



Hello Church!

May the peace of Christ be with you.

I write today on behalf of the Myers Memorial United Methodist Church (MMUMC) Reopening Committee. We have had numerous Zoom meetings in which there have been discussions and recommendations, all prayerfully considered, which were sent to our Church Council.

Bishop Leeland, who presides over the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church (WNCCUMC), and his Cabinet have continually advised “to be mindful of our scriptural and Wesleyan call to ‘love others’ and ‘do no harm’”. To this end, he has encouraged the churches of the WNCCUMC to follow guidelines of the CDC as well as state and local officials. Our Church Council agreed that our church would follow the recommendations of Bishop Leeland.

On September 4, 2020, after Governor Cooper’s announcement of “Safer at Home, Phase 2.5”, Bishop Leeland sent out the following message: *With appropriate safety precautions, smaller groups may choose to worship indoors. We recommend that if you choose to hold indoor worship, you follow Governor Cooper's restriction of no more than 25 persons and follow the safety protocols. You agree to accept the liability for doing otherwise.*

The MMUMC reopening committee recommends that we do not yet begin indoor worship. Some of the considerations are:

1. The actual number of congregation members would be limited to twelve people in addition to worship leaders, technical support, and ushers to maintain 25 persons indoors.
2. Logistics and volunteers needed to clean and sanitized after worship will need to be recruited
3. Volunteer training for ushers and cleaning needs to be developed and implemented
4. An equitable process needs to be developed and implemented for those who desire to worship in-person.

While we don’t think indoor worship at Myers Memorial UMC is achievable right now, there are many other opportunities being planned and being considered. We continue to recommend and encourage outdoor groups to meet with social distancing and masks – there are several areas which can be used. Some rooms within the church can also be used following approved guidelines. It is our hope to plan a “day of prayer” where the sanctuary could be used for persons to come in and pray if there seems to be an interest. Outdoor worship on Wednesday evening is also

being considered for the fall. The children are going to begin having Sunday school after church.

There is much going on and places where volunteers are needed. If you have ideas or wish to volunteer for something, please let us know. If we all work together, amazing things can happen for the glory of God. Remember, I am the church; you are the church; we are the church together!

Thank you for your flexibility and patience. We are still learning as we go and we ask for your continued grace as we learn together. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact any of us on the Reopening Committee or send a card in the mail to the church with suggestions, volunteering options, or just to let the staff know you appreciate the job they are doing. And as always, you can attend Church Council to be a part of the ongoing conversation.

This pandemic has been a new experience for all of us but if we work together, we can be the hands and feet of Christ to our part of the world and beyond. Please continue to keep our church family, the Church worldwide, and our nation in your prayers.

Blessings in Christ,

Judy Fritzsche

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