



COVID Safety Plan for Sun Prairie United Methodist Church
As of March 1, 2022

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Key Priorities

1. The Life and Health of Neighbor

In our decision making, our top priority will be caring for the life and health of our neighbors. It is easy for us to focus on meeting our own needs and desires during these challenging times. However, during this pandemic, it is clearer that our individual and church decisions have ramifications on the lives and health of people in our wider community.

2. Creativity in Ministry

Our mission and basic values as a church do not change. However, how we live out our mission and values has changed over time, in order to connect with and meet the needs of our changing community and world. It remains a highest priority to find ways to creatively live out our mission and values as a community of faith that will meet our current challenges and needs without sacrificing safety of the community.

3. Diversity and Accessibility

Our church places a high priority on ensuring that the church's ministries are available to the greatest number of God's people. For instance, we include in our embrace those who struggle to access technology, those who are not able to be immunized, and people who are new to the community of faith.

4. Continue to Acknowledge and Claim the Church's Role as a Community Leader

We acknowledge and claim the special role we have in the community and strive to model best practices in health and community care.

5. Trust in the Resilience of the Church

While this extended crisis has stretched our endurance and imaginations, we trust that God will guide the church through these difficult times. We affirm that nothing on earth can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Guiding Metrics and Sources of Information

There is an overwhelming amount of information available to us. Too much information from too many sources can be almost as debilitating to a decision-making process as no information.

Therefore, we have chosen the following to be the main sources of information upon which we will base our guidelines and recommendations as a church.

- Wisconsin Department of Health Services
 - o Metric Information - <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/disease.htm>
 - o Vaccine Information - https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine_data.htm

- Public Health Madison and Dane County - <https://www.publichealthmdc.com/>

o Current Public Health Orders -

<https://www.publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus/forward-dane/current-order>

o Data and Metrics - <https://www.publichealthmdc.com/coronavirus/data>

• Wisconsin Council of Churches

o Returning to Church - <https://www.wichurches.org/2021/01/14/returning-to-church/>

o Holding Our Plans Loosely -

<https://www.wichurches.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/01/Holding-Our-Plans-Loosely-Returning-to-Church-2-3.pdf>

• Church Mutual Insurance- <https://coronavirus.churchmutual.com/>

Church-wide Pandemic Guidelines and Policies

At Sun Prairie United Methodist Church we strive to be a grace-filled, inclusive community of Christian believers dedicated to building disciples and sharing God's love.

As a part of loving our community, we hereby covenant with one another to continue the fight against COVID-19 even as we open our buildings for public worship, learning, and use.

- We will not attend any activities on the church grounds if:
 - o We are sick
 - o We are experiencing symptoms of illness, even if we are not certain of illness
 - o We believe we may have been exposed to someone who is sick, until we are certain we are not contagious with COVID-19
 - o We are currently in isolation due to testing positive for COVID-19

- We will try our best to avoid touching our eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Immediately upon entering the church building, we will either:
 - o Disinfect all surfaces of our hands with hand sanitizer until the gel is dry. When possible hand sanitizer should be at least 60% alcohol
 - o Wash our hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (the time it takes to pray the Lord's Prayer or sing "Happy Birthday")

- When attending events or groups outside we will immediately sanitize our hands with hand sanitizer.

- We will not hug, shake hands, or engage in physical contact when we are with others in the church building.
- We will remain at least 3 feet apart from people with whom we do not live.
- Wearing a mask will be recommended but not required for most situations and ministries. However there may be times when you are asked to wear a mask in our building.
- We will follow these guidelines whether or not we have been vaccinated.

Small Group Gatherings: 10 or fewer people

Outdoor Small Groups

Both church and community based small groups are welcome to meet outdoors on the church grounds following the guidelines laid out in the Church-Wide Pandemic Guidelines, as long as the current County Health Order allows groups of this size to gather outdoors. There is no maximum number of groups for outside meetings.

Other guidelines include:

o Each group must schedule their meeting with the church office staff at least five working days before their meeting to ensure the space is available. The church can be contacted at 608-837-5554 or imeixner@sunprairieumc.org.

- o Each group shall designate one person who will be accountable for the following:
 - cleaning up and sanitizing
 - keeping a list of who attended the group's meeting (for possible contact tracing)
 - requesting a fob for building access (if needed)
 - notifying the church office of any exposure events as soon as one is identified
 - communicating meeting plans and other information with the church office

The name of that person shall be communicated to the church office staff, along with their preferred mode of communication.

o Individuals are welcome to use the restrooms in the church as needed. According to the CDC, using shared restrooms poses a significant risk for infection. High touch surfaces should be sanitized by the user after the restroom is used.

