

ALL SAINTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Guidelines for Post-Quarantine Ministry

Introduction

The following guidelines describe how—not when—we will return to worship. We will take a phased approach, and this document only describes Phase One. Phase Two will be some sort of advance on Phase One, with additional ministries returning to normal. However, it is unclear at this time what the triggers for Phase Two will be or which ministries it will include.

The leadership of All Saints Presbyterian Church is fully committed to the public health and the health of our members. We also recognize that the calling God has placed upon the Church, the mission he has sent her into the world to accomplish, and the means by which he has ordained that she will accomplish that mission are set out in his Word and are inviolable. We do not expect the world to understand these things. Our task is to pursue obedience to God in our mission while also obeying the civil magistrate God has placed over us insofar as we can do so with a clear conscience. We believe the guidelines for faith-based organizations issued by the State of Tennessee on May 1, 2020 are wise, helpful, and consistent with our biblical and theological convictions. Our Phase One plan, outlined below, is in complete and voluntary alignment with those guidelines.

In the plan we outline below, at times we encourage those who are high risk to remain at home. This is encouragement and not a command. This process is a matter of risk assessment and mitigation. We will do all we can to mitigate the risk and to counsel our members in assessing that risk. We will not, however, attempt to override our members' consciences. Those who evaluate the risk and choose to stay home should do so with clear consciences. Those who evaluate the risk and choose to attend gatherings of our public ministry should likewise do so with clear consciences. As you evaluate the risk, please consider not only your own health, but the health of those around you. We understand everyone is eager to return to worshiping in person. However, if you are sick, we do insist that you to stay home. This is not only in keeping with state and county guidelines, but also common sense. This is one way we “love our neighbors” well right now.

Despite our best efforts to provide a safe and clean environment in which to worship, please be aware that we cannot guarantee that our worship space will be free of any risk. Those who do choose to attend do so at their own risk.

Current Situation *(as of May 18, 2020)*

All in-person ministry is canceled. Key ministries have been moved online via Zoom. This includes a Sunday-morning livestream of Sunday School and Worship, a midweek livestream of Bible Study, and regular weekly livestreams of Shepherding Group meetings. The Session, Diaconate, and Staff have also been meeting virtually.

As of the writing and approval of this document, there are no active COVID-19 cases confirmed in our congregation, nor is anyone symptomatic. We had one confirmed case at the very beginning of the quarantine; that member has made a full recovery.

Phase One *(Commences at the discretion of the Session)*

1. **Sunday Morning Worship: In person and virtual**
 - a. **Who attends:** All are encouraged to attend in person unless they:
 - i. are high-risk
 - ii. live with someone who is high-risk
 - iii. have any symptoms of COVID-19 or another contagious illness

- iv. have a fever or answer “yes” to any of the screening questions below

According to the CDC, as of May 18, 2020, “High Risk” is defined as:

- People 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term-care facility

Also, people of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised
 - ~ Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune-weakening medications
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

- b. **Screening:** We will screen everyone upon arrival for worship using the questions below. The head of household or another adult in the household may answer for the entire household. We will screen temperatures at the door using a no-touch thermometer. Anyone with a temperature of or exceeding 100.5 (medically accepted definition of a fever using an oral or no-touch thermometer) should stay home and will be asked to return home if registering that temperature at the door. The same is true for anyone answering “yes” to any of the following questions:
- i. Have you been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
 - ii. Are you experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat?
 - iii. Have you had a fever in the last 48 hours?
 - iv. Have you had new loss of taste or smell?
 - v. Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?
- c. **Hygiene:** All attendees will be required to wash hands upon arrival and departure. Wearing gloves is permitted but does not excuse anyone from handwashing. Face masks are required for everyone age four years (48 months) and older. We can provide cloth masks if requested in advance but will be unable to do so at the door. Anyone involved in setup and breakdown, as well as screening and handing out orders of worship, must wear a mask and gloves and wash hands prior to work.
- d. **Spacing:** Families may sit together. Households must be separated from one another by 6 feet, at a minimum. At all times, from arrival to departure, all attendees should maintain at least 6 feet between themselves and anyone who does not live in their home.
- e. **Communion:** We will not observe Communion for the first couple of weeks of Phase One. Once the Session has had an opportunity to observe worship in our temporary space under the social distancing guidelines, it will make a decision about restoring Communion. Once Communion is restored, it will be under the following parameters: preparers must be gloved and masked and wash hands prior; bread will be served in cups to avoid hands spreading germs in the plate; the line will be spaced 6 feet apart by household; hand sanitizer will be provided in line, and its use will be required; partakers should keep their masks on until they return to their seats; elements will stay covered until the table is fenced, then left on the table rather than held by elders; the minister will conduct the reading from the pulpit rather than

in front of the table; congregants should return to their seats before eating and drinking and throw away their cups when the service ends. Those who wish to attend worship but are not comfortable with the risk associated with participating in Communion may abstain for the time being.

- f. **Post-worship cleaning:** Communion-ware will be washed in a dishwasher every week.
 - g. **Book table setup:** The book table will not be set up. There will be a small table upon which the offering box will be set. Gifts may be given here, by mail, or online.
 - h. **Orders of worship:** Orders of worship will be printed no less than three days prior to worship (by a volunteer who has washed hands and is wearing gloves and mask) and placed in a closed plastic bin where they will remain until distribution on Sunday. They will be distributed by hand at the door by someone who has washed their hands and is gloved and masked. Orders of worship should not be shared with anyone outside of household members. Those who are able to read the order of worship on a device such as an iPad should consider doing so rather than using the paper orders of worship.
2. **Sunday School:** Sunday school will continue to be hosted on Zoom and will move to Sunday evening at 6pm.
 3. **Children's Ministry:** Will not resume.
 4. **Weekly Bible study:** Will continue via Zoom, as scheduled.
 5. **Weekly Shepherding Groups:** Will continue via Zoom.

Phase Two

It is unclear whether or not Phase Two will include the restoration of all remaining ministries and a relaxing of social distancing guidelines or if those changes will be components of Phase Three.

All of the ministries that remain to be restored to normal in Phase One will be evaluated on a regular and consistent basis by the Session and may be restored at any time, based on a combination of government guidelines and the discretion of our Session.