

**Sun Prairie United Methodist Church  
Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic Response  
Plan for Returning to In-Person Worship & Ministries  
As of August 30, 2020**

*“I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” –John 13: 34-35*

At the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church, we take the health and well-being of our congregation, staff and surrounding communities very seriously. Our response to this unprecedented global pandemic has been and will continue to be guided by John Wesley’s general rules to do no harm, do good, and continue to be the church as the body of Christ as we grow in our love of God and neighbor.

SPUMC will model the protection of public health and not put people at risk by increasing the spread of Covid-19 by reopening too soon. Returning to in-person worship and ministry gatherings in a church of our size will be done with care, caution and faithfulness as we work to protect each other, especially the more vulnerable populations to this virus. Until vaccines are available our return to worship and ministry will be limited.

Our SPUMC church staff and our Pandemic Management Team continue to monitor the Covid-19 updates and resources from our United Methodist Annual Conference leaders, local city, county, and state governments, the CDC, medical professionals, and local public health officials. Returning to full church participation will be based on these resources and the movement of the Covid-19 virus and possible other viruses such as the seasonal flu.

At SPUMC, we are blessed to have the technology to provide a quality worship experience online through our church website and also on our local KSUN television station. So, until our area of Wisconsin progresses through the phases of seeing a consistent downward trajectory of Covid-19 symptoms, positive test cases and hospitalizations; large gatherings and contact with others will be limited.

Community is at the core of worship. Congregational life in community includes the sacraments of Communion and Baptism, having choirs, children’s activities, fellowship times, meals, and small group gatherings and activities.

The following plan includes basics of personal responsibility and the guidance of returning to in-person worship and ministries based on our Wisconsin United Methodist Annual Conference, the Wisconsin Council of Churches and the Forward Dane Plan. Individual ministry areas such as children and youth ministries will also have guidelines for returning to those ministry areas and we will be looking to when area school districts return to classes and activities.

### **Core Values of Personal Responsibility to Prevent the Spread of Covid-19:**

- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Avoid touching your face.
- Stay home and isolated if you are not feeling well.
- Self-quarantine for 14 days if you have been knowingly exposed to Covid-19.
- Cover sneezes and coughs with a tissue or the bend of your elbow.
- Wear a cloth face mask when in public (mandated in Dane Co. as of 7/13/20). Face masks will be required in the church building until it is safe not to wear masks in public.
- Maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet when possible in public inside and outside.

SPUMC is following the Forward Dane Plan of when Dane County moves into each new phase, as well as updates and emergency orders from Public Health Madison & Dane County.

### **Phase 1 Began 5/26/20:**

Many businesses open at 25% capacity. Gatherings up to 10 indoors (private home); 50 outdoors (public venue); 50 outdoors with physical distancing.

- Worship will continue to be offered only online.
- Baptisms, weddings and funerals will be kept to less than 10 in attendance. Wearing masks and 6-foot distance maintained.
- Small groups continue to meet online.
- Church office functions limited to essential operations. Sanitizing of work stations and surfaces before and after use.
- Church ministry teams continue to meet online or in-person if less than 10 people, wearing masks and maintaining social distancing.
- High risk individuals (people over 65 and those with underlying conditions), whether staff or volunteers, should continue to be safer at home.

### **Phase 2 Began 6/15/20; Revised 7/2/20 & 7/13/20:**

Businesses, including churches, are limited to 50% capacity indoors, however, because of numerous restrictions to in-person worship, we will continue to offer worship only online.

- Everyone in Dane Co. age 5 and older is required to wear a face covering or mask when in any enclosed building where other people, except for members of the person's own household could be present.
- Small group and ministry team gatherings of 10-12 persons are allowed, wearing cloth face masks and 6-ft. social distance maintained. No food will be served; no singing; no supplies shared.
- Each ministry event or group gathering will be looked at individually to see how the event can happen in the safest possible way and whether that is in-person or virtually.
- Youth and children ministry gatherings and activities will continue to meet virtually or for specially arranged activities.

**Phase 3 Date TBD depending on metrics (Phase 3 will continue “Until widespread protections are available”):**

Many businesses open at 75% capacity. Gatherings up to 100 indoors/250 outdoors with physical distancing.

