

# **Dublin First UMC Preparation and Procedures for Reopening**

**Prepared on the advice of the**

**Senior Pastor's Reopening Advisory Team**

**Chair: Rev. Barry Giddens**

**Joe Carruth, Chair of the Public Health Board**

**Janet Mair, Public Health Board member**

**Phil Best, Mayor, City of Dublin & Health Board Member**

**Morris Hester, Chair, Administrative Board**

**Ted Short, Chair, Staff Parish Relations**

**Angie Kahrman, Chair, Finance**

**Jim Cameron, Lay Leader** *(absent on May 13)*

**Gayle and Johnny Stanfield, Annual Conference Delegates**

**Tim Lake, Contemporary Worship Representative**

**Bill and Rebecca Gainous, Mature Adult Representatives**

**Jacob and Laura Poole, Young Adult Representatives**

**Cheri Kellam, Preschool Representative** *(absent on May 13)*

*As of May 13, 2020*

We will continue with online-only worship through June 14, 2020. In preparation to return to the new normal, we need to begin taking steps for a soft opening on June 21. This is the date set forth by the Bishop of the South Georgia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. We recognize that in the corona environment, this date may be pushed back due to the tentative nature of the world we live in.

At present, we are continuing to look for input from sources who have proven helpful in our gathering of information, especially our partners in health & government as well as the Dublin FUMC staff. Therefore, this document will become quite fluid as information and regulations are in flux.

We cannot emphasize enough, how those with health risks or compromised health should exercise great caution when choosing to attend worship. Anyone who has had a fever in the previous 72 hours is asked to stay home for the sake of others.

This document is our best attempt to set forth the conditions through which we will return to in-person congregational worship for a period of four weeks, beginning June 21.

**Basics:**

For our return to church worship service gatherings, we will seek to comply with the current and forthcoming stipulations from the Governor of Georgia and South Georgia Conference of the UMC for appropriate socially-distanced gatherings. Additionally, the basics are as follows

**In-Person Worship Schedule for four weeks, beginning June 21, 2020:**

8 am: Early Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary (the most vulnerable will be encouraged to attend this service as it will have the most ability to be socially distanced)

9- 9:15 Wiping down of pews and needed sanitation of the Sanctuary

9:15-9:30 Seating of Guests in the Fellowship Hall with overflow space in the Sanctuary

9:30 am: Contemporary Worship in the Fellowship Hall. The max capacity in the fellowship hall will be 50% of usual capacity (roughly 75-80 available seats, depending upon family configurations). Overflow seating with a live video stream will be available in the Sanctuary.

10:30 Wiping Down/ Sanitation of Fellowship Hall and Sanctuary as needed

10:45 Seating of Guests in the Sanctuary with overflow space in the Fellowship Hall.

11 am: Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary

**Key points:**

- Prior to June 21, ACS will deep clean and fog the entire church.
- Worship will be different.
- Access to the worship spaces will only be available through external entrances. The second floor, offices, and Sunday School wing will be locked for this phase. Handicapped accessibility is available through the exterior parlor door. The handicapped lot leading into this area will be corded off and only persons with handicap accessibility needs will be permitted to park in this area. Entering the building will require guests to be ushered to their seats, assigned by those ushering on a given Sunday. Guests waiting outside will have markers on the sidewalk to denote 6 foot spacing.
- The online worship services for Contemporary and Traditional will be available for persons to view.
- In this initial return to in-person worship, there will be no Sunday School or childcare provided. Families should sit together in worship.
- Bathrooms will be limited to where only necessary. An usher should be stationed in the hallway to monitor bathroom use.
- Hymnals, Bibles, and other distributable paper materials will not be available. All words to songs will be available on the screens at the front of each worship space. Please bring your own Bible.
- Bulletins will be online only and will not be available to be distributed.
- Coffee service will not be offered.
- Fellowship Hall chairs will be spread into groups six feet apart to allow for social distancing.
- Sanctuary pews will be corded so that every other pew is not available for seating.
- There will be no choir in this phase.

- Masks will be mandatory for all guests in this phase. To enter the building, one must wear a mask. Masks will be available at each entrance.
- Hand Sanitizer will be offered as available.
- There will be no hand shaking, hugging, or fist bumping until it is deemed safe to do so.
- The offering will be collected in secure boxes at the door of each service.
- Disinfection between services will be required. This may include ACS personnel, staff, and volunteers who work for the common goal of church safety.
- Dublin Police will be on hand as before to help insure safety.
- Temperature checks will be conducted at each entrance.
- Anyone who has had sickness in the previous 72 hours is asked to stay home as a courtesy to others.
- Anyone who has a compromising health condition or who is potentially weakened physically should stay home for their own protection.

Dublin First UMC wants your worship experience to be safe. Please be in prayer for our church. Eventually, we will return to the goal of "normal" services in full, that being Sunday School, regular worship and weekly activities while appropriately distanced. However, for now we must define a "new normal" that allows for congregational worship in a safe environment as COVID-19 would seem to be a part of our lives for the foreseeable future.

We celebrate our return to in person worship! Remember, the church is not closed. Worship has been conducted throughout this pandemic, even if we've had to worship in different and creative ways. Our in-person return will be accompanied by times of praise, testimony, and a sermon that will focus on how we can embrace life changes God has revealed to us.