%	Vaccination rates 70-85+%
Viral Transmission New Cases >10/100K OR Positive Tests >10%	Viral Transmission New Cases 5-10/100K AND Positive Tests <10%	Viral Transmission New Cases <1/100K AND Positive Tests <5%

from Returning to Church 2.0

Marathon County has a population of 136,000, so new cases need to be less than 13 per day to be in the “Make It Safer” range (see chart below). April 16 saw a recent high of 21.7. We track the Marathon County numbers every day. If you would like to join us, you can “Like” the Marathon County Health Dept. Facebook page or go to their website: www.co.marathon.wi.us/Departments/HealthDepartment

The plan going forward from this point is to start outdoor worship in the parking lot on June 6. Watch for more details in the emailed bulletin and June Lantern as we approach that date.

NOTE: As we all know, plans can change very quickly during a pandemic. So may we all *lead lives worthy of the calling to which we 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.*



The First English Bounce Back Team:

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