O Each group will be required to use the COVID Health Screener created by the church for each participant. The screener can be found at [Covid-19-Symptoms-Update-March-2021.pdf \(sunprairieumc.org\)](https://www.sunprairieumc.org/Covid-19-Symptoms-Update-March-2021.pdf)

Indoor Small Groups

The following are not requirements, but are recommendations for small groups who are meeting indoors:

- o It is highly recommended that people not meet in person in small groups until two weeks have passed from the date of their final COVID-19 vaccination.

Both church and community-based small groups are welcome to meet indoors in space approved by church office staff following the guidelines laid out in the Church-Wide Pandemic Guidelines, as long as the current County Health Order allows.

- o Each group must schedule their meeting with the church office staff at least five

working days before their meeting to ensure the space is available. The church can be contacted at 608-837-5554 or lmexiner@sunprairieumc.org

o Each group shall designate one person who will be accountable for the following:

- cleaning up and sanitizing
- keeping a list of who attended the group's meeting (for possible contact tracing)
- requesting a fob for building access (if needed)
- notifying the church office of any exposure events as soon as one is identified
- communicating meeting plans and other information with the church office

The name of that person shall be communicated to the church office staff, along with their preferred mode of communication.

o Individuals are welcome to use the restrooms in the church as needed. According to the CDC, using shared restrooms poses a significant risk for infection. High touch surfaces should be sanitized by the user after the restroom is used.

O Each group will be required to use the COVID Health Screener created by the church for each participant. The screener can be found at [Covid-19-Symptoms-Update-March-2021.pdf \(sunprairieumc.org\)](#)

Medium-Sized Group Gatherings

Outdoor Medium-Sized Groups (11 – 50 people)

Both church and community-based medium-sized groups are welcome to meet outdoors on the church grounds following the guidelines laid out in the Church-Wide Pandemic Guidelines and Covenant, as long as the current County Health Order allows groups of this size to gather outdoors. There is no maximum number of groups for outside meetings.

Other guidelines include:

- o Each group must schedule their meeting with the church office staff at least five working days before their meeting to ensure the space is available. The church can be contacted at 608-837-5554 or lmexiner@sunprairieumc.org.

- o Each group shall designate one person who will be accountable for the following:
 - cleaning up and sanitizing
 - keeping a list of who attended the group's meeting (for possible contact tracing)
 - requesting a fob for building access (if needed)
 - notifying the church office of any exposure events as soon as one is identified
 - communicating meeting plans and other information with the church office

The name of that person shall be communicated to the church office staff, along with their preferred mode of communication.

o Individuals are welcome to use the restrooms in the church as needed. According to the CDC, using shared restrooms poses a significant risk for infection. High touch surfaces should be sanitized by the user after the restroom is used.

o It is highly recommended that a social distancing plan be put in place prior to the group's meeting.

O Each group will be required to use the COVID Health Screener created by the church for each participant. The screener can be found at [Covid-19-Symptoms-Update-March-2021.pdf \(sunprairieumc.org\)](https://www.sunprairieumc.org/Covid-19-Symptoms-Update-March-2021.pdf)

Indoor Medium-Sized Groups (11 – 25 people)

The following are not requirements, but are recommendations for medium-sized groups who are meeting indoors:

o It is highly recommended that people not meet in-person in groups until two weeks have passed from the date of their final COVID-19 vaccination.

Other guidelines include:

o Each group must schedule their meeting with the church office staff at least five working days before their meeting to ensure the space is available. The church can be contacted at 608-837-554 or lmexiner@sunprairieumc.org.

o At the time of scheduling, a written plan for how the group is going to maintain and monitor social distancing must be submitted.

o Each group shall designate one person who will be accountable for the following:

- cleaning up and sanitizing
- keeping a list of who attended the group's meeting (for possible contact

tracing)

- requesting a fob for building access (if needed)
- notifying the church office of any exposure events as soon as one is identified
- communicating meeting plans and other information with the church office

The name of that person shall be communicated to the church office staff, along with their preferred mode of communication.

o Individuals are welcome to use the restrooms in the church as needed.

According to the CDC, using shared restrooms poses a significant risk for infection. High touch surfaces should be sanitized by the user after the restroom is used.

