

Guidelines for Prince of Peace Post-COVID-19 Reopening Plan

These measures are for the safety and protection of all and are presented as a guideline for safe in-person worship. The guidelines do not replace each individual's personal responsibility in protecting themselves and others.

For now, there will be one worship service each week: Sunday at 9:45 am.

If you are in a high-risk category for COVID-19, please consider not attending. We will continue to provide worship online and using the phone service POP-2-POP.

1. Entering the Church Building

- a. Signage will be posted on the front doors indicating appropriate mitigation measures and infection control management to keep everyone safe. Signage will be changed or updated as deemed necessary by the PA Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control guidance.
- b. A statement will be posted indicating the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, asking worshipers and visitors to refrain from entering if they are experiencing any symptoms. All who enter are verifying that they feel well, have no symptoms of COVID-19, and have not been exposed to anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 in the 14 days. Greeters will direct entrants who report illness or those who appear ill to either remain outside on the benches or direct them to the Sick Area (see #5 below). A member of the Health and Wellness Committee or the Task Force will be designated to guide the worshiper or visitor and direct assistance as needed.
- c. Masks must be worn to cover the mouth and nose inside the church at all times unless deemed medically prohibitive by a member's physician. (Worship leaders may remove masks only when in the pulpit, behind the altar, or at the organ bench, and only if no one else is within ten feet.)
- d. All entrants will practice social distancing of at least 6 feet when entering and exiting the building and while inside. Tape markers will be placed to aid in this. Using both sidewalks, attendees shall move forward when the tape mark ahead of them is vacated.
- e. In order to limit the areas and surfaces to be cleaned, the front doors only will be used to enter and exit. All areas other than the narthex, sanctuary, rest rooms, and fellowship hall will be marked as off limits.
- f. Socializing in the Narthex, Sanctuary, parking lot, or any other church property is not recommended until deemed safe by the PA DOH, the CDC, and the Prince of Peace Task Force.

2. Narthex

- a. Signage will be posted in the Narthex reminding entrants of the need to wear a face mask and social distance. A basic outline of appropriate and safe seating in

the sanctuary will be posted along with directions for safe use of the restroom and overflow seating.

- b. Greeters will wear masks and gloves and verbally greet worshipers and visitors and may use other non-touching gestures such as peace signs or “thumbs up” to convey welcome greetings.
 - c. Ushers will wear masks and gloves in the performance of all of their duties. There will be no hand-outs allowed in the beginning stages of opening. Ushers’ duties during the service will be addressed by the Pastor.
 - d. Greeters and Ushers will act as contact persons for entrants who need guidance, direction, or assistance in following the recommended safety precautions.
 - e. Training will be provided for Greeters and Ushers at a date to be determined via virtual meeting.
3. Sanctuary seating
- a. In order to maintain social distancing, only 7 pews on the pulpit side and 4 on the organ side will be available. Also available for specific people will be the usher/PowerPoint pew, the pew (not chairs) in the choir loft, and the handicapped pew.
 - b. All hymnals, papers, and other items have been removed from the pew racks.
 - c. Ushers will escort attendees from the narthex to an available pew.
 - d. Once in the pew, attendees should maintain a 6’ distance from the individual/couple/family group seated next to them. (One way to measure this is for both parties to hold their arms straight out to the side, fingers extended. As long as your fingers don’t touch, you’re approximately 6’ apart. Ushers may also be given “pool noodles” to assist in determining an appropriate distance.)
4. Overflow seating
- a. Fellowship Hall will be used as overflow seating only when the sanctuary has met capacity. (A closed-circuit television will broadcast worship here.) The use of Fellowship Hall will be limited to this purpose only to limit the need for cleaning.
 - b. Signage will be posted to remind all entrants to wear a face mask and social distance.
 - c. Worshipers and visitors will adhere to seating arrangements as indicated in Fellowship Hall and not rearrange seating, unless to accommodate an established family unit.
5. Restrooms and Kitchen
- a. Signs will be posted to remind entrants to wear masks and social distance.
 - b. Kitchen use should be limited to decrease the need for cleaning.

