

Harrison First United Methodist Church Protocols for COVID-19 Restart

Harrison First United Methodist Church will resume in-person worship effective July 12, 2020. Per the guidance received from state health officials, the Bishop and Cabinet of the Arkansas Area, and the FUMC relaunch team, we propose the following guidelines for reopening:

PHASE I

WORSHIP GUIDELINES

The Sanctuary and Family Life Center will serve as the two primary venues for worship, observing a 50-person maximum attendance. Signage is prominently posted at each entrance highlighting safe social distancing and expectations for each person in attendance:

- If a worshiper has symptoms, (fever, cough, contact with a person testing positive) PLEASE STAY HOME. Observe a 14-day self-quarantine. We will continue to offer live-streaming and recorded options for Sunday morning services and various small groups.
- If a worshiper develops symptoms, or becomes aware of a test-positive contact, please let the church know immediately so we can begin the process of contact tracing.
- Sunday schedule for worship will be 8:30 Ignite service and 10:45 Sanctuary service. Thursday 6:00 p.m. Celebrate Recovery service will be held in the Family Life Center.
- Sanitizing stations will be stocked at each entrance, including hand sanitizer and disposable masks.
- Worshipers will be required to wear masks and sit as family groups with a minimum of 6 feet of space between them. In the FLC, this will be done by observing pods of chairs; in the sanctuary, taped-off areas will be observed. Anyone who refuses to wear a mask will not be allowed to join in-person gatherings.
- Congregational singing will be discouraged, and worshipers will be instructed to put on masks before any song or spoken liturgy.
- All worship leaders and musicians may take off their masks while leading worship; all worship leaders must remain 12 feet apart.
- Worshipers are to refrain from handshakes and hugs inside the building.
- In place of connection pads/registration pads, we will use connection cards. The connection cards will be placed in the seat of each pod/seating area for each family group to fill out and place in the offering boxes placed at each entrance. In the event that we have to engage in contact tracing, this will help us to identify who may have been exposed.

We will not offer nursery care during services, and all in-person Sunday School classes will remain suspended until further notice. We will offer Sunday School-to-go bags containing discussion questions surrounding that week's sermon for worshipers to take home and use during their lunch or dinner hour.

Communion

In order to provide the most sanitary means of communion, we will use pre-packaged communion cup/wafers, handed out to individuals by servers wearing masks and gloves. The individual packages are then only touched by the person receiving it, and they can dispose of

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their container when done. Of course, it is up to each individual to decide whether or not to receive communion.

Greeters

In order to provide the most sanitary means of greeting, greeters stationed at each entrance will be encouraged to do the following:

1. Greeters must wear PPE (gloves and mask) while attending to their duties.
2. If at all possible, prop doors open before and after services to minimize communal surface contact with door hardware.
3. Keep sanitizing wipes handy to clean door hardware before and after greeting time
4. Refrain from any physical contact with those whom you greet.
5. We will not distribute bulletins or any other material. All information will be available via social media and website. An announcement sheet will be available for individuals to pick up as they so choose.

Ushers/Offering

Due to the inherent risk of passing an offering plate/basket through the congregation, we will encourage worshipers to use electronic means of giving, and if they so choose, deposit their offering in the locked offering boxes affixed to the wall at each entry point. There are three boxes in the main sanctuary, and two boxes in the Family Life Center. Persons responsible for collecting the offering will be given the key to the lock boxes and required to wear gloves to remove offering and connection cards and deposit them in the office safe. Counters will be required to wear gloves and masks during their duties.

Coffee/hospitality stations

Until further notice we will not offer the hospitality table with self-serve coffee, snacks or meals. We can encourage people to bring their own from home. This includes Sunday school classes. Anything where there is a communally-touched surface (pump handle, coffee stir sticks, coffee pot handle, serving utensils) must be avoided.

Each worship venue will be cleaned and sanitized following use, and midweek usage will be limited to better control the environment.

YOUTH MINISTRY

- Face coverings will be required for youth and adults; we will supply one to those who arrive without one. Anyone who refuses to wear a mask will not be allowed to join in-person gatherings.
- All staff, volunteers, and youth should maintain 6 feet physical distance from all present whether gatherings are indoors or outdoors. Those who live in the same household can be considered a “family unit” and can be within 6 feet of one another but must wear a face covering at all times.
- When possible, youth gatherings will be held outdoors.
- When youth events are held indoors, they should be limited in duration since contracting COVID-19 involves both distance from infected persons and duration of exposure.

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- Whether indoors or outdoors, adequate space for physically distancing must be accounted for as recommended by the CDC.
- Youth trips, outings and missions should not involve communal travel.
- Attendance will be taken at all youth gatherings including youth and adults in attendance in case COVID-19 tracing needs to occur.
- Food should not be offered in a communal setting. It is recommended that youth bring their own food to gatherings when necessary.
- While youth appear to be less vulnerable than other age groups, some are vulnerable and some are in regular contact with someone who is vulnerable. It is vital to provide ministry opportunities for those who are not able or are not comfortable attending in person.

ADMINISTRATIVE MEETINGS

Monthly administrative meetings will commence in-person, but will also offer a ZOOM platform for those who do not wish to assume the risk of in-person meetings. All meetings will be held in the Fellowship Hall, adhering to the 6-foot rule and requiring necessary PPE's. After each use of the space, it will be cleaned and sanitized.

PAID STAFF

1. You may only report to work if you are symptom-free; we reserve the right to do a temperature test on all staff.
2. All staff in direct contact with anyone must use contact precautions (wash hands, masks covering nose and mouth, gloves). We will provide gloves, masks, and sanitizing wipes/cleaning supplies.
3. After each use of space, clean and sanitize all touched surfaces.
4. If a staff person is exposed to a test-positive person, they must inform their supervisor immediately so we can begin contact tracing.

PHASE II – Date TBD

SUNDAY SCHOOL / SMALL GROUPS / NURSERY CARE

In order to adhere to the guidelines established by our state, local and church leaders, small groups may begin meeting during Phase II, but we strongly encourage maintaining 6 foot distances between family groups, wearing PPE's, and not sharing resources (Bibles, study books, etc.). Nursery care may be resumed on a limited basis, and children will need to be checked in using either a paper form or mobile platform.

PHASE III – date TBD

Upon recommendation of our state, local and denominational leaders, FUMC will return to full weekday and weekend schedule, with PPE's voluntary except for staff. Other changes (communion, offering, etc.) will be subject to review.