

Brooks Memorial United Methodist Church Guidelines for Reopening

After weeks of worshipping online, our pastor and congregation are beginning to resume in-person services at our church location.

We are excited to go to church again, but it would be unrealistic to expect things to be as they were before the global pandemic.

“Worship will be different and feel strange,” we would like to share with you our '**Guidelines for Reopening.**'

Please note: *Those considered at **high risk of contracting coronavirus** are recommended to refrain from in-person worship gatherings at this time.*

Entering the building

We may not be able to enter as we did previously. Certain doors may be designated as entrances and others as exits.

Health screenings will be performed at building entrances. Using a no-contact thermometer, a greeter may take our temperature on the way in, as a means of keeping us well during and after worship.

Masks will be required when entering the building. Mask will be provided if you do not have one. We will also provide hand sanitizer at entrances to the building.

Worship

To help maintain safe social distancing, seating will be modified. Pews may be roped off. An usher may escort your family to specific seats.

Following plans like these help the congregation use the worship space most effectively until social distancing and occupancy restrictions are lifted.

It will be good to see our fellow worshipers in person again, but we will need to refrain from greeting them with hugs or handshakes for now.

We may not receive a printed bulletin and the hymnals, Bibles, attendance pads and the other high-touch items we are used to seeing near our seats, may be removed.

Speaking of high-touch items, we won't pass a **collection plate** for the offering. Instead, we will be invited to drop our offerings in a designated location on our way into or out of worship.

Communion is another important part of our worship that congregations may suspend during this time. Others will choose to modify the practice. When the sacrament is offered, it is okay not to participate if we are uncomfortable. The communion will be passed out to each person in a safe enclosed plastic bag.

Other possible changes

A less-sacred favorite of many United Methodists, the fellowship time before and after worship, will also be on hold.

Unfortunately, **Sunday school classes** will not be available. The rooms used for these activities are often not big enough to be able to maintain social distancing.

Not ready? Worship online by calling the following conference call number: **978-990-5159, use access code 4166125** and select the **# sign** after entering the code. Follow the instructions on the call. The worship service will start at 11a.m.

If any of us do not feel ready to return quite yet, that is okay. We can continue to support our church by worshiping online until we're more comfortable.

As we return, whether now or later, let us do it well. Stay healthy, whether together or from a safe social distance. Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any concerns during our worship service.