



WOODBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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Rev. John A. Thomason, Pastor

June 29, 2020

Rev. Dr. Alpher Sylvester,
District Superintendent, Connecticut District,
New York Annual Conference (NYAC), United Methodist Church

Dear Rev. Sylvester,

As Lay Leader, I am writing on behalf of Woodbury United Methodist Church, located in the Town of Woodbury, CT (WUMC-CT), to request your review and approval of our phased plan for reopening our church. I was asked to lead WUMC-CT's ad hoc COVID-19 Recovery Team (CRT) in developing our strategy and plan for reopening in a manner that ensures the welfare and safety of our church family and surrounding community. Our CRT team comprises representatives from key ministries/ committees, has met frequently over the last month, and is working closely with ministries/committees that will be charged with implementing approved reopening plans in compliance with NYAC guidelines.

Based on input from our church family, including input from an anonymous survey, we are proposing to reopen in a phased manner. Phase A will entail in-person worship services to be held outdoors. Phase B will enable indoor worship services, initially as a contingency in the advent of weather that precludes outdoor services. We have conceptually identified two more phases that will lead eventually to a new 'normal' church life, which remains to be defined.

The enclosed planning documents focus on detailed plans for Phases A and B, for which we seek your and NYAC approval. For your convenience, a high-level summary of our strategy and plans are provided in a PowerPoint briefing included as an appendix. We hope to hold our first outdoor service as early as July 12th, assuming that we have adequately addressed all risks and concerns in compliance with NYAC guidelines. We realize that the Phase B plan may require an iteration before final approval. While we do not plan to routinely hold indoor services until September, we hope to have approval for holding indoor services in early August, allowing time for one Phase B plan iteration, if necessary.

We hope that it is obvious that WUMC-CT takes seriously the risks associated with reopening and plans to comply with NYAC's guidelines. The next to last section in the enclosed plan contains WUMC-CT's Church Compliance Certification, signed by our Pastor and the Chairpersons of Trustees and Church Council, and two compliance matrices. The first matrix summarizes plan compliance and cites page number(s) where plan details can be found for each item of with NYAC's Worksheet for Protocol Planning and Reopening Teams. The second matrix provides a similar summary of compliance with recommendations provided by our liability insurance company Church Mutual.

We look forward to your and NYAC's feedback and approval of our Phase A and Phase B plans. Our CRT stands ready to discuss and respond to any questions, concerns, and requests for improving our current plans. Finally, we thank Bishop Bickerton, the NYAC team, and yourself for the thoughtful and comprehensive guidelines that were provided to support local churches in reopening during these very difficult times.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Mark W. Davis

Mark W. Davis, Lay Leader
Woodbury UMC of Connecticut



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Rev. John A. Thomason, Pastor

COVID-19 Reopening Plan

Jointly Prepared by COVID-19 Recovery Team and Trustees

Woodbury United Methodist Church

Woodbury, CT

Submitted to:

Rev. Dr. Alpher Sylvester,
District Superintendent, Connecticut District,
New York Annual Conference (NYAC)
United Methodist Church

June 29, 2020

Version 2.0

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Introduction

In mid-March, the Leadership Team at Woodbury United Methodist Church of Woodbury, CT (WUMC-CT), made the difficult decision to postpone or reschedule all activities and events that traditionally are conducted in-person. At that time, we immediately transitioned to remote committee meetings via teleconference and online worship services, leveraging already existing livestreaming of services. This was communicated to the church family via a special Life of the Church letter (see Appendix A) that was distributed via e-mail, traditional mail, website posting, and phone calls. The latter was done as part of a campaign immediately launched by our Family Nurture Ministry team to call all members of our extended church family to communicate this decision and assess the well-being of each family and potential need for support.

We revamped our website to make it more accessible and user-friendly as a means of staying in touch. We also transitioned to pre-recorded worship services, that allowed more members of our church family to safely participate in the service (e.g., virtual choirs). We also developed a method for providing an audio-only broadcast of the service by phone for a small number of members having no access to computers or smart phones. We learned to conduct meetings and twice weekly Fellowship Hours via Zoom video conference. For better or worse over the last three months, we have become quite adept at remotely conducting most elements of traditional church life.

In mid-May, WUMC-CT formed an ad hoc COVID-19 Recovery Team (CRT) for developing a strategy and plan for reopening the church for in-person worship and other elements of church life. CRT's efforts have been helped greatly by the extremely thoughtful and comprehensive guidelines/requirements provided by the New York Annual Conference (NYAC) of the United Methodist Church and recommendations provided by Church Mutual Insurance, which underwrites WUMC-CT's liability insurance. WUMC-CT Leadership and CRT fully understand these guidelines, requirements, and recommendations and that compliance is a life and death matter that must be taken seriously as certified by our Pastor and the Chairpersons of our Board of Trustees (BOT) and Church Council. NYAC's Church Compliance Certification document, as signed by these representatives, has been included in the next to last section.

WUMC-CT CRT has developed a four-phase plan that will initially reopen the church for in-person outdoor worship services and eventually lead to a new 'normal' church life, which remains to be defined. Phases A (outdoor worship) and B (indoor worship) are well defined and serve as the primary focus of the current plan. While we have conceptually identified two more phases, much work remains to be done before associated Phase C and D plans will be ready for review, approval, and implementation. WUMC-CT is seeking the approval of the Phase A and Phase B plans by the NYAC Connecticut District Superintendent. We are hoping to obtain approval(s) for holding outdoor services as early as July 12th and for holding indoor services in early August.