- When in-person worship is offered, it will include not more than 50 people in the sanctuary and 50 people in the Fellowship Hall. These number include volunteers and worship leaders. **Worship will be limited with NO:** Hymnals, pew Bibles, printed announcements, prayer cards, choirs, congregational singing, unison liturgy such as call to worship, prayer of confession or Lord’s Prayer; greeting time, Communion, children’s time, nurse care, children’s church, fellowship time. No greeters at the doors. Welcome Center host will greet people from behind the desk. Single-use bulletins if used. Limited use of restrooms.
- Elements of worship will be brought back as it is safe to do so based on public health recommendations.
- Worship seating will be blocked off in 6-ft. intervals with only people living together sitting with one another. When the service is over, people will be dismissed so that spacing can be maintained. Leaving the building immediately will be required.
- The number of worship services offered will be determined based on safety, staff and volunteer support available and ability to clean between services.
- On-line worship will continue.
- High risk individuals (people over 65 and those with underlying conditions), whether staff, volunteers, or program participants, should follow physician guidelines about going out in public.
- Small group and ministry team gatherings are allowed, wearing cloth face masks and 6-ft. social distance maintained. No food will be served; no singing; no supplies shared.
- Office functions will resume as normal, with attention to cleaning and limiting traffic in the church office areas.
- Staff and leaders of children and youth will decide about in-person gatherings modeled after the school districts and safety.
- Each ministry event or group gathering will continue to be looked at individually to see how the event can happen in the safest possible way and whether that is in-person or virtually.

**General Recommendations:**

- Each ministry event or group gathering will be looked at individually to see how the event can happen in the safest possible way and whether that is in-person or virtually.
- All small group gatherings or use of the church building will be arranged through the church office. Protocols and procedures will be explained to the group leader.
- Signs throughout building posted indicating Covid-19 symptoms and urging people to stay home/seek medical attention if they have symptoms.
- Traffic patterns will be established and marked showing one way into building and one way out.
- Maintain a good stock of tissues and hand sanitizer throughout the building; as well as soap and disposable paper towels for drying hands in restrooms and kitchen.
- Masks for covering the nose and mouth are required for anyone entering the church building until it is safe not to wear masks in public. Disposable and cloth masks available at church.
- Building cleaned regularly and between user groups or worship services, paying extra attention to high-touch surfaces.
- Temperature checks with no contact thermometer and screening questions will be used as people enter the church building for worship, ministry activities and volunteering.

*Do all the Good you can,  
By all the Means you can,  
In all the Ways you can,  
In all the Places you can,  
At all the Times you can,  
To all the People you can,  
As long as Ever you can.  
--John Wesley*

## Resources:

1. Wisconsin Council of Churches <https://www.wichurches.org/2020/04/23/returning-to-church/>
2. Dane Forward Plan 6/2/20 <https://publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus/forward-dane>
3. Centers for Disease Control <http://cdc.gov/coronavirus>
4. Wisconsin Department of Health <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>
5. Church Mutual Insurance <https://coronavirus.churchmutual.com/>
6. More information about the Coronavirus and current orders for the Madison area and Dane County can be found at <https://www.publichealthmdc.com/>

## Documents from the Wisconsin Annual Conference of the UMC:

7. <https://www.wisconsinumc.org/Resources/Documents/Coronavirus/WAC-COVID-19-Response.pdf> Wisconsin Annual Conference Response Guidelines to COVID-19
8. <https://www.wisconsinumc.org/Resources/Documents/Coronavirus/ReturningToWorshipPhasesGraphic-WAC.pdf> Wisconsin Annual Conference - Steps for Church Reopening Graphic
9. <https://www.wisconsinumc.org/Resources/Documents/Coronavirus/GoingToWorshipGraphic-WAC.pdf> Points for Entering the Sanctuary

## **Use of Classrooms & Meeting Areas**

- Classrooms and meeting areas, such as Conference Room, Library, Fellowship Hall, Chapel and Multipurpose Room will be used when small group, classes and ministry gatherings resume only if required 6-foot distance can be maintained between the number of people allowed; allowing for people living in the same household to sit together.
- Staff person leading the group or group leader will have a checklist for wiping down touched areas and equipment or supplies when finished.
- Gloves and supplies for wiping down space will be provided in each meeting space.
- Each meeting area will have a reversible sign on the door indicating whether the space is 'Sanitized' or 'Needs Attention.'
- SPUMC custodial staff will be cleaning all used areas and restrooms nightly.
- Church Trustees are purchasing a professional spray cleaning system that will be used by custodians and other trained persons.
- Once multiple Sunday worship services resume, either a cleaning service or volunteers will be trained to clean used spaces between worship services.
- Outside user groups will not be scheduled in the building until at least September with the exception of Blood Drives and U.S. Elections previously scheduled. Blood drive and election staff will follow their own cleaning and sanitizing protocols. In addition, SPUMC custodial staff will clean at the conclusion of those events.

