

Myers Memorial United Methodist Church

~ **Indoor Worship Guidelines** ~

approved October 25, 2020

The safety of all our members and guests is our overriding priority. As the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic continues we are monitoring the situation closely and following the guidance from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, local health authorities, and the directions given to us by the Bishop of the Western North Carolina Annual Conference. In order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus and reduce the potential risk of exposure at Myers Memorial UMC (MMUMC), we are asking that all participants covenant to the following before coming to our campus for an indoor worship service. *All of this is subject to change based on disease prevalence in our area.*

- Indoor worship services have been approved by the Church Council for 50 participants/worshippers seated in the congregation per service to allow for social distancing in the sanctuary. This leaves 15 participants for worship staff (worship guides, worship leaders, and technology persons). The Myers Memorial UMC Sanctuary allows for 65 people socially distanced.
- Worship services will last 40-45 minutes. This does not include entrance and exit times.
- All Sanctuary pews have been taped off and seating locations are restricted to a 6ft x 6ft area.
- In-person worship attendance will be scheduled on a first come/first serve basis using the online program "Sign-Up Genius". Sign ups will take place the week prior to the worship service.
- Worshippers who did not sign up in advance will be given a seat in the Narthex until all who signed up have been seated. Then they may be seated in the Sanctuary until at capacity and then until the Narthex is at capacity.
- The proper wearing of face coverings are required at all times for all persons over 3 years of age while on church property.
- Children are more than welcome in worship yet no childcare will be provided.
- Worshippers are asked to enter via the front doors of the sanctuary building and follow the Worship Guides' directions. The Narthex shall not be used for congregating or visiting before or after worship.
- An offering plate will be placed in the Narthex for tithes and offerings.
- In-person worshippers may speak liturgies and prayers but will be asked not to join in the singing of hymns at this time.
- In-person worshippers will be escorted to their seats by a worship guide. In-person worshippers will be seated from the front to back of the sanctuary. Worshippers are asked to remain seated. Worshippers will be escorted out of the sanctuary by worship guides one row at a time at the conclusion of worship.

- Worship guides will provide worshippers with verbal guidelines such as silencing all devices, proper wearing of masks, using restrooms in emergencies only, refraining from singing, inviting them to speak the liturgy and other information to help worshippers feel more comfortable with the new procedures.
- There will be a sign-in sheet present in the narthex that Worship Guides will maintain as a form of attendance taking for contact tracing purposes.
- Worship Guides and Technology Teams are asked to serve at both services on a given Sunday.
- Alice Sweazy, in partnership with the Worship Reopening Committee, holds responsibility for scheduling and recruiting volunteers, worship guides and cleanup crews.
- Worship leadership will remain in the chancel area during worship and will remain masked unless speaking from a safe distance in relationship to the congregation.
- Any choral ensembles will sing, while masked and properly distanced, from the Choir Loft.
- A Worship Guide will take a photo at each service from the chancel area to provide a picture of seating for the purpose of contact tracing.
- Disinfecting will take place after each service. It is not necessary to clean and disinfect after each service (only in a time of extreme soiling). Quat-Stat 5 Disinfectant solution has been purchased and will be used to disinfect the Sanctuary after each use. Proper training will be provided before use by volunteers. It will be necessary for the sanctuary to remain empty between worship services so that the chemical may work.
- Volunteers/Worship Guides will be pre-scheduled to ensure cleaning of all pew surfaces, door handles and bathrooms at the conclusion of each worship service.
- All participants in church activities must adhere to all COVID-19 related questions asked and must adhere to the following affirming that:
 - During the last 14 days, the individual has not had and is not presently experiencing any of the following symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, sore throat, chills, new loss of taste or smell, new onset of head or muscle ache, nausea, diarrhea or vomiting.
 - In the past 14 days, the individual has not been in close proximity to someone experiencing the above symptoms or has not been around someone who is under investigation for or tested positive for COVID19.

During October, the Reopening committee, Worship committee, and Church Council practiced and adapted the policies to be practical and safe. We will continue to adjust as needed while adhering to safety guidelines as presented by the WNC Conference, The State of North Carolina and local health officials.

We ask all persons to remember the 3 W's (Wash Your Hands, Wear a Face Covering, Wait 6 Feet) to keep our church family and community safe as we continue to Do No Harm.