The remainder of the document is organized into the following sections: 1) Overall Strategy and Approach, 2) Communication Strategy and Church Family Survey, 3) Phased Reopening, 4) General Preparation, 5) Phase A Plan Description, 6) Phase B Plan Description, 7) Plan Compliance and Certification, 8) Concluding Remarks, and 9) Appendices, with additional information. For convenience, a high-level summary of the narrative plan is provided in a slide deck in Appendix B.

Overall Strategy and Approach

WUMC-CT's Church Council formed the CRT as a small team composed of the Pastor, Lay Leader, and representatives of key ministries/committees, including Board of Trustees, Worship Ministry, Open Doors Ministry (evangelism & outreach), Adult Ministry, Children & Youth Ministry, and Finance Committee. This resulted in a team of six members, given dual roles by some members.

The CRT started the process by defining the path to reopening, which is graphically represented in Figure 1, 'Path to Reopening,' below, and by developing both a high-level strategy and approach that would guide high-level planning.

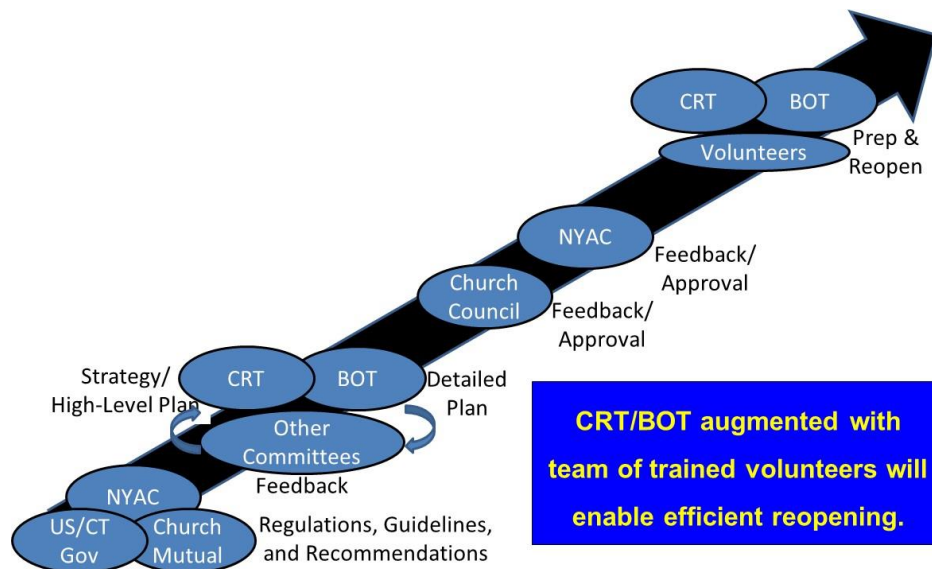


Figure 1: Path to Reopening

The high-level strategy is captured by the following guiding principles:

- Follow “The General Rules” created by John Wesley: Do no harm. Do Good. Stay in Love with God.
- Reconcile and comply with
 - NYAC: *COVID-19 Guidelines for Church Reopening*
 - Church Mutual Insurance: *Recommendations for Safe Return to Worship*
- Be disciplined and systematic in assessing and minimizing the risks posed by the Coronavirus in reopening the church
- Be creative in determining and meeting the needs of our church family
- Engage the entire church family in developing and implementing the reopening plan
- Develop and implement a communication strategy to prepare and train our church family for a successful reopening of our church

The CRT acts as a catalyst for developing a reopening strategy and high-level plan. The high-level plan has been iteratively refined through feedback from various ministries/committees and

members of the church family at large. While CRT members are expected to represent and keep their respective ministry(ies)/committee(s) in the loop, special meetings have been held with BOT and Church Council along the way to seek feedback and buy-in, early and often, from the full WUMC-CT Leadership Team. Additionally, early feedback from the church family at large was sought via an anonymous survey with the results used to change the phased plan, as described in the next subsection.

WUMC-CT's reopening plan is based on a solid understanding of risks, risk mitigation methods, and compliance with regulations, guidelines, and recommendations, which have been developed by large organizations that have thought long and hard about the risks and conferred with experts regarding best practices for reducing these risks. Further, WUMC-CT is blessed with members within the church family that have strong science, technology, and/or healthcare backgrounds. These members have stepped forward to provide additional understanding of risks/mitigations that have been leveraged in developing plan details that are both compliant with published guidelines and tailored to WUMC-CT's specific church facility and available resources.

The CRT then worked with BOT and other committees to develop the more detailed plan documented herein. The following high-level approach was developed by CRT to guide plan development:

- Identify and prioritize all elements of church life for which a risk assessment and mitigation approach is required
- Establish a phased reopening plan for returning to a fully open church allowing all elements of church life to be conducted in a safe manner
- Establish work teams with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for implementing the reopening plan
- Establish an early warning system for identifying the need for renewed restrictions or improved processes
- Communicate early and often to all members of the church family

Once the plans for Phase A and B are approved by NYAC, CRT and BOT will work jointly to develop detailed preparation/implementation work plans and checklists to be followed by trained volunteers to ensure adherence to approved plans. Preparation and implementation of these work plans and checklists will be monitored by members of CRT/BOT with clearly defined roles and responsibilities to ensure adherence to approved plans and to modify these plans as we encounter challenges and/or are informed of new best practices that emerge from NYAC local churches. Of course, WUMC-CT will confer with the District Superintendent, Connecticut District (DSCD) if lower level work plans and checklists deviate materially from the plans documented herein.

