

Manchester United Methodist Church Re-opening FAQ

The Reopening Task Force has been meeting regularly to consider when Manchester United Methodist Church can safely resume in-person worship and how to do so carefully with regard to the health and well-being of everyone. To begin, we have been and will continue asking persons wanting to enter the building to read through and answer the list of pre-screening questions below before entering. These questions are also posted on the doors.

To protect all those using our church building, we ask that you answer the following questions before attending an in-person gathering:

1. Are you currently experiencing a cough, fever (>99.4), chills, sore throat, muscle pain, loss of smell or taste, vomiting or shortness of breath?
2. Are you currently caring for someone who is ill?
3. During the last two weeks, have you been diagnosed with COVID-19?
4. During the last two weeks, have you had contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 or suspected to have COVID-19?
5. During the last two weeks, have you lived in or visited a place where COVID-19 is spreading?
6. Do you consider yourself high-risk, unable to follow the in-person meeting precautions, or otherwise feel uncomfortable with attending an in-person gathering?

If you answered "yes" to any question, do not enter the building in order to protect your health and the health of all those in our community. Thank you!

Below are some frequently asked questions to help understand the plan to reopen the building for in-person worship.

1. We miss everyone! When will we get back to in-person worship?

Our region of the state is currently in phase four of Michigan's coronavirus response, with guidelines limiting indoor gatherings to 10 people. This is in line with Gov. Whitmer's directive. The plan is to resume in-person worship within three weeks following a move to phase five, when guidance on indoor gatherings increases to 50 people.

2. What if I don't yet feel comfortable coming back to the church for worship?

No worries! Even after returning to in-person worship, the church will continue offering livestream worship so you can continue to safely worship from home or wherever you may be. One of the great outcomes of our livestream worship is that we now have people from all over joining with us in worship. Folks have tuned in while on vacation in Florida, family have joined us from Arizona, and some friends from St. Johns, Michigan have faithfully worshipped with us throughout the shutdown. So, go ahead and share our YouTube link with friends and family. The more the merrier!

3. Will masks be required?

Everyone coming into the church building is asked to wear a face mask or covering at all times, and have it in place before entering the church. If you do not have a mask or forgot yours, there will be a small number of handmade masks available. The mask will be in a baggie with a note explaining that it is a gift from the church and hope that it will be worn when visiting again. The note will also contain instructions for how to launder the mask. If you do not wear a mask due to health

or other reasons, you will be asked to not attend in-person worship and participate in the livestream worship online.

4. What about hand sanitizer?

Everyone coming into the church building is asked to use hand sanitizer which will be available just inside the door and also at the entrance to the sanctuary.

5. Will the restrooms be open?

The restroom next to the library on the sanctuary level will be open and available for use. A bathroom attendant will disinfect and clean the bathroom between each use. We ask that you use only the sanctuary-level restroom.

6. Will the elevator be available?

Yes, the elevator will be available for use. We ask that only one person or a group of family members living in the same house use it at one time. An attendant will wipe down the surfaces between each use.

7. How will social distancing be done in the sanctuary?

The pews will be marked so that families living in the same house may sit together, but will remain at least six feet from other congregants. Everyone is to maintain a distance of six feet from others while in the building.

8. What changes are being planned for the order of worship?

- a) We will not be using name tags.
- b) All hymnals and bibles have been removed from the pews for your safety. Hymn lyrics will be projected on the wall and printed in the bulletins which will be placed at the end of each pew.
- c) Passing the peace will be done differently. A simple wave or hand over the heart may be the new way to greet each other. Let's get creative.
- d) Because the act of singing may contribute to the transmission of COVID-19, possibly through the emission of aerosols, there will be no congregational singing until it can be done safely. There may be soloists and/or recorded singing of the hymns with the lyrics projected on the wall.
- e) Offering plates will not be passed. Offering plates will be placed near the doors to the sanctuary. Offerings may be placed in the plates either before or after the worship service. Offerings may also be mailed to the church or use online giving available on the website.
- f) Prayer requests may be emailed to the church or texted using the Reminder app.
- g) Initially communion will not be served. The Task Force is exploring ways to celebrate communion safely.
- h) Children will remain in their pews during the Children's Message.
- i) There will be no childcare or Children in Worship until restrictions are lifted.
- j) When the service is over, please follow the directions of the ushers who will release people slowly to ensure social distancing. Pastor Dillon will not be greeting people as they leave the sanctuary. Please don't congregate in the narthex or stairwells.
- k) There will be no coffee hour. Please continue to engage with each other through phone or email.

The Reopening Task Force has developed these precautions thoughtfully and carefully to create a safe environment for everyone to be able to worship together. Please be patient and flexible as we all navigate this new territory. Call or email the church office with any questions or suggestions you have. As Christians we are called to love and care for each other. We appreciate your help and effort in keeping each other safe and healthy during these times. We are all in this together.