## SANITIZING & CLEANING

- SPUMC custodial staff will be cleaning all used areas and restrooms nightly.
- When the Sun Prairie Nursery School resumes, they will be following their own cleaning and sanitizing protocols and will communicate and work in coordination with SPUMC staff and custodians as needed.
- Hand Washing & Sanitizing
  - Hand washing is another cornerstone in reducing the transmission of the virus. This practice helps to keep yourself and others safe, as it mitigates the risk of transmission of COVID-19.
  - Hand sanitizer is not a replacement for regular hand washing. After using common areas and shared tools or equipment, members/visitors should wash their hands thoroughly. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, after using the restroom, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
    - Hand sanitizer stations will be positioned throughout SPUMC. Personal hand sanitizer dispensers are encouraged to be used in addition to regular hand washing.
- Surface & Equipment
  - Sanitizing is required to keep surfaces and equipment clean and to reduce the potential spread of COVID-19.
  - Ministry leaders and volunteers may be asked to assist with sanitizing or cleaning surfaces and equipment they have used, wearing mask and gloves.
  - SPUMC will designate volunteers and/or hired cleaning staff to clean rooms, common areas, bathrooms, entry and exit points.

## **Children's Ministry Volunteer Room Check List**

### Upon Entering a Room:

- Make sure each child has a work space that is six feet apart from others
- Pull out a supply bag/tub and set it up in a work space (Each child should have their own container of labeled supplies)
- Wipe all door knobs and surface
- Wear your mask at all times
- Sanitize your hand
- Clearly label adult volunteers work space so kids do not enter

### At the end of Class:

- Have each child return their items to their bag/tub and seal.
- Have each child leave their supplies in their spot
- Dismiss the room from front to back always
- Wipe down each child's bag/tub and store
- Wipe down all surfaces including tables, chairs, cupboards, door knobs, light switches, etc.
- Bag up and seal trash and take to outside dumpster
- Close door
- Wash your hands

## **Nursery Plans for Reentry after COVID-19**

- No more than 2 adults and 8 kids will be present in the nursery. If needed, additional volunteers and children will be sent to an overflow room. Children will be separated by age when making this decision. Anyone under the age of 2 will be given priority in the nursery setting.
- Nursery workers/volunteers will wash their hands upon arrival.
- Everyone over the age of 2 will be required to wear a mask.
- Older children will be asked to wash their hands in the nursery bathroom upon arrival. A Parent/Guardian will need to wash their child(ren)'s hands upon arrival to the nursery.
- If parents/guardians are staying in the nursery or entering it for diaper changes etc, they will be asked to wash their hands in the nursery bathroom.
- All surfaces and door knobs will be cleaned at the start of each nursery shift.
- A box/tub will be created for all toys and other items played with during each nursery shift. All items used during a shift should be put in this tub for cleaning before they are returned to the nursery for play.
- Before consumption of any food or drink hands must be washed. A small table will be placed away from all play areas where children may consume food one at a time. This space will be cleaned between each use. Snack time will not include more than one child at a time.
- Nursery workers/volunteers will be allowed to bring in water bottles but must wipe them down upon entering the space and labeled with first and last name.
- If a child appears to be sick in any way, Nursery Workers/Volunteers may take that child's temperature.
- Signs will be posted outside the nursery door with symptoms we are watching for. These signs are available on the CDC website.
- When parents/caregivers sign in they will be required to answer COVID related questions.
- Reusable Tupperware containers with lids will be used for items children are bringing into the nursery (diaper bag, backpack, etc.) Items will be placed in bins and then labeled with the child's first and last name. Bins will have lids and will be set outside of our nursery. Only items that can be easily cleaned will be allowed into our nursery space.
- All surfaces will be cleaned between each worship service. Toys that cannot be cleaned between worship services will be removed until cleaned.
- Only craft supplies and tools that can be wiped down after each use will be used in the nursery (for example markers instead of crayons).

-At the end of shift in addition to wiping all surfaces, trash items will be taken out of the nursery and carpets will be vacuumed.

-Custodians will need to clean the bathroom in the nursery on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. If this cannot happen, nursery workers will be asked to clean at the end of each shift and should be compensated for this time.