Communication Strategy and Church Family Survey

Communication throughout the path to reopening depicted above is crucial to a safe and successful reopening and our eventual return to a full and vibrant church life. The CRT developed the following communication strategy, which will continue to evolve as we continue our journey:

- Review of draft re-opening strategy, high-level plan, and survey by Church Council and key Committees (e.g., BOT, SPRC, Worship)

- Conduct survey of church family to assess comfort level, determine preferences on key decisions, estimate likely attendees, and identify vulnerable members that may attend
- Church Council review/approval of final detailed plan
- DSCD and NYAC review/approval of final detailed plan
- Transmit high-level summary of final plan to church family via Life of the Church Letter
- Hold Zoom meeting(s) to educate church family and solicit support for work teams
- Post guidelines, plan, checklists, FAQs, and concise educational /training articles, graphics, and/or videos on WUMC website and communicate to church family via multiple channels
- Provide mechanism(s) for submitting questions to WUMC CRT/BOT online or by e-mail and/or calling to discuss concerns in private with the Chairperson of CRT
- Post/distribute the following videos prior to reopening.
 - Pastor: providing reassurance; describing re-opening procedures, changes, and requirements; encouraging vulnerable to be "safer at home"; and emphasizing need for any church family member that is diagnosed with COVID-19 to notify the church office
 - Lay Leader: walking through & explaining new traffic patterns for entering, seating & exiting sanctuary/building.
- Conduct training of volunteers that will help implement the plan
- Post ubiquitous signage within church facility and outdoor service venue
- In the event of a member being diagnosed with COVID-19, notify the Pomperaug Health District and affected church family members, using HIPAA compliant methods.

With the submittal of this plan, WUMC-CT has completed the first three elements listed above for Phases A and B. The Church Family Survey used to shape the final plan is provided in Appendix C. The survey included a one-page introduction explaining the guidelines and restrictions with which we need to comply during initial phases of reopening. The survey posed questions in three categories: 1) Reopening, 2) Online Services, and 3) Demographics, and took ~10 minutes to complete. We had 27 responses within 24 hours, showing high interest, and 40 responses by the close of the survey ten days later. Eighty-one percent of the respondents were over the age of 50.

Key results that helped shape our Phase A and B reopening plans are summarized in the pie charts, shown in Figure 2, reflecting responses to the following three questions: 1) likelihood of attending indoor services in July-Aug, 2) likelihood of attending indoor services in Sep-Oct, and 3) would the respondent be more likely to attend outdoor services in July-Aug.

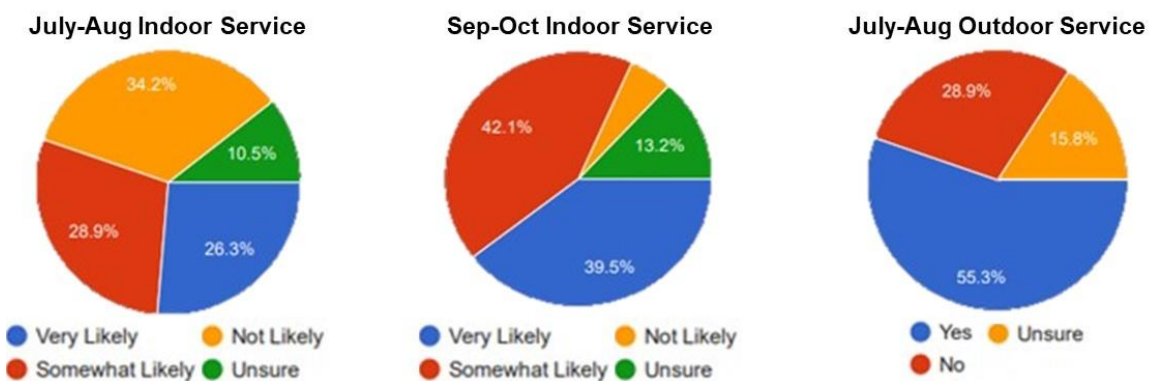


Figure 2: Key Results from Part 1 of the Survey

The following Category 1 and 3 survey results were of particular relevance in finalizing our phased reopening approach:

- 34% of respondents are unlikely to attend indoor service in July-Aug
- 40% are more likely to attend indoor service in Sep-Oct
- 55% would be more likely to attend outdoor service in July-Aug
- 45% indicated that sufficient risk reductions protocols were planned
- 16% would like to see more protocols (undefined)
- 11% would like to see fewer restrictions on worship service
- 78% would be willing to pre-register for weekly service to help in taking attendance and contact tracing if it became necessary
- Over 50% felt that providing online services was sufficient to accommodate the 50-person limitation on indoor services, as opposed to having two services or an overflow room.
- About 42 people are likely to attend if indoor services were held in July-Aug.

As a result of the survey, a prioritized plan to hold outdoor services was developed as Phase A, while deferring preparation for holding indoor services until later in the summer as part of Phase B. Further, the CRT concluded that there was no need to provide two services or an overflow room, which would place additional burden on worship and volunteer cleaning teams.

Category 2 of the survey provided excellent insight into participation in and satisfaction with recent broadcasts of worship services (online video and audio-only via telephone) and twice-weekly virtual Fellowship Hours. It also sought ideas for future improvements since online and remote worship and fellowship are likely to be essential components of WUMC's ministries now and into the future. However, this feedback did not influence reopening plans, which is the focus of this document, and thus are not summarized herein.