O Each group will be required to use the COVID Health Screener created by the church for each participant. The screener can be found at [Covid-19-Symptoms-Update-March-2021.pdf \(sunprairieumc.org\)](https://www.sunprairieumc.org/Covid-19-Symptoms-Update-March-2021.pdf)

Large-Sized Group Gatherings

[Outdoor Large-Sized Groups \(50 people or more\)](#)

Both church and community-based large-sized groups are welcome to meet outdoors on the church grounds following the guidelines laid out in the Church-Wide Pandemic Guidelines and Covenant, as long as the current County Health Order allows groups of this size to gather outdoors. There is no maximum number of groups for

outside meetings.

Other guidelines include:

o Each group must schedule their meeting with the church office staff at least five working days before their meeting to ensure the space is available. The church can be contacted at 608-837-5554 or lmexiner@sunprairieumc.org.

o Each group shall designate one person who will be accountable for the following:

- cleaning up and sanitizing
- keeping a list of who attended the group's meeting (for possible contact tracing)
- requesting a fob for building access (if needed)
- notifying the church office of any exposure events as soon as one is identified
- communicating meeting plans and other information with the church office

The name of that person shall be communicated to the church office staff, along with their preferred mode of communication.

o Individuals are welcome to use the restrooms in the church as needed. According to the CDC, using shared restrooms poses a significant risk for infection. High touch surfaces should be sanitized by the user after the restroom is used.

o It is highly recommended that a social distancing plan be put in place prior to the group's meeting.

o Each group will be required to use the COVID Health Screener created by the church for each participant. The screener can be found at [Covid-19-Symptoms-Update-March-2021.pdf \(sunprairieumc.org\)](#)

[Indoor Large-Sized Groups \(25 people or more\)](#)

The following are not requirements, but are recommendations for large-sized groups who are meeting indoors:

o It is highly recommended that people not meet in-person in groups until two weeks have passed from the date of their final COVID-19 vaccination.

Other guidelines include:

o Each group must schedule their meeting with the church office staff at least five working days before their meeting to ensure the space is available. The church can be contacted at 608-837-554 or lmexiner@sunprairieumc.org.

o At the time of scheduling, a written plan for how the group is going to maintain and monitor social distancing must be submitted.

o Each group shall designate one person who will be accountable for the following:

- cleaning up and sanitizing
- keeping a list of who attended the group's meeting (for possible contact tracing)
- requesting a fob for building access (if needed)
- notifying the church office of any exposure events as soon as one is identified
- communicating meeting plans and other information with the church office

The name of that person shall be communicated to the church office staff, along with their preferred mode of communication.

o Individuals are welcome to use the restrooms in the church as needed.

According to the CDC, using shared restrooms poses a significant risk for infection. High touch surfaces should be sanitized by the user after the restroom is used.

O Each group will be required to use the COVID Health Screener created by the church for each participant. The screener can be found at [Covid-19-Symptoms-Update-March-2021.pdf \(sunprairieumc.org\)](https://www.sunprairieumc.org/Covid-19-Symptoms-Update-March-2021.pdf)

Special Accommodations for Children and Youth Ministries

If a child/youth begins to have symptoms in the 48 hours AFTER attending a ministry event or program and is tested for COVID-19, please contact ahinthorn@sunprairieumc.org even if you have not gotten results back. It's helpful for us to be on alert so we can be prepared to contact trace IF the test comes back positive.

If a child/youth is struggling to comply with mask/physical distancing protocols, a parent/guardian will be contacted.

Any diaper changing will be done by parent/guardian only at this phase of re-opening.

Adult volunteers/staff will be responsible for making sure all surfaces are cleaned at the end of ministry.

COVID Communication Protocol

Our primary goal is to provide a safe environment for everyone, but even with the most diligent of precautions, it is impossible to remove all risk of contracting COVID-19 while participating in onsite ministry at SPUMC.

Below are the protocols in place if SPUMC is made aware that a person (child/youth/adult) has tested positive for COVID-19 and was contagious while on-site.

Upon notification, SPUMC Staff will conduct contact tracing. Staff will determine if close contact occurred and who was involved. The CDC defines close contact as: Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period* starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

*Individual exposures added together over a 24-hour period (e.g., three 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes).

If you are exposed to COVID outside of a church setting, please monitor your symptoms and wear a mask. If you do start to have symptoms please test on day 5 and stay home from church activities.

Since it is important to respond quickly in these cases, there may be little notice given to families for the need to quarantine.

Adults in worship or small groups:

1. Once the staff has determined a person has tested positive for COVID-19 and was contagious while on-site, 1) a church-wide email will go out (snail mailing to those without email) notifying them of the positive test; OR – 2) if individuals have signed in, just those individuals will be notified and the staff will make the recommendation for a 7-day quarantine for the persons involved.
2. All people from that room (regardless of close contact) will be notified with the recommendation to monitor themselves for symptoms.
3. All people from that room will be asked to stay home for 7 days and not attend SPUMC out of an abundance of caution.

