

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

UPDATED JULY 2021

*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 are not necessary for those who are fully vaccinated (two weeks since last dose). If you are not fully vaccinated, we ask you to wear a mask.
- d. 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.
- e. Socializing indoors is not recommended at this time.

### 2. Narthex

- a. Greeters will verbally greet worshipers and visitors and may use other non-touching gestures such as peace signs or "thumbs up" to convey welcome greetings.
- b. There will be no handouts prior to worship, but you may pick up announcement folders or other things as people leave.
- c. Greeters and Ushers will act as contact persons for entrants who need guidance, direction, or assistance in following the recommended safety precautions.
- d. Training will be provided for Greeters and Ushers.

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.
  
4. "Safe Zone" seating
  - a. Recognizing that people's comfort levels vary regarding COVID at this point, we have designated our Fellowship Hall as a "safe zone." In Fellowship Hall, all worshipers will be masked and practice 6-foot social distancing. Worship is shared live there on large television screens.
  - b. If you prefer to worship in the Fellowship Hall, please speak to an usher or greeter.
  
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. Restrooms should be single use only, unless family units enter together. Wipes are available in each restroom; you are asked to wipe down surfaces after each use.
  
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. Ushers will direct the assembly forward pew by pew.
  - b. Communicants will take the bread and wine themselves. The presiding and assisting ministers will say to them, “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.
  - c. 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.
  - d. 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.
  - 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. Socializing indoors is not recommended at this time.
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, doorhandles, table tops, 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. 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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