Phased Reopening

After consideration of the Church Family Survey results and much discussion, the Church Council, BOT, and CRT, decided to develop a conceptual four-phased plan that ultimately leads to a new 'normal' church life, which remains to be defined:

- Phase A – Initial Reopening via Outdoor Worship Services
- Phase B – Reopening Indoor Services, Pastoral Care, and Other Church Ministries
- Phase C – Safe Restoration of Other Key Restricted Church Life Elements
- Phase D – Final Transition to New Normal

Key aspects of the four phases are summarized in Table 1 (at the top of the next page) with early phases continuing to impose restrictions associated with current remote/virtual church life activities. As can be seen, the focus of Phase A is the introduction of in-person outdoor worship services in compliance with NYAC guidelines and restrictions. All other elements of the life of the church remain on hold or will be conducted remotely as is being done today.

In Phase B, indoor worship services, ministry/committee meetings of fewer than 5 people, in-person pastoral visits, and weddings/funerals will be allowed using appropriate social distancing and risk reduction restrictions/protocols in compliance with NYAC guidelines/restrictions and Church Mutual recommendations. It is expected that the Pastor and ministry/committee chairs will use discretion in determining whether meetings/visits can be conducted virtually as done today or are best conducted in person.

Table 1: Summary of Four-Phase Church Life Activities

Church Life Element	Phase A	Phase B	Phase C	Phase D
Church Office & Administration	Appointment only if can't be conducted remotely.	No Change	Open with new protocols	TBD
Worship & Associated Activities	Outdoor Services	Indoor Services	Fewer Restrictions	TBD
Sunday School & Children's Activities	Remote. No in-person.	No change	Allowed with new restrictions	TBD
Bible Studies	Remote. No in-person.	No change	Up to 20 people	TBD
Ministries/Committees	Remote meetings	5 or fewer people	Up to 20 people	TBD
Pastoral Care	Remote	At Pastor's Discretion	Fewer Restrictions	TBD
Weddings/Funerals	Suspended	Allowed with same restrictions as worship	Fewer Restrictions	TBD
3 rd Party Facility Use	Suspended	No Change	Allowed with new restrictions	TBD

In Phase C, it is envisioned that social distancing and risk reduction protocols can be defined to safely relax restrictions on other elements in the life of the church, which remain to be determined as we learn from the experiences gained from Phases A and B, as well as those from across NYAC and the country as a whole. Finally, it is hoped that a yet to be defined Phase D will allow reduced restrictions on church life activities and unencumbered from associated distractions. This may result from either 1) the development and deployment of a safe and effective Coronavirus vaccine and/or 2) the evolution of best practices that protect our church family and surrounding communities with less-intrusive restrictions on how we conduct the life of the church.

General Preparation and detailed Phase A and B plans are provided in the next three sections. Sufficient details are provided to substantiate the protocols being implemented to ensure the safety of our church family and community and compliance with NYAC guidelines/restrictions. More detailed workplans and checklists are being developed, in parallel to plan review/approval, to be used by volunteer teams in preparation for and implementation of these plans. We are asking for DSCD and NYAC approval of the Phase A plan by July 10th, if possible, so that WUMC-CT can hold its first outdoor worship service on July 12th. We hope to have approval to hold indoor services by the end of July. WUMC-CT's intent is to hold worship services outdoors throughout the summer, but would like to hold indoor services in the event of bad weather.

General Plans and Preparation

WUMC-CT has already begun general preparation for reopening for in-person services. Because of the detailed guidelines provided by NYAC and detailed recommendations provided by Church Mutual Insurance, preparation requirements are well known. By preparing in parallel, WUMC-CT will be ready to hold our first outdoor service shortly after receiving DSCD and NYAC review/approval. The CRT decomposed planning and preparation efforts into the categories listed below. General plans and preparation efforts will be discussed briefly for each within this section, while phase-specific plans will be described in detail in following sections.

- Communication and Training
- Worship Service Enhancements to Offset Safety Related /Restrictions
- Risk Management and Compliance with Guidelines
- Procurement of Supplies
- Facility Modification and Preparation
- Readiness and Approval

Communication and Training: Early on, CRT recognized the importance of communication in developing a reopening strategy and plans that meet the needs of our church family, while complying with governing regulations and guidelines. A list of elements was provided in a previous section, many of which are already well underway. WUMC-CT website has been modified to include a ‘COVID-19 Recover/Reopening’ webpage (<https://woodburyumc.net/covid-recovery%2Freopening>) that is easily accessible by using a hotlink button at the top of our website homepage. The webpage was created in late May as a resource for respondents of the reopening survey that was conducted and described earlier. At that time, the page content focused on NYAC and Church Mutual guidelines, the NYAC ‘Worksheet for Protocol Planning and Reopening Teams,’ the work-in-progress WUMC-CT Reopening Strategy and Planning slide deck, and the reopening survey. The detailed reopening plan documented herein will be posted concurrently with submittal of the plan to the NYAC DSCD. Additional content will be added as it becomes available, including guideline compliance checklists, workplan(s)/checklist(s) for church modification and preparation, supply procurement checklist, cleaning checklist for each church area, instructional and training material, reopening readiness/approval checklist, NYAC Worship Checklist, and frequently asked questions.