- c. If someone needs to leave the sanctuary during worship, only the side aisles should be used for this purpose (unless the person who wishes to leave is seated on the center aisle.) Everyone seated between the person who wishes to leave and the side aisle should leave the pew and stand in the side aisle while that person clears the pew (unless they are all part of the same family group). This process should be repeated when the person returns.
 - d. Restrooms should be single use only, unless family units enter together. An Usher will be responsible to remain in the Narthex during the service to ensure single use of the bathrooms and general foot traffic avoids restricted areas.
- 6. The CDC recommends establishing an indoor "Sick Area" for those who exhibit signs of illness during services.
 - a. The Sunday School room next to the Sunday School office will be clearly labeled as a Sick Area.
 - b. Protective equipment will be provided in this room for use when assisting a sick worshiper or visitor.
 - c. The Sick Area is not intended for long-term use or for those who are sick to listen to the worship service. The Area is intended to separate potentially sick entrants from asymptomatic individuals and establish if they need immediate medical attention or if they can leave the building independently.
 - d. Sick worshipers or visitors will be escorted out of the building through the side door at the end of the hallway.
- 7. During worship
 - a. In order to reduce the spread of aerosols, there will be no congregational singing or full-voice unison speaking. Attendees are urged to speak in low voices when praying or speaking congregational responses.
 - b. The handheld microphone will be set in a static location. Anyone needing to make an announcement will walk to that microphone and use it without touching it. Lay readers should also use this microphone. A designated person will be responsible for turning on and off the microphone and adjusting the height as necessary. Assisting ministers will wipe down their headset and battery pack before and after worship.
 - c. Offering plates will not be passed. Instead, a receptacle will be placed near the door between the narthex and nave. Givers will drop their offerings there. On "Joyful Noise" Sundays, a second receptacle (metal, for clinking) will be available there.
 - d. For the sharing of the peace, the assembly will be encouraged to flash "peace signs" (or use another gesture).

- e. The baptismal font will not have water normally. For a scheduled baptism, only the immediate family of the baptized should approach the font. The presiding minister will wear a mask and gloves and will use the baptismal shell instead of touching the baptized person. Baptisms can be scheduled privately (a video or some other way of connecting the baptism to the assembly will be provided).
 - f. All young children should remain with their family at all times.
8. Holy Communion
- a. A table will be set up near the foot of the chancel. On this table will be pre-filled cups of wine, and cubed pieces of bread in condiment cups. They will be covered appropriately. The Altar Guild will wear masks and gloves while preparing this setup each week.
 - b. The covering will be removed just before the Great Thanksgiving by an usher or assisting minister wearing a mask and gloves. The presiding minister will lead the Great Thanksgiving from behind the altar, not behind this table; any elements he touches will not be consumed by others.
 - c. Ushers will direct the assembly forward pew by pew, using tape markers to maintain a 6' distance between attendees. If there are not enough empty markers forward of the pew to accommodate all of the people in that pew, communicants should remain in the pew until a spot opens up.
 - d. Communicants will take the bread and wine themselves. The presiding and assisting ministers will stand behind the table, masked, and say, "The body of Christ" and "the blood of Christ." Communicants will then move to the side, remove their mask, eat and drink, and replace their mask. Communicants will then place the empty cups in provided receptacles.
 - e. The ministers will provide a blessing for those not communing from a distance. Standing where they are, behind the table, they will proclaim the blessing.
 - f. Communicants will return from the front as usual, using the side aisles.
9. Exiting the building:
- a. Ushers will dismiss attendees pew by pew, starting at the rear of the nave, using the same procedures used for communion, i.e., if there are not enough empty markers between the pew and the door, attendees should remain in the pew until a space opens up.
 - b. If there is anyone seated in the Fellowship Hall, ushers will dismiss them after the nave has been cleared, row by row, starting with the row closest to the door and using the tape markers to maintain the appropriate distance.
 - c. Once in the narthex, attendees should immediately proceed to the parking lot, using the tape markers to maintain the appropriate distance between individuals/family groups.

- d. Socializing in the Narthex, Sanctuary, parking lot, or any other church property is not recommended until deemed safe by the PA DOH, the CDC, and the Prince of Peace Task Force.
- e. Offering counters are encouraged to wear gloves and masks when handling envelopes and money and should wash their hands thoroughly when complete.

10. Cleaning

- a. Weekly cleaning and sanitizing the building will be performed by our Sexton.
- b. The building will be cleaned and sanitized after every service.
- c. Particular areas of concern will be the narthex, sanctuary, rest rooms.
- d. Light switches, door handles, tabletops, pews, pulpit, altar, walls that are within reach will be sanitized. All areas will be wiped.
- e. All floors in the narthex and sanctuary will be vacuumed.

11. Suspension of worship

- a. Attendance will be taken each week by the greeters. If we determine that someone who attended worship has tested positive for COVID-19, in-person worship will be suspended for three weeks. Also, everyone who attended the same service(s) as the infected person will be notified.
- b. If there is an increase in COVID-19 cases in our region that causes county or state agencies to issue stricter guidance, the Re-Opening Taskforce may suspend in-person worship for a specific time or indefinitely.

12. The Corona virus and COVID-19 pandemic present new and unpredictable challenges for congregations and families alike. The measures adopted by Prince of Peace are for the protection of all and will be re-evaluated and updated as needed, directed as always, by the PA DOH and CDC guidelines.

The Prince of Peace Reopening Task Force

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Approved by Congregation Council 6/23/2020

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