

As you might imagine, there are many steps that we must take to gather again for worship and in-person gatherings. Our COVID-19 Response Task Force has worked to prepare for the resumption of in-person worship and gatherings that follows the latest in CDC guidance and the Governor's/Arkansas Department of Health guidelines issued on May 4, 2020. Also, the Arkansas Annual Conference Guidance for the Safe Reopening of Churches in Response to COVID-19 has been considered in the guidelines to follow.

Worship

1. Persons with preexisting conditions which put them at risk of contracting COVID-19 are encouraged to participate in our Online Worship Service.
2. Persons who are exhibiting symptoms associated with COVID-19 should not enter church facilities and are encouraged to follow CDC and state guidelines for self-quarantine.
3. The Fellowship Hall doors shall serve as a singular point of entry into the church for worship
 - The doors will be opened 15 minutes prior to the start of service and then locked for entry at 10 minutes after service is scheduled to begin.
 - All other entry doors to the church shall remain locked.
4. The west-side narthex doors shall serve as a singular point of exit following service and signage will be posted.
 - An usher will open the doors and prop them open at the beginning of the last song in order to minimize multiple people touching the door.
5. Masks shall be worn at all times while inside the building by everyone over the age of 10.
 - An Usher/Greeter will be stationed at the Fellowship Hall door to greet, hand out masks to those without one, and to notify people when we have reached sanctuary capacity.
 - Persons not wishing to wear a mask while inside the building or for health reasons cannot are invited to participate in our online worship service.
6. Usher/greeters will seat families as they arrive.
7. We will require social distancing in worship seating, entering and exiting the building, and in the restrooms. This includes no physical contact during worship (shaking hands, hugging, etc.).
 - Members and guests will be seated from front to back as they arrive and alternating rows of pews on both sides will be used to ensure six feet of distance is maintained between different household/family groups.
 - Attendance will be taken of all persons in worship and maintained in the event contact tracing is required.
 - All members and guests are encouraged to register their attendance online to assist the church in ensuring all persons are accounted for in the event of an outbreak.
8. There will be hand sanitizer stations at key access points throughout the church and signage posted.

9. A "Tithe/Offering" box with a lock will be located just inside the sanctuary to facilitate the collection of tithes and offerings without the use of a plate/bag.
 - The "Tithe & Offerings" box will be opened following the last service of the day and those counting monies and preparing deposit shall follow standard practices with the exception that gloves shall be worn by those handling the offering.
10. On designated Sundays when Holy Communion is celebrated individual pre-packaged communion elements (i.e. wafer and cup of grape juice) shall be distributed to people in attendance by masked and gloved persons.
 - Those in the Siloam Springs area who are worshipping online may request communion element be brought to their home.
 - Requests must be made online prior to noon that day.
 - Social distancing, masks, and gloves shall be practiced by those distributing the elements to persons at home.
11. During Worship those leading worship will remain seated in the chancel area unless they have family attending that service and there is adequate room for them to sit with their household.
 - Vocalists shall be situated at least 12 feet from the nearest person seated in the pews.
 - All persons leading worship shall wear a mask when not leading in worship.
12. Congregational responsive prayers, readings, and liturgies will be minimized during this stage.
13. Though congregational singing is permitted during this stage, efforts will be made to encourage people to participate by singing at a low volume, using raised hands, clapping, and other means of non-verbal praise.
14. Chancel Choir shall not lead in live worship at this time.
 - Soloists and smaller ensembles may lead so long as the above guidelines (see #9) are followed.
 - Handbells are permitted to practice and lead in worship so long as masks are worn and at least 6 ft. of social distance is maintained.
15. Nursery care will not be provided during this stage.
 - Families are encouraged to bring items with them that assist in their child's wellbeing during worship.
16. All printed materials will be removed from the sanctuary pews.
 - During this stage hymnals, bibles, and offering envelopes will be removed from the sanctuary and safely stored in the Wesley Room.
 - Members and guests are encouraged to bring their own bibles during this stage.
 - Printed bulletins will not be utilized during this stage.

- Persons needing an offering envelope for their cash or check may request one from an usher.
 - Any unused envelopes or other printed items left in a pew following each service will be discarded and other items placed in “lost & found” in the Fellowship Hall.
17. Nametags for members and guests as always is optional.
- People may request their nametag from the nametag rack and then members and guests are asked to keep those with them and bring them each time they come to worship.
18. Coffee and other snacks will not be provided during this stage.
19. The Sanctuary, bathrooms, and other public areas that were used during Worship shall be sanitized after each service.
- Persons assisting with cleaning will be trained in the proper sanitization of the sanctuary, bathrooms, and other public areas.
20. Should a person who attended worship test positive for COVID-19 the church shall cease immediately in-person worship for a period of at least 14 days and state and local authorities shall be notified so that contact tracing may occur.
- All church staff will self-quarantine for 14 Days
 - Members and guests who were in attendance at that worship service will be encouraged to self-quarantine for 14 Days.

Small Group Gatherings

1. Sunday school classes, Connexion Groups, and other church-based small groups who wish to meet during this stage may petition the pastor and COVID-19 Response Task Force for permission to meet so long as a detailed written proposal detailing how each of the following guidelines will be addressed:
 - a. Time, Date, and Location of Meetings
 - b. Social Distancing of at least 6 ft. between each person is maintained.
 - c. Masks to be worn by all participants while on church property.
 - d. Self-serve food and beverages are prohibited on church property.
 - e. Sanitization of meeting space following group meeting.
 - f. Mitigation steps to be taken for church related groups not meeting on church property.
2. Outside groups and organizations are not permitted at this stage.

Church Building Use and Access by Staff and Non-Staff Persons

1. Except as otherwise scheduled and approved by the pastor, during this stage all church facilities shall remain closed during non-worship times to persons other than staff, building and maintenance sub-group members, and non-staff persons involved in the renovation project.
2. Church staff will continue to work a flexible on-campus schedule during this stage and work on-campus only when necessary or to facilitate planning as a staff.
3. When working on-campus staff will maintain social distancing with one another and will wear face masks when meeting in close quarters.
4. Staff will clean and sanitize their workspaces and the church office area each day.
5. All non-staff persons entering the church will be expected to wear a face mask.
6. All contractors entering the church office area or any other area of the church aside from the Old Church Building must wear a face mask.
7. During the old church building/ministry center renovation all contractors working on church premises are encouraged to wear face masks and to follow all CDC and state health department related guidelines for maintaining social distancing and assume all risk and liability associated with working in close quarters during this COVID-19 pandemic.

Adopted on June 9, 2020 by Action of Church Council and the Trustees