Instructional and training material will include the following:

- Instructions, checklists, and talking points for ushers/greeters
- Registration and check-in processes
- Ingress/egress flow patterns for both church facility/sanctuary and outdoor venues
- Importance for social distancing, wearing masks, avoiding touching of one’s face, and hand washing/hygiene
- Information on social distancing requirements for both venues
- Instructions for proper wearing of face coverings
- Messaging to stay home if vulnerable, sick or have been in close contact within last 14 days with a person diagnosed within COVID-19
- Signage to be posted at both venues
- Cleaning procedures and checklist(s) for each church area, as well as a list of supplies.

Training modules are planned for the following:

- What to expect when you return to worship, including guidelines/restrictions for in-person worship service, ingress/egress flow patterns for indoor/outdoor worship service venues, registration/check-in processes, signage, guidance on when to stay at home, and instructions for reporting COVID-19 illness or exposure in the family
- Procedures for ushers/greeters, including taking attendance, reminding people of worship service guidelines/restrictions, and handling non-cooperative attendees
- Proper cleaning/disinfecting procedures

Instructional/training materials will take the form of graphical signs, brief narrative documents, power point briefings, and/or videos, as appropriate. For example, two videos are planned for reinforcing more traditional training material that will be made available on our website and ‘taught’ during an online video Zoom meeting and teleconference. In the first planned video, our Pastor will provide reassurance that we are ready to safely open; a brief description of what to expect when returning to in-person worship; reminders of requirements for social distancing, wearing a mask, and following foot traffic flow patterns; reminders to our church family that they should stay at home if sick or have been in close contact with a person that has been diagnosed with COVID-19; encouragement for vulnerable church members to continue to be safe and worship at home; and instructions for any church family member that is diagnosed with COVID-19 or in close contact with someone who has to notify the church office. In the second planned video(s), our Lay Leader will literally walk through both the church facility/sanctuary and outdoor worship service venue explaining new traffic patterns for entering, seating and exiting each venue.

Training options will include: 1) self-training using the aforementioned material, which will be posted on WUMC-CT’s website and sent via US mail to members without internet access, 2) an online video Zoom meeting, and 3) teleconference with members, which have no internet access, following along using hardcopies. In addition to posting FAQs, WUMC-CT will provide church family members an opportunity to submit questions to our CRT/BOT online or by e-mail. Finally, church family members will be informed that they can call our Lay Leader, who is also the CRT Chairperson, to discuss any questions or concerns. All key materials posted on our website will be mailed to members without internet access.

Worship Service Enhancements to Offset Safety Related Restrictions: A key outcome from the church family survey and numerous informal discussions is that many members of the WUMC-CT church family are wondering “what is the point of reopening” with all the restrictions associated with NYAC and insurance company guidelines/restrictions. Thus, the CRT developed an initial list of ‘Multi-Sensory Modes of Worship’ as shown Figure 3 (see top of next page). This figure represents a slide that we plan to use to motivate our church family to view this as an exciting opportunity to explore new methods of worship. During training sessions that we plan to conduct to get our church family ready for the near-term ‘new normal,’ we will have the opportunity to discuss these options and solicit feedback and other ideas for alternative worship that are compliant with Phase A and B guidelines/restrictions.

Following reopening for in-person worship services, WUMC-CT plans to continue to provide online video and audio-only telephone broadcasts of worship services each week. The second part of the survey on online worship showed that 100% of respondents had watched and/or listened to these other broadcasts, and 43% of respondents were over the age of 65. While a vast majority typically watched the online video broadcast, the audio-only telephone broadcast has had 3-5

listeners every week. Most listeners have no internet access and are elderly. Therefore, sustainment of both broadcast options is important.

Before the COVID-19 crisis, WUMC-CT live-streamed worship services, which were archived for later viewing. We did not offer audio-only telephone broadcasts. Subsequently, we went to pre-recorded broadcasts to achieve better sound quality and resolve online bandwidth issues, which caused annoying buffering and other

interruptions, associated with the large number of new remote participants. The following were among other reasons for going away from livestreaming: 1) limitations on the number of people that could participate in the service, 2) desire for inclusion of a children’s moment, and 3) desire for a virtual choir. We now use an audio-file from the video recording for audio-only broadcast.

After we converged on our current approach for broadcasting worship services, people have been generally satisfied with both the video and audio-only telephone broadcasts of pre-recorded services. According to the second part of our church survey, 73% of respondents were very satisfied with the video broadcast and 22% were somewhat satisfied. One person was not satisfied, stating we should not try to provide an online worship service that mimics an in-person service.

We will likely have to revamp our online broadcasts once again, given the challenges of livestreaming and/or recording services in an outdoor venue while maintaining large social distances between worship team members and using relatively inexpensive equipment. Based on the lessons learned from transitioning to completely online worship services, we may have to continue (initially) to pre-record non-live services, until we can investigate and procure appropriate equipment that would allow us to livestream/record both indoor and outdoor services with acceptable broadcast quality. We currently have no equipment that would allow livestreaming of an audio-only broadcast. Given the number of vulnerable church family members that will be encouraged to stay safe at home following reopening and the number of out-of-state participants that have started watching online services, we will likely invest in equipment that would allow us to provide quality broadcasts while livestreaming services.

