

Re-starting In-Person Worship at MUMC, as of May 23, 2021

As we enter into a new phase of worship, with in-person Sunday morning worship resuming, we all need to recognize that we are in a transition and not everyone is at the same place within that transition. We will continue to focus on Doing No Harm as part of loving our neighbors, and ensuring that our church is a place where love is shared, but disease is not spread. To that end, we will look to our regional denominational guidelines, our national CDC guidelines, our local government guidelines, and the wisdom of our congregation. Movement towards “normalcy” will have potential to happen when all three sources of outside influence allow that change (UMC District, CDC, local government), but even then, only if our church body feels comfortable with that change.”

Setting our expectations:

- Church will look and feel different for a while
- About masks: While there are new state and CDC guidelines on mask wearing for those who are vaccinated, we also anticipate that there will be unvaccinated people, as well as immunocompromised and otherwise at risk people with us, and so, for now, we will wear masks to be as welcoming and safe as possible for all people (also, this is still required by our denomination)
- About singing: For now there will not be any live singing (whether group or solo performance) due to guidance from the United Methodist Church, and the ongoing heightened risk which comes from the aerosol nature of singing.
- Please be aware that though we are a small group at MUMC, we are very diverse, and people are each dealing with the reality of COVID in their own way. We will each have very different levels of comfort, even regarding being in the same space together
- We will grow into this over time. Together we will figure out which things work and those that don't, week by week.
- We are going to need a lot of grace for each other. We are a community, and we face each other with love and respect, regardless of where we each are in our comfort levels surrounding all of this.
- **Nonetheless, praise God! that for those who feel ready, we can be together again.**

Requirements/restrictions

- Masks worn at all times by all participants over age 2.
- 6' physical distancing between all households.
- Less than 50 attendees (not a problem for us 😊)
- No Congregational singing, or live performance singing.
- Sunday service limited in length to no more than one hour
- Communion will not be served in person
- Fellowship time before and after the service will be outdoors only. If on church property: masks required, 6' between households.
- No food or drinks consumed in the church or on church grounds
- Offering will be arranged in a way that does not include passing of the offering plate

Other precautions and logistics:

- Door greeter to do temperature scan, ensure that masks are worn, sign in for contact tracing, and to show rules to newcomers
- We will have monitors who help ensure that rules are being followed

A typical service at MUMC, during this season, will include:

- Liturgy surrounding a theme
- Bible readings
- Praying together, including sharing joys and concerns
- Introduction of a topic, or brief message related to the Bible Readings
- Group discussion time or activity
- We will continue online services on YouTube for the foreseeable future, so that everyone in our community has a way to access our time of worship together.
- Bible study will continue online for the foreseeable future.

Sunday morning schedule will be as follows:

7:30am – Online service will be posted on YouTube and on the church website, and congregation will be notified via email.

9:00am – Adult Bible Study will continue on Zoom, at the same link as always. Steve Miller will lead. The study will be completed by 10am.

10:30am – In-person community and fellowship time, at MUMC. Services will be less than 1 hour long for the foreseeable future.

For reference, follow this link to a PDF with current guidelines as provided by the Greater Northwest United Methodist Church: <https://greaternw.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Stepping-Forward-FINAL.pdf>