

In-Person Worship Guidelines

As we prepare to begin worshipping indoors on Sunday October 11, there are a number of guidelines that have been put in place in order to assure safe and meaningful in-person worship. Drawing on information from the ELCA, our ecumenical partners, the CDC, the WHO, the state of Pennsylvania, the National Association of Teachers of Singing and the American Choral Directors Association, as well as other sources, our reopening committee, which is comprised of church leadership and members of the wider Emmanuel's community, have identified procedures that we feel will allow us to safely resume worship in our building.

We will be alternating between worshipping in the Sanctuary or in Fellowship Hall - Oct. 11 in the Sanctuary, Oct. 18 in Fellowship Hall, etc.

At the outset we want to be clear that, at this time, whether we worship in our traditional sanctuary or in our contemporary worship area the service will be different from what you experienced pre-COVID. It will closely follow the format of the outdoor services we have held since July which are spoken, limited to approximately 30 minutes and there is no singing. All hymnals, Bibles, and other materials have been removed from the sanctuary.

- We are following Pennsylvania guidelines and we are also set up to maintain 6 feet between what have, in some circles, become known as “pandemic pods” which are basically household units. **This further reduces the number of people we can accommodate and it means that seating will be quite limited and assigned.** When we are in the Sanctuary no one will be allowed in the balcony.
- **EVERYONE MUST CALL the Church office before 3:00 pm on the Thursday before the service to reserve a seat.** When calling please be prepared to let us know the number of people who will attending with you in order for us to determine how to arrange seating. Each week preference will be given to those who have not previously or recently attended a service. In the event that we do have additional space others will be allowed to attend, but **be advised should you arrive unannounced on a Sunday morning and we are at capacity you will not be allowed entry.**
- Everyone except children under 2 will be required to wear a face covering at all times. This includes entering and exiting the building. If you are not able to wear a mask please use a face shield. If you are not comfortable with either of those options please continue to stream one of our online services at home. Masks may be removed for a brief time when eating and drinking the communion elements. Once we have partaken you must resume wearing your mask. Anyone removing their mask during the service will be asked to leave.
- Please plan to arrive early. When we are in the Sanctuary, all entry will be through the main doors facing Valley View Drive. When we are in the Fellowship Hall entry will be through the doors at the back of the room. Upon arrival you will be greeted by volunteers who will check that you are on the list. They will ask basic health questions, take your temperature with a touchless thermometer, and direct you to a touchless hand sanitizing station before entering the worship area. We will place markers on the sidewalk to make sure we keep 6 feet of distance between groups. If your temperature is above 100.3 degrees or your answers to the health questions indicate possible illness or exposure to COVID-19 you will be asked to return home.
- A volunteer will direct you to your assigned seat. Please remain in your seat unless an usher directs you to move. At the conclusion of the service ushers will dismiss people from back to front. When you are dismissed move directly outside and away from the doors. There will not be any receiving lines. Please do not congregate in the gathering areas and go directly to your vehicle limiting conversation.
- Restrooms will be available for emergency use only and everyone except those participating in the service must remain on the level of the building in which the worship service is being held.
- All windows and doors will be open throughout the service to help with airflow. Please dress accordingly.
- **It is vital that we have correct contact information for everyone attending.** If after attending a service you receive a positive COVID-19 test result or think that you may have been exposed to the virus please contact a public health official with the date of the service you attended so that contact tracing services can request the information from the church.

If we all pull together following what we believe to be prudent and reasonable guidelines we will be able to continue to come together indoors moving forward.