Risk Management and Compliance with Guidelines: After reviewing the comprehensive guidelines/restrictions from NYAC and recommendations from Church Mutual Insurance (see Appendix D), the CRT developed compliance matrices for both (see the next to last section entitled

Potential Modifications to Enhance Restricted Worship Service

Multi-Sensory Modes of Worship

- Enhanced Scripture readings with sound effects
- Non-Traditional Song/Choir
 - Virtual Choir
 - Instrumental pieces accompanied by sign language, body motions, and/or congregational reading of lyrics
- Worship Song PowerPoint with Inspirational Images & Lyrics
- Hymn Stories: Delve into history of faith songs bringing inspiration, reflection & a fresh perspective.
- Guided Prayer
- Chants & Taizé prayer
- Guided Meditations & reflections accompanied by video
- Christian poetry reading
- Purposeful silence
 - Ecclesiastes 3:7– “There is a time to keep silence and a time to speak”
- Use of visual design elements: artful displays with props, art, flowers, etc.

Let’s view this as an opportunity to explore worship through a wider variety of our God given senses & modalities.

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Figure 3: Multi-Sensory Modes of Worship

‘Plan Compliance and Certification’) and decided to use these as a surrogate for federal and state government regulations, guidelines, and recommendations. In addition, the CRT ultimately plans to perform its own risk assessment of identify primary risk mitigations for each of the following elements of the life of the church:

- Church Office and Administration Activities
- Worship Services and Associated Activities
- Sunday School, Youth Group, and Bible Studies
- Church Ministries and Committees
- Pastoral Care
- Weddings and Funerals
- Third Party Facility Use

Such a risk management approach may result in primary risk mitigation restrictions/protocols that completely overlap the guidelines/recommendations provided by NYAC and Church Mutual. However, it is felt that such a systematic approach will provide a better understanding of the risks and governing guidelines. At this point, the development of risk management matrices has only been completed for Phase A and B plans, respectively. These will be discussed in subsequent sections that document these two plans. Other activities in the life of the church will be addressed in Phase C and D plans to be submitted for approval at a later date.

At every step of developing the plans contained herein, the CRT worked to understand the underlying risks that drove the guidelines developed by NYAC and Church Mutual. This allowed the CRT to tailor, with confidence, our plans to our church family, facility, and available resources. As the next step beyond plan development, the CRT has already begun to develop detailed task workplans, checklists, training material, and signage that ensure that trained staff and volunteers perform both non-recurring and recurring tasks in compliance with approved plans.

Most of the details associated with risk management and compliance are specific to specific church life elements and different phases of the plan. As such, details for Phases A and B will be described in the last three sections of the main body of this document: Phase A Plan Description, Phase B Plan Description, and Plan Compliance and Certification. However, one overarching risk that is common to all church activities and plan phases warrants a discussion here. That is the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak within our church family. This risk will be addressed through training and robust recurring communication that emphasizes the importance for reporting COVID-19 illness in the family and close contact by family members with diagnosed people. If a church family member has been in close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19, they will be asked to stay at home for 14 days before returning to in-person worship services. In the event of a member being diagnosed with COVID-19, the Lay Leader will determine, based on attendance records, the list of church family members to be notified that they may have been exposed to the Coronavirus. Either the Pastor and/or the Lay Leader will contact, using HIPAA compliant methods, affected church family members and the Pomperaug Health District Department, which covers Woodbury and will be responsible for contact tracing.

Procurement of Supplies: Supplies required to prepare for reopening are now more readily available. WUMC-CT’s BOT has already registered to receive a ‘starter’ cleaning kit from NYAC that we anticipate will include disinfectant concentrate, masks, spray bottles, hand sanitizer. The BOT also plans to take advantage of any opportunities offered by the state for securing personal protection equipment (PPE) or grants for their purchase. The BOT plans to procure and sustain an

inventory of cleaning supplies (e.g., disinfectants, cleaning wipes), hand sanitizer, bathroom supplies (toilet paper, paper towels, tissues), PPE (masks, gloves, and face shields), and no-touch trash cans. Ample supplies will be maintained in inventory for use by staff, volunteers, and worship service attendees. While it is hoped that attendees will bring their own masks, a supply will be made available to any attendee arriving at check-in without one. Signage for both outdoor and indoor services will be either made by volunteers or purchased. Many signs CRT/BOT plan to post are readily available for online purchase. Ropes and stakes will be purchased to support the Phase A plan to create check-in points at outdoor services (see the next section).

Facility Modification and Preparation: Primary modifications and preparation of the church for in-person worship services are related to 1) deep initial cleaning, 2) signage, and 3) recurring cleaning. A professional cleaning service will be hired to deep clean the office, sanctuary, all entrances/exits, all bathrooms, and all carpets, flooring, and pew cushions. Recurring cleaning will be conducted by staff and volunteers as described in detail in Phase A and B plans described in the next two sections. Detailed workplans and checklists will be developed for use by staff and volunteers, who will be trained in proper cleaning procedures. Recurring cleaning conducted shortly before worship services will be overseen by the Lay Leader (or delegate).

Readiness and Approval: Readiness for reopening will be achieved after successful completion of the following for each of the Phase A and Phase B plans:

- Compliance matrices have been created and completed to ensure that NYAC guidelines/restrictions and Church /Mutual recommendations have been satisfied
- NYAC ‘Worksheet for Protocol Planning and Reopening Teams’ has been completed.
- Reopening plans have been documented
- WUMC-CT Church Council has approved reopening plans
- WUMC-CT Pastor, Church Council Chairperson, and BOT Chairperson have signed church certification document
- WUMC-CT has submitted reopening plans, ‘Worksheet for Protocol Planning and Reopening Teams,’ and the NYAC compliance certification document to DSCD
- NYAC DSCD has approved WUMC-CT's plans
- Adequate supplies have been procured
- Building modification and preparation have been completed
- Instructional/training materials have been developed and staff, volunteers, and broader church family have been adequately trained per previous descriptions of the communications and training strategy
- Care has been taken to identify and encourage sick or vulnerable church family members to stay safe and worship at home, including: persons who are feeling sick, have a positive diagnosis of COVID-19 or have been in close contact with someone that has been diagnosed with COVID-19; those who are in vulnerable age categories, live with vulnerable persons or have pre-existing medical conditions; and anyone who has trouble breathing or requires assistance in putting on, keeping on or taking off a face covering
- Method for registration and taking attendance has been developed and communicated to church family
- Greeters/ushers have been trained

Note that almost half of these have been completed. While much remains to be done, we are well on our way to being ready to hold our first outdoor worship service in mid-July, pending DSCD approval.

