

## **FPC Worship Protocols**

(Updates incorporated September 22, 2020 at 5:00 pm)

Approved by the Coronavirus Task Force,

Worship & Music Committee, and by FPC's Session at the September 15 Session meeting.

These procedures will be communicated to the congregation and will be instituted once we return to in-person worship.

The following protocols are temporary, are tailored to protect everyone, and must be observed by all. Those who are uncomfortable with the protocols may still participate in worship online.

There will be two worship services each Sunday, one at 10:00 am in the sanctuary and the other at 5:30 pm in the parking lot.

Protocols for both the indoor and outdoor worship services: (Items 1 & 2 will be printed at the top of each bulletin)

1. **Wearing masks or cloth face coverings is required upon entering the worship space and throughout the worship service, except for children under the age of 5. Masks must cover the nose and mouth.**
2. **Physical distancing of at least six feet should be observed at all times. There will not be a greeting time during the service, but you may nod, wave, or virtually hug one another. Please, no physical touching.**
3. Individuals experiencing upper respiratory symptoms (cough, sore throat, congestion, sinus pressure), shortness of breath, fever, loss of taste or smell, or any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (or other illness) should stay home and not come to church services in person. It is requested that all members of the family stay home if there is someone in your household experiencing any of these symptoms. In addition, it is suggested that those who have underlying health conditions as listed by the CDC in the website listed at the end of this paragraph, especially those over the age of 65, and those caring for these higher risk individuals at home, should consider remaining at home. We would much prefer that this not be the case, but there are just too many uncertainties concerning this novel virus to take unnecessary risks. Further information is available on the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/groups-at-higher-risk.html#people-aged-65%20years-and-older>.
4. On each communion Sunday, worshipers will pick up a prefilled communion kit upon entering. The kits will include a sealable plastic bag and wipe. Worshipers are asked to place used items in the bag, seal it, and dispose of it in receptacles provided at the exits.

Additional notes for both the indoor and outdoor worship services:

1. Masks will be provided for worshipers who do not have their own.
2. The 10 am worship services will continue to be livestreamed and recorded for those who are unable or who do not wish to attend in-person worship.
3. Once in-person worship resumes, the virtual celebration of communion will continue for those worshipping from home.
4. In the communication sent to the congregation, it will be emphasized that the wearing of masks and the use of hand sanitizer upon entering the church are how we demonstrate our care for and consideration of each other.

5. Once approved, these protocols will be published on the church's homepage and on Facebook.
6. There will be no greeters. Ushers will be responsible for ensuring the availability of masks for those who need them, as well as hand sanitizer, bulletins, and communion kits.

Protocols specific to the 10 am indoor worship service:

1. **The use of hand sanitizer is required upon entering the church.**
2. Those wishing to attend in-person worship must sign up no later than noon the Friday prior to Sunday Worship. Sign-ups will be done online using Signup Genius or by contacting the church office. The Signup Genius sign-up link will be in our weekly e-mail and on the church website. Each worship service can accommodate 50 parties, 48 of which will be available to the congregation. There will be room to accommodate two parties of visitors. Once a worship service has reached its maximum attendance, sign-up will close. There will be no waiting list. There will be a sign-in station at the Gregory Street main entrance with a list of those who signed up for that worship service. Worshipers are expected to honor their reservation. Additional visitors beyond the number that can be accommodated who arrive at the time of worship will only be permitted to attend the service if space allows. Otherwise they will be provided with information about how to reserve their place for the following Sunday.
3. Only the front doors of the church on Gregory St. will be used for entry and exit.
4. Upon entering the Sanctuary, worshipers shall proceed directly to their seats without congregating. Worshipers will sit in the forward most pew available and fill the sanctuary in from the front to the back. Ushers will be available in the Sanctuary to indicate available seating and will make adjustments to maintain appropriate distance between parties larger than two people. At the end of the worship service, the ushers will dismiss worshipers by rows. Worshipers are expected to exit without congregating in the church building.
5. Seating will be designated with a sign-in form placed on the pew seat to ensure at least six feet of physical distance, with some pews roped off. Families may sit together without observing distancing.
6. The first several front pews on the lectern side will be reserved for families with children. The Nursery and Keeping Rooms will be available.
7. Upon being seated, each family or individual will sign in using the form provided. The form will be used for contact tracing, if necessary. Worshipers will place sign-in forms in the offering plates upon exiting the Sanctuary.
8. Worship bulletins will be available to pick up from tables in the Narthex immediately before entering the Sanctuary.
9. Only the bathrooms adjacent to the Parlor will be available for use. Bathrooms in the CDC will not be available.
10. All music will be instrumental, i.e., there will be no singing by the choir or congregation. A soloist will sing the Kyrie, Gloria Patri, and Doxology.
11. The offering will be called for immediately prior to the Benediction. Upon exiting the Sanctuary, worshipers will be able to place their offering in one of four plates placed at the back leading into the Narthex (one on each side of the central doors, and one at each side door).
12. At the conclusion of worship immediately after the Benediction, the pastors will exit the Sanctuary down the center aisle and proceed outside prior to the ushers dismissing each row.
13. The above protocols will be evaluated and revised, as necessary. These revisions will be communicated regularly to members in advance via email and traditional mail, as well as during worship services.