**HAVE YOU OR ANYONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD  
EXPERIENCED ANY OF THESE COVID-19  
SYMPTOMS (NEW OR UNEXPLAINED) IN THE  
LAST THREE DAYS?**

- A temperature at or greater than 100.4 degrees
- A persistent cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle or body aches
- Sore Throat
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Loss of taste or smell
- Contact with a Covid+ person within the last 14 days
- Travel outside the state of Wisconsin in the last three days or travel outside the U.S. in the last 14 days.

Temperature checks will be performed along with the screening questions for staff and anyone entering the church building (except for dropping something off at the door) or participating in a group gathering on the church grounds.

Anyone who answers 'yes' to any of these questions will be asked to leave and remain off of church grounds until they have consulted with a medical provider and are fever free for 72 hours without the use of temperature-lowering medication.

## **Church Office Pandemic Protocol**

- Main office glass door remains locked at all times
- Office complex door to Fellowship hall remains locked at all times.
- Doors to the workroom and to the staff offices propped open to avoid needing to touch handles.
- As a general rule, all doors to the church will remain locked unless necessary to be unlocked for a gathering or event.
- Encourage weekday visitors and/or volunteers to contact Laura in advance of arriving at church, so that needs can be determined.
- Laura will determine where to meet a person(s) outside the office if necessary, i.e., the parking lot, the foyer outside the office or Fellowship Hall.
- Persons dropping off or picking up items do not need to be screened, but should wear a mask.
- All volunteers coming to the office will be screened (using the screening questions) and temperature checked. Masks are required in the church building and on the grounds outside when others are present.
- Laura will keep a daily log of who has come in the building for any purpose.
- The church building will not be open for use by outside groups until at least September and then will be determined on an individual basis.
- Activation of door fobs will be at Laura's discretion.
- Sanitizing wipes will be near each office machine such as copiers. Touched portions of the machines will be wiped down after each use.

## **Church Staff Pandemic Protocol**

- Staff will enter and exit through Door #2 near the church office.
- Staff may review the screening questions and take their temperature at home before arriving at church or stop at the screening station inside Door #2 at church to review screening questions and take temperature. Staff will record their attendance on the screening sheet.
- Staff will not come to church if they are experiencing any of the symptoms or answered 'yes' to any of the screening questions.
- Hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes will be at each staff member's work station.
- Staff will wipe down their work station before beginning work and before leaving for the day.
- Staff will wear a face covering and maintain a 6-foot social distance when others are present in the building. Exceptions would be if working in your own office or in the 'cube' office spaces if no one else is present. Face coverings will be worn when moving around the offices or building when others are present.
- Restrooms across from the multipurpose room will have gloves and sanitizing wipes available for wiping area before use.
- Other basics: Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; cough or sneeze into crook of elbow.

## **Check List for Group Leader or Person Responsible for Group Members**

- Schedule group gathering with Laura in the church office.
- Obtain a door fob and instructions for doors to enter and exit, what room or space to use, what restrooms to use, screening protocols and instructions, and documentation sheet.
- Leader emails symptom sheet to group members ahead of gathering.
- Wearing mask and gloves, leader or designated group member will screen themselves and participants.

### **Whether using space in the church building or outside on church grounds:**

- All participants wear a face mask or covering at all times.
- Have all participants sanitize or wash their hands before starting group.
- Seating or work spaces are six feet apart from others.
- No food or beverage is served or shared. Participants may have their own beverage or food that they have brought.
- No sharing of any supplies or handing out of any printed materials.

### **At the end of the group time:**

- Wearing gloves provided, wipe down all hard surfaces, chairs used, light switches, door knobs, screening table, laminated symptom sheet and thermometer with cleaner or wipes provided.
- Wash or sanitize your hands.
- Close the door to the classroom or meeting space and turn sign on the door to 'Needs Attention.'
- Group members should maintain 6-foot distance when leaving the building and when in the parking lot.

Person in charge of group should put the screening documentation sheet in the mail slot of the church office and email or call Laura (lmeixner@sunprairieumc.org/608/837-5554) in the church office with any questions or problems.

## **Screening Stations**

- A screening station table will be set up in the foyer to the Narthex and the foyer inside Door #2 near the church office.
- Each station will have individual disposable masks in plastic bags; gloves; hand sanitizer; sanitizing wipes; laminated symptoms sheet
- Thermometer with instructions for use and document sheet will be in a basket or box under the table.