Phase A Plan – Outdoor Worship Services

Based on survey results, WUMC-CT changed its phased plan to hold initial in-person services outdoors, addressing the reluctance of a significant portion of our church family to attend indoor services this summer. After consideration of potential locations, the CRT selected the Woodbury North Green located across Main street from the church (see Figure 4). The Town of Woodbury has verbally approved our request to use the town green for weekly outdoor worship service starting in mid-July until early September. A formal application was submitted and remains pending. This location is desirable for a number of reasons including the following:

- Proximity to WUMC-CT’s church facility
- Size of open space: >10,000 square feet within a natural boundary of trees planted along the periphery of the green (well back from the street)
- Estimated capacity, while maintaining social distancing: 300+ people with 6-ft social distancing; 200+ with 8-ft distancing, and 125+ with 10-ft distancing
- Visibility to community that WUMC-CT is open for worship
- Potential to hold joint services with other local churches

Assuming town approval, the Phase A plan assumes that 10-ft social distancing will be maintained, allowing for extra social distance of 15-20 feet between members of the worship team and the congregation, while still accommodating 100+ people. As a backup plan, the church’s front yard on Main Street can accommodate about 48 people with 6-ft social distancing and 28 people with 8-ft distancing with about 15-18 feet between the worship team and the congregation.



Figure 4: Location Selected for Phase A Outdoor Worship Services – Woodbury North Green

The following is a summary of key aspects of the Phase A plan to safely hold outdoor services, while minimizing identified risks and complying with NYAC and Church Mutual guidelines, restrictions, and recommendations. A conceptual layout of the town green when staged for worship services is provided in Figure 5. It is envisioned that roped boundaries (shown with dashed red lines) on the periphery will enable two clearly marked check-in areas, allowing trained

greeters to apply admission criteria, inform of mask and social distancing requirements, inform of service restrictions, record attendance, and provide access to hand sanitizer. Interior boundaries also will be imposed, as shown, to break the area up into four sections: 1) worship team (Pastor, Liturgist) within the circular boundary and 10-15 social distancing, 2) a praise band and/or two singers socially distanced by 10-15 feet, 3) southwest section for seating of the congregation associated with Check-In #1, and 4) northeast section for seating of the congregation associated with Check-In #2.

Parking spaces will be ‘reserved’ near both check-in areas for people with limited mobility, using temporary signs. The interior boundaries may be imposed before the service with ropes or cones that would be removed prior to the start of the service.

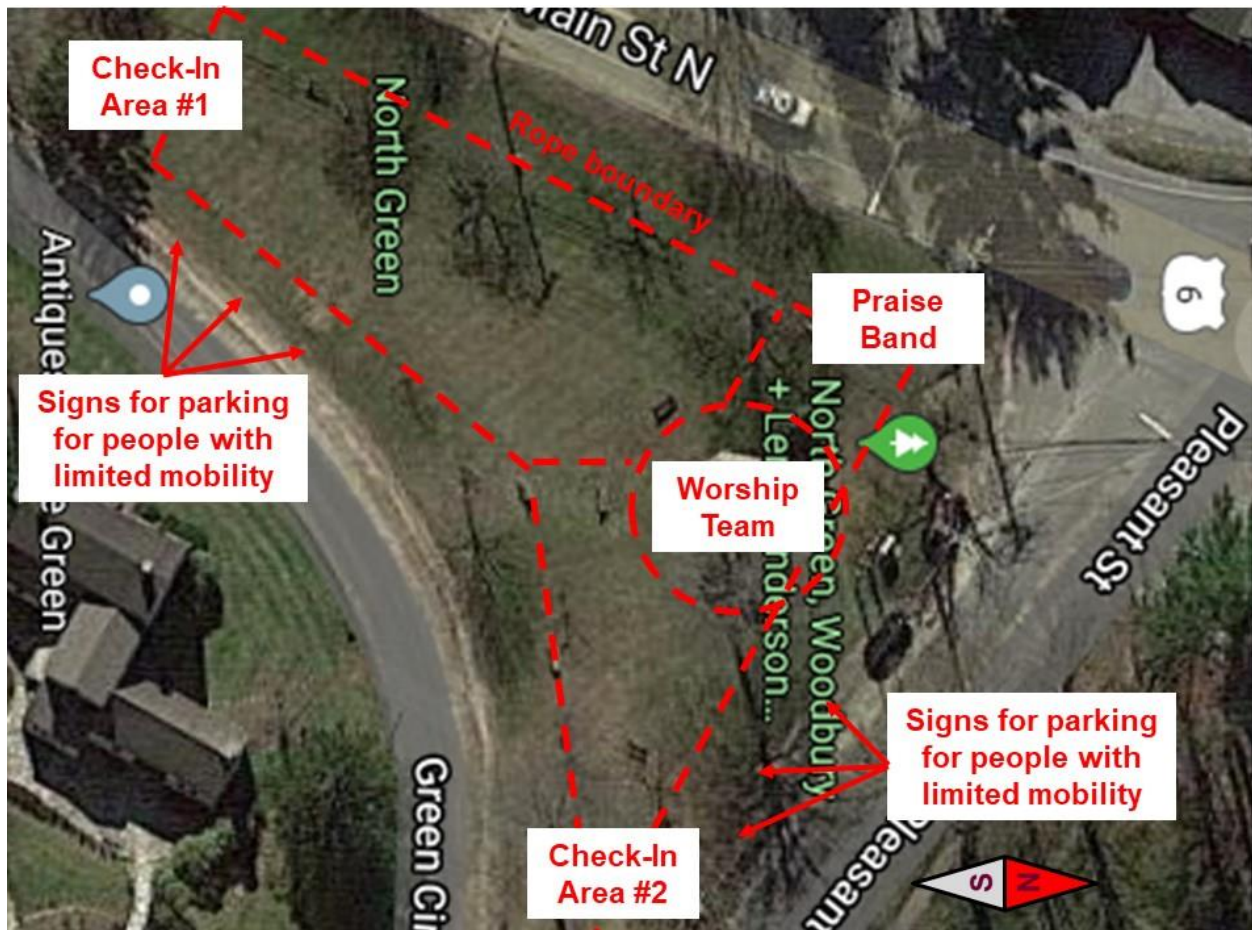


Figure 5: Conceptual Staging of North Green for Phase A Plan for Outdoor Worship Services

Note that outdoor services will be recorded live and scheduled for broadcast later on Sunday. Inclement weather will result in cancellation of in-person services until Phase B is approved, allowing indoor services. In the event of weather-related cancellations, services will be recorded in the sanctuary as is done today with no more than five socially distanced people present at any one time. Broadcast would be scheduled for later on Sunday, just as it would be if recorded live during an outdoor service.

The church's lower entrance will be open for access to adjacent (handicap accessible) restrooms before, during, and after the worship service. All other areas will be closed. An usher will be located at the clearly marked cross walk to help with traffic control as needed. Seating will be from front-to-back, on a first-come-first-serve basis in both check-in areas (from N.E. to S.W in area #1 and from West to East in area #2). Attendees will be asked to bring their own seating or sit on the lawn, along with a blanket for families with small children to provide a visual 'boundary' as a reminder to the children to remain with parent(s). A limited number of sanitized chairs will be available for person that forget or are not able to bring their own seating and cannot sit on the ground. Rope boundaries will be removed at service end to allow unrestricted exit, while maintaining proper social distancing, so that no bottlenecks are created at the two check-in areas.

Sanitization requirements will be much lower for this approach, when compared to the requirements for indoor services. Only a small portion of the Fellowship Hall and adjacent restrooms will require sanitization, because all of the other areas of the Fellowship Hall and church will be rendered inaccessible. Deep cleaning of carpeting and flooring in portions of the church to be used for both Phase A and Phase B will be performed by a professional cleaner prior to their respective reopening. The Lay Leader (or delegate) will oversee the initial deep cleaning and recurring setup/sanitization prior to each service to ensure compliance with guidelines and identify opportunities for process improvements.

Volunteers responsible for setup will be required to wear gloves when moving required material and supplies to the North Green and staging the area by installing the roped boundaries, sound system equipment, tables at the two check-in locations, and temporary signage. Gloves will be changed before sanitizing the following hard-surface touch points within the roped boundary: sound system components, tables at check-in points, town green permanent benches, and the limited number of chairs to be made available as described above. The gazebo will be roped off so that it does not have to be sanitized. The areas for the worship team and praise band will be off limits to the congregation after these areas have been sanitized. If people with limited mobility require assistance with seating setup, the seats will be sanitized following setup.

The above sanitization process will be performed shortly before planned arrival of the worship team and congregation. Volunteers doing setup will be required to perform proper hand hygiene by washing or disinfecting their hands after removal and disposal of the gloves. After the service, new gloves will be used by volunteers when tearing down and storing material, followed by removal/disposal of gloves and washing/disinfecting of hands. This process precludes the need to sanitize staging materials following the service. The sound system equipment would be sanitized following return to the sanctuary.

The following is a summary of outdoor worship service restrictions that will be imposed during Phase A to minimize the risk of virus spread:

- Max capacity of 100 attendees
- Masks must be worn at all times, except when the Pastor, liturgist, and soloist are speaking or singing while maintaining 20-foot social distance with other worship team members and the congregation
- Separate microphones and lecterns/stands for all worship team members
- Socially spaced praise band in N.W. area of green
- At least 10-foot social distance between families (can go to greater distancing if this would enable DSCD and NYAC approval of congregational singing)
- Children to remain with parent(s) at all times

- No congregational singing; no passing of the peace; no greeting line
- Personal Bibles/hymnals only (both available for long-term loan from the church)

The following is a summary of the check-in process planned to minimize risk of virus spread and enable contact tracing, if it ever becomes necessary:

- A six-person team, including the Lay Leader (or delegate), four ‘greeters,’ one ‘usher’ (wearing masks, name tags, same colored shirts for visibility, and socially distanced), will be used to ensure social distancing is maintained, masks are worn, and deviations from service restrictions are corrected; apply admission criteria; record attendance; complete the NYAC Worship