



*Dublin*

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ACCEPTANCE · GROWTH · GENEROSITY

## **Guidelines For Reintroducing Worship Services**

Approved by the Administrative Council of  
Dublin United Methodist Church  
and the New River District  
of the Holston Conference

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**The following is our plan to take faithful steps forward so that we can safely hold church activities in person. Our future steps and the lives of those around us depend on our collective behavior.**

1. Occupancy: A maximum of 55 people will be allowed in the Sanctuary, including children. Additionally, up to two people can be in the sound booth, and up to 8 people in the altar area of the Sanctuary.
2. Online Worship: Worship services will continue to be streamed and available online.
3. Face Masks: Facial masks will be required to enter the church. It is recommended by the pediatric physician community that no child 2 yrs. or less in age wear a mask. Face masks will be provided as needed. Worshipers are encouraged to bring their own.
4. Ushers: The first 6 weeks of reopening worship services we will use elected officers to serve as ushers.
5. Entrance and Exits: Entrances and exits will be restricted to the Sanctuary part of the building. For example: Sanctuary lobby doors are to be used for entrance only. Those with mobility issues can use the sanctuary lobby entrance also as an exit. All others will use room 107 for an exit and the door by the left side of altar area. Doors will be propped open before and after the service for touchless entry and exit.
6. Sanitation: High touched areas (door handles, etc.) will be cleaned during worship and in-between services. Sanitizing stations will be provided at entrances/exits. We also encourage worshipers to provide their own personal hand sanitizer.
7. No Shared Items: Traditionally shared and passed items such as hymnals, pew bibles, church provided children's books, bulletins, offering plates, attendance pads, etc. will be removed. Drop boxes for offerings will be placed at designated entrance and exit doors and digital giving will be encouraged. In person Holy Communion is currently postponed.
8. Singing and Worship Leadership: Congregational singing will be restricted. Appropriately socially distanced soloist or small group of 2-3 may sing from the altar area. Microphones and stands will be sanitized and not passed between users. Leaders in worship services will not be required to wear a mask while exercising their responsibilities. They will wear a mask at other times.
9. Seating: We will practice social distancing in our seating. Families who have been spending time together during the stay at home order can sit together during worship. Children are to remain with an adult during services. They will not come forward for "Children's Time."
10. Pre-Registering Attendance: Pre-registration will be required to attend worship, and provisions will be made for a small number of "walk-ins" and guests. Seats will be held for those who registered until 5 minutes following the start of the service, after which the seats will be released to any walk-ins on a first-come first-serve basis. Individuals may use an online tool (TBA), email, or call the church office. An usher will log attendance of those who attended (for contact tracing purposes if needed).
11. Who Should Attend: All people are welcomed to attend worship. However, following CDC guidelines and those of the Holston Conference, persons in the vulnerable category of 65 or older, or have significant high risk conditions (i.e. diabetes, heart problems, respiratory issues, etc.), or those who live with persons who fit into this category, are encouraged to remain at home and take advantage of online worship. Any person who is sick or running a fever should also remain at home.

12. Signage: Signage concerning public health reminders and this policy will be posted in high-visibility locations.
13. Restroom: Available restrooms will be limited. The restroom connected to room 107 will be available as needed. We are limiting access to the building beyond the sanctuary.
14. Hospitality: When greeting friends and guests please refrain from physical contact such as hugging, handshakes, fist bumps, and elbow taps. No drinks or snacks will be provided by the church.

## **Grievance Procedure For Noncompliance**

1. If a worshiper refuses to follow these guidelines, they will be asked to not enter the sanctuary and participate online. If they insist on entering, the pastor will intervene by stopping the service.
2. Following a non-compliance interaction, and within 24-72 hours of this interaction, a minister/church leader will make contact with the individual, hear their concerns, and explain the worshiping guidelines.
3. If there is still no resolution, the leader/pastor will offer prayer and encourage an additional conversation the following week.
4. If the person who refuses to follow these guidelines does not feel they are being heard or understood, they may contact the District Superintendent of the New River District for further resolution and intervention.

## **Requirements For Other Activities**

1. Mission Trips: Local mission trips may occur as long as they adhere to proper sanitation and social distancing.
2. In Person Small Groups: Small groups may meet in the church as long as they adhere to these guidelines.

## **Creation Of An Intervention Team**

The focus of this team will be to humbly address issues that arise during worship service. For example: to help soothe a person who becomes emotionally distraught in worship, to address a person who is noncompliant with worship safety guidelines, to assist a person who is erratic or speaking out, etc. This trained group of team members would address the situation in such a way that the integrity of worship could continue and the needs and dignity of the person could be met. This team helps alleviate the minister(s) from stopping the service to attend to a situation.

## **Communication Plan**

1. Guidelines will be distributed in our newsletter and online, along with a timeline for our first worship services.
2. We will produce a “walk through video” of what the new normal will look like and make it widely available.
3. Leadership will also make contact with people in our congregation that will likely have challenges understanding or reading these guidelines.

## **Our Future Steps**

1. These guidelines will be reviewed regularly and revised based on updated information received from the Holston conference and state authorities.
2. Revisions and new guidelines will be communicated as they become available.

3. We will continue developing this plan until we can be fully opened per our governmental guidelines and provisions provided by the Holston Conference.
4. As conditions change, these plans may be entirely lifted or become more restrictive without prior notice.