

RECOMMENDATION FOR RE-OPENING

Approved April 11, 2021

In-Person Worship

All of us are anxious to return to normal and put the pandemic in the past. All of us are anxious to return to in-person worship. We have missed community in our sacred space. However, we must do so in a way that is safe and wise. The threat of COVID is still very real and threatening. Do not take it lightly. Be vigilante and safe!

None of us have experience in navigating a pandemic. So, in prayer and humility we will incorporate guidance from health professionals into our plan. This means that in-person worship will be different than pre-pandemic in-person worship. We ask for your cooperation with the guidelines and requirements below. Your cooperation will make for a smooth and safe return. We need your help!

As we return to in-person worship we may have to or want to make adjustments as we go. All of must be flexible. Please have patience and forbearance with the leaders of the church and with each other. Those who attend in-person worship will be asked to follow certain guidelines. This is for the mutual health and safety of all present. We will journey together, trusting in the Holy Spirit, learning and growing in faith.

Target Date – May 23, 2021 (Pentecost)

This will allow a few more weeks to judge the effect of vaccines on the COVID cases in our area. It will also allow time to judge whether the feared fourth wave occurs. This also gives us several weeks to publicize the new processes and address expectations.

- Given average worship attendance before the pandemic, there will be no limit in attendance.
- Masks will be required while inside the building at all times. Masks will be supplied for those who arrive without a mask. The only exception will be those speaking during the service and young children. The CDC recommends that children over the age of two wear masks around people not of their household.
- Signs will be placed throughout the church to remind people to keep the masks on, wash hands and practice social distance.
- Social distancing must be maintained while in the building.
- Everyone will be asked to check-in upon arrival for contact tracing purposes. Therefore, everyone will enter the building via the south parking lot entrance. People will be encouraged to arrive early. A volunteer will be present to mark attendance.
- The service will be live-streamed via Facebook. People are encouraged to watch on-line if they have a fever, they are not feeling well, they are exhibiting symptoms, or are uncomfortable attending in-person worship. The service will be directed towards both those viewing remotely and those in-person.
- The doors in the sanctuary will remain open during the worship service.

- Initially, there will be no nursery.
- The sanctuary will be reconfigured to allow for social distancing. Families and couple may sit together. Each family/group/single will need to be socially distanced.
- Hymnals and bibles will be removed from the sanctuary. People may bring their own bible.
- Bulletins will be available on a table at the entrance to the sanctuary. They are to be disposed in the recycling bin upon leaving or taken home.
- Responsive readings/prayers/singing may be done softly with masks in place.
- Hymns and choral anthem will continue to be taped.
- Offering plates will be at the entrance to the sanctuary. They will not be passed during the service.
- Everyone is asked to use no-contact forms of greeting and stay in place during the service. This will include the Passing of the Peace.
- There will be no formal fellowship inside the church. Fellowship is encouraged outside. Tables and chairs will be located throughout the hallway between the building entrance and the sanctuary entrance for those who arrive early. There will be no coffee service.
- When communion is celebrated, individual communion elements will be provided at the entrance of the sanctuary. People are requested to dispose of the cups and packaging in the garbage as they leave.
- Dismissal will be aisle by aisle. People will have the option to leave via the southwest door in the sanctuary, the east facing doors in the hallway or the south parking lot doors.
- Funerals, memorials, and weddings will follow the above criteria.
- Iglesia Presbiteriana Emmanuel will be requested to follow the above guidelines for their worship in the Fellowship Hall.
- Should community conditions warrant or should Dallas County return to a Red level of concern, worship will return to remote only.

Sunday School Classes

- Sunday School classes will continue to meet remotely.
- Iglesia Emmanuel will be contacted to discuss a timetable for children's church.

Other

- The building will remain closed to outside groups.
- Office will reopen June 1. However, the option to work at home will remain.