



COVID-19 Resumption of Public Worship Guidelines

The One Board (Church Council) has been meeting weekly by video conference throughout the weeks of COVID-19 closures. We have been praying, learning, studying and discerning information from a variety of sources, including our Bishop Scott Jones. Determining when to return to in person worship has not been an easy decision. We do want to resume in person service but we all must acknowledge that there is a risk of spreading the virus. It is absolutely imperative to follow the requirements below. The majority of our congregation is in the higher risk category and we must do everything to protect all that attend. In order to maintain safe distancing, social interaction must be avoided. In other words, no hugging, shaking hands, congregating in the FLC or hallways.

These are the plans for Phase One of our return to public worship. Online worship will continue for those who are unable to attend in-person. While we are all anxious to get back together, everyone must understand that this will be a group service but not a social activity. For Phase One, the plan is to meet in the Family Life Center. This area provides appropriate space, good access to restrooms, and does not require the using the elevator to enter the worship area. If we move beyond Phase One, using other areas of the campus will be evaluated.

Phase One

Tentatively, beginning **Sunday, August 30, 2020**, First UMC Orange will resume in-person worship. This will be a worship service much like what we have been doing online.

We will continue to monitor the health guidelines and situation within our community and consider ourselves in “Disaster Mode,” as we were following Hurricane Ike in 2008.

- **Self-screen** before attending and do not attend if you feel you have respiratory problems, don't feel well, or have a fever.
- **One worship service at 10 am** in the Family Life Center. The style will be blended and similar to what we have presented online with a shorter time format. There will not be greeting your neighbor, children's sermon, or passing the plates for offerings.
- **Facial Coverings Required. Masks will be required to enter the building and participate in the service. No Exceptions. Please bring your own mask.** We will have a limited supply, should you forget yours.
- **Hand Sanitizer** will be available in the entrance.
- **Chairs** will be spread out in clusters with 6 feet in-between. The FLC has been set up. With proper

safe distancing, the building can accommodate between 95-100 people. Ushers/Greeters will direct people to sets of chairs. Currently the chairs are set up in pairs. If your immediate family needs more seating, ask the usher and they will be able to reposition some chairs to accommodate your family. If you are a single, do not join groups which are not your immediate family.

- We will not use bulletins or connect cards. The order of worship will be displayed on our screen.
- **Baskets** will be placed near the entrance to the worship space for your offering, as you arrive or as you leave. We continue to recommend online or electronic giving through your financial institution.
- **Holy Communion** will be shared with the utmost care by adhering to CDC and denominational guidelines. Ushers will direct rows to the communion station. Tape has been placed on the floors to be sure everyone can maintain proper spacing. Masked and Gloved servers will place a small piece of bread in your hand and will ask you to pick one of the individual communion cups.
- No Nursery will be available.
- Sunday School Classes will not meet.
- There will be no gatherings prior to worship or following.
- The Welcome Center will not be open. The Education building will be kept locked. Feel free to bring your own coffee in a container from home.
- Worship will be dismissed in an orderly fashion to allow distance between congregants.

We have taken a cautious and slow re-entry to gathering together. We believe that it provides the most protection for everyone. Some may see these guidelines as hardships and restrictive, but they are designed for the greater good of all of our people. These are challenging times and small acts of kindness and generosity are powerful witnesses to the Love of God through Jesus Christ and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit in our Christian community and in our lives.

Grace and Peace,

Greg DeFrates, One Board, Chair

Rev. Lani Rousseau, Pastor