

FPC Phased Reopening Plan

Congregational Information Sheet – August 20, 2020

As we move forward in reopening our church, Session has approved a plan that includes the following safety protocols and information for initially gathering in person for worship with a target date of Sunday, October 4, 2020. We will continue to work toward carefully adding other elements to our church life together. This plan is subject to change depending on evolving conditions and restrictions.

- **We will continue to livestream our worship services via Facebook Live and strongly recommend that those in high risk categories continue to stay home and participate in worship online.** We also encourage those who are otherwise not ready to join us in person to do the same.
- **If you are feeling unwell or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, please stay home and seek medical advice/testing.**
- **Please contact the church office if you have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for or is suspected to have COVID-19.**
- **Only the sanctuary will be used on Sunday mornings.** Fellowship Hall, the kitchen, and the Creighton Building will not be open for use or passage.
- **At this time, Sunday school will remain online only,** following plans of the local school district. We will continue to work toward reopening in consideration of space and distancing requirements, cleaning protocols particularly as they relate to shared space with our preschool, and teacher availability.
- **For the first few weeks, entry to the sanctuary will be through the East Main St. entrance only** (from the sidewalk through the playground and up the ramp) to facilitate entry protocols. **Please maintain at least six feet of distance from others as you enter.**
- **A mask must be worn to enter the building.** As a responsible partner in our community, we request that masks also be worn outside while on church property, particularly if you are in conversation with others.
- **Upon entry, worshipers are asked to use hand sanitizer from the provided station and sign in** with name and contact information. **By signing in, you are indicating your agreement with FPC's [Gathering Covenant](#),** which you should read in advance. Should the need arise, your contact information will be used to facilitate contact tracing.
- We will not have ushers, which will impact worshipers in four ways. (1) **Bulletins will be available for you to take as you enter the sanctuary,** or you may print one at home from our website or Facebook page. (2) **Offering plates will not be passed during the service. Offering collection boxes will be available for you to use as you enter/exit the sanctuary.** Alternatively, you can mail your offering to the church at 10 E. Main St., Flemington, NJ 08822 or give online at <https://www.flemingtonpres.org/giving>. (3) **Prayer cards will not be collected during the service.** To request that a prayer be shared during worship, please submit your prayer request in advance via our website at <https://www.flemingtonpres.org/prayer-requests>, contact the church office, or leave a note in the offering collection box for inclusion in the following week's service. (4) When you depart, **please remove all personal items from your pew, including your bulletin, and take them home.**
- **Pews will be marked to assist with appropriate physical distancing.** A small number of front rows will be closed off, and moving back from there, every other pew will be closed. Pew cushions will be removed from closed pews.

- **We will not pass the peace** during worship and request that you have **no physical contact with others** who are not members of your household.
- **We will not participate in group singing** by either the choir or the congregation.
- **We will not participate in communal speaking.** Speaking will be limited to those at the pulpit and/or the lectern.
- We will not have Communion servers. **Communion will continue to be celebrated on the first Sunday of each month, and participants are asked to bring their own elements**, such as bread or a cracker and a small container of juice or water.
- **All worshipers are requested to exit the building promptly upon the conclusion of the service**, maintain at least six feet of distance from others while departing, and continue to wear a mask outside on church property, particularly if in conversation with others. We will not have fellowship/coffee hour in Fellowship Hall at this time.
- **The unisex bathroom located on the west side of the building in the vestibule between the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall will be available for use.**

Other

- The church office is open with limited hours. We ask that you continue to conduct church business remotely whenever possible. If you must stop at the Parish House in person, you are required to wear a mask and maintain a minimum of six feet of distance from staff and others.
- Our church committees and groups have been successfully meeting remotely via Zoom, and we will continue to meet in this manner in consideration of our many at-risk group members, the extra cleaning protocols we would need to implement in order to meet in person, and the greater ease in understanding each other via video than while wearing masks and being physically distanced in person. Any church group wishing to meet in person must first contact the church office for approval.

We long for a time when our lives can return to normal and realize that these initial worship protocols will feel strange and may be difficult to adjust to. We are cognizant of the wide range of risk factors affecting us and those in our lives as well as the various opinions we all hold regarding what is safe and what is prudent. These are the steps we feel best protect our wellness based on the information and recommendations available to us at this time. We warmly welcome you back to in-person worship if you are comfortable joining us and it is safe for you to do so. We hope you will continue to worship with us online if that is more advisable for your wellness or better suits your circumstances. We will remain in ongoing discussions as we evaluate these first steps and those to follow as we also continue with our mission and ministry, maintaining our connections with each other and in our community in both new and familiar ways.

Yours in Christ,

The Session of Flemington Presbyterian Church