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COVID-19 POLICIES & PROCEDURES

**Safety Protocols for Worship**

Having consulted the CDC and City of Columbia guidelines and sensitive to the needs of our community, First Presbyterian Church has returned to in-person worship.

1. Masks will be required during congregational worship at First Presbyterian Church.
2. We encourage anyone with COVID-19 symptoms (fever, aches, chills, cough, etc.) to worship online.
3. All worshippers will be advised to maintain six feet of distance from people outside their household.
4. Pews will be roped off and chairs arranged in the Ramsey Center to encourage social distancing.
5. We will not pass offering plates or communion trays. Bulletins and prepackaged communion elements will be available for pickup in the narthex or Welcome Center. Bulletins will also be available for download via QR code. Offering plates will be in the narthex for worshippers to drop off offerings, and prayer request/contact info slips.
6. The Early Childhood center will be staffed immediately. The family room off the sanctuary will be open and available to families with children. Sunday school will resume August 29.
7. Restrooms, the narthex, and the Welcome Center will be stocked with disinfectants/wipes. High touch surfaces will be disinfected after services.

**Safety Protocols for Children’s and Youth Ministries**

Based on the current CDC recommendation, masks will be required indoors during children and youth activities (i.e. Sunday School, childcare in the ECC, VBS, and other indoor events) for all individuals aged 2 years and older, including students, teachers, staff, and visitors, regardless of vaccination status. This policy will be re-evaluated based on CDC recommendations and current COVID status in our community.

Children and/or Youth exhibiting the following symptoms should remain at home:

* A temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater (As a guideline, children/youth should be fever free for 24 hours without the assistance of fever reducing medication.)
* Cough
* Shortness of Breath or difficulty breathing
* Nausea/Vomiting with associated signs of illness within the previous 24 hours
* Fatigue
* Headache
* New loss of taste of smell
* Sore throat
* Diarrhea
* Unusual or unexplained rash

**Safety Protocols for Other Activities**

* In keeping with pre-pandemic policy, and with the exception of corporate worship, all in-person or “hybrid” events must be pre-approved by the Senior Pastor, Clerk of Session, or their representative and registered with the Office.
* In-person meetings and gatherings should assume the need for, and therefore facilitate, Social Distancing practices and Face Mask requirements. These practices shall be encouraged through signage and verbal reminders that are contextually appropriate.
* If the individuals gathered have unanimously agreed, the Social Distancing practices and/or Face Mask requirements may be temporarily suspended. (This temporary policy suspension is granted as a tool to facilitate expressions of grace and love among those gathered; it shall not be used to coerce or pressure anyone into uncomfortable or unsafe situations.)
* All events must have at least one staff member, church officer (i.e. Elder or Deacon), or Ambassador in attendance to provide hospitality for all present. This includes ensuring the safety of all by ensuring these policies are followed. Violations shall be reported to the Senior Pastor and may be used as grounds to restrict individuals and/or groups from accessing FPCC property and facility use.
* Events with meals must follow the same policies as listed above (i.e., events with meals would need approval by Administrative or Pastoral staff; Social Distancing practices and Face Mask requirements are to be followed at all times unless a temporary suspension of part or all of those practices and requirements has been unanimously agreed upon by those present.)