Elementary & Youth (K-Grade 12):

1. Parents/ Guardians and volunteers who were in the same room as the child/youth will be notified if there was close contact and make the

recommendation for a 7-day quarantine for the volunteer/children/youth involved.

2. All parents/guardians and volunteers from that room (regardless of close-contact) will be notified with the recommendation to monitor their child/youth/themselves for symptoms.
3. All children/youth/volunteers from that room will be asked to monitor symptoms and stay home if they start to not feel well.

Preschool (birth-4K)

1. Note our goal is to minimize close-contact for grades K-grade 12 by enforcing 3-feet physical distancing as much as possible, but it is impossible to do the same for infants through 4K as it is physically and developmentally challenging for that age group! For rooms with children birth-4K we will recommend a 10-day quarantine for any children and volunteers in those rooms. Parents/ Guardians will be notified via a phone call AND email.
2. Custodial staff will be notified and the room will be closed and thoroughly disinfected.

Attendee Log

GROUP LEADER CHECK-IN SHEET

DATE	EVENT	LEADER NAME	PARTICIPANT NAMES
			1
			2
			3
			4
			5
			6
			7
			8
			9
			10

Church Office Pandemic Protocol

- Main office glass door 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.
- Office Staff 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 are encouraged to wear a mask.
- All volunteers coming to the office will be screened using the screening questions. Masks are encouraged but not required.
- Office Staff will keep a daily log of who has come in the building for any purpose.
- Activation of door fobs will be at Office Staff'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 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 workstation.
- Staff will wipe down their work station before beginning work and before leaving for the day.

-Staff are encouraged but not required to wear masks. Face coverings will be worn when moving around the offices or building when children 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 the crook of the elbow.

Food and Beverage Protocols

-Ministries and Groups will be required to include information in their plan turned into our church office before each gathering that answers the following questions.

-Is food prepackaged, brought from home, prepared in a commercial kitchen, church kitchen or home kitchen?

-Ministries and groups will be highly encouraged to educate and publicize food information with those planning to attend or at the event itself.

-Ministries and groups may eat inside or outside of the church building.

-Meals and food items can be packaged in our church kitchen. We are not encouraging hot meals at this time.

Restroom Protocols

No matter the size of the group or if the group meets inside our outside, the church office staff will assign a restroom for the group to use while their event is happening.

We highly encourage the use of hand sanitizer instead of hand washing when possible to minimize the number of people in the restroom facilities.

Offsite Ministry Activities

We understand that there are times when children, youth and adults may travel offsite for ministry events and opportunities. At the discretion of church staff, participants may be asked about their COVID vaccination status prior to these trips. In most cases, these questions will be asked for prolonged close contact trips and/or trips where participants are traveling long distances.

Staff may share numbers with those participating in regards to vaccination status but MAY NOT share names of individuals or their personal information.

Worship

Worship Outdoors:

Worship can occur outdoors without sign up or space limitations. Singing is allowed in outdoor worship settings.

Procedure and Guidelines for Sanctuary Worship:

-Please do not come to church if you are not feeling well. The only entrance that will be open is the Narthex doors under the overhang. If you are wearing a jacket or coat, please plan to keep it with you.

-Please use the hand sanitizer stations and sanitize your hands before going into the sanctuary. A face mask covering your nose and mouth is encouraged but not required in the church building and during worship. Please maintain a 6-foot safe distance.

-Some portions of the worship experience will be live and other portions will be pre-recorded and viewed on the screens. No bulletins will be passed out. Everything you need will be on the screens. There will be no congregational singing at this time. We invite you to listen to the song leaders or recorded music and reflect on the music.

-We thank you for your generous stewardship. You may give your offering online, mail your offering to the church or dropped it in the baskets at the door as you leave worship.

-Please do not shake hands, hug or visit with one another inside. Please share your greetings with one another by waving and visiting outside at a safe distance following the service.

-The single/family restroom across from the nursery and women's restroom near the chapel are the designated restrooms if needed. The multi-stall restrooms in fellowship hall will not be used.

Music Onsite

Instrumentalists can share music both inside and outside of the church building.

We can sing in small groups or as part of worship in outdoor worship settings.

Congregational singing WILL NOT take place indoors.

Music leaders may share in singing indoors as long as they are spaced away from the congregation.