

Oakland UMC Plan for Resuming In-Person Worship

The plan was developed by the Administrative Council of Oakland UMC and follows the guidelines set out in the reentry plan developed by the leadership of the Iowa Annual Conference.

At this time, our intention is to resume in person worship in our building on June 14th. Last Sunday, we started an in-person worship service in Lions Park in Oakland, and that worship service will continue as well.

But in-person worship is going to be different than before Covid19.

During worship, we will be following recommended social distancing and other hygiene practices necessary to, as much as possible, prevent potential virus spread. However, these practices will mean that we cannot interact with each other before, during and after worship in the same way as before.

Though we cannot guarantee 100% safety for those who attend worship, I as the pastor, along with the leadership of Oakland UMC want to do everything we can to maximize the safety of worshippers by minimizing the risk of virus transmission, therefore we have developed the following guidelines:

Guidelines for in-person worship outdoors

- Please bring your own chairs or blankets for seating. There will extra chairs available for guests.
- TO PROTECT OTHERS, wearing facemasks is strongly encouraged.
- Please observe social distancing of at least 6 feet between family groups.
- For the protection of others, we ask that you please refrain from attending worship if you have been or think you have been exposed to the Covid-19 virus or if you or someone in your household is sick, until you or they are fully recovered.
- If, because of age and/or underlying medical condition(s), you are in a higher risk group for contracting a more serious case of Covid19 if you are exposed to the virus, we ask that for your personal safety you consider staying at home and continuing to worship with us online instead of worshipping in person.
- Outside worship will be cancelled if it is raining.

Guidelines for in-person worship in the church building

- The church building will be open for Sunday worship and funeral/memorial services only. Sunday school is suspended until next fall. For now, meetings and other study groups will continue to be held online instead of in person.
- Hand sanitizer and cleaning wipes will be available as you enter and exit the sanctuary.
- **TO PROTECT OTHERS, wearing facemasks is strongly encouraged.**
- Even though we know that after being apart for so long, you will be glad to see each other, we ask that for the protection of yourself and others you please ***refrain from handshakes or hugs at this time.***
- Because of the physical distancing requirement of six feet between family units, seating will be limited to every third pew in the sanctuary and seating in the pews will be spaced six feet apart. Please follow the direction of the ushers, who will guide you in entering and exiting the worship space.
- Worshippers will only be able to sit with members of their own family.
- Frequently touched surfaces will be sanitized before worship.
- Instead of passing the offering plate during the service, offerings will be placed in a box at the entrance to the sanctuary so that worshippers can deposit their offering before or after worship.
- ***Because singing spreads the virus farther, there will be no out loud congregational singing during in person worship in the sanctuary. However, you are invited to sing along in your heart as loudly as you like.***
- Because safe social-distancing is not possible when gathering in the space outside the sanctuary, and because sharing food with people outside one's immediate household is not recommended at this time, we are suspending Koinonia fellowship time following worship until in person worship can resume without restrictions.
- For the protection of others, we ask that you please refrain from attending worship if you have been or think you have been exposed to the Covid-19 virus or if you or someone in your household is sick, until you or they are fully recovered.
- If, because of age and/or underlying medical condition(s), you are in a higher risk group for contracting a more serious case of Covid19 if you are exposed to the virus, we ask that for your personal safety you consider staying at home and continuing to worship with us online instead of worshipping in person.

I know that these precautions may seem somewhat cold and impersonal, but please understand that they are necessary for now to maintain as safe a worship environment as possible during this time of Covid19.

These precautions are for everyone's safety. If you feel that you cannot abide by these instructions, please continue to worship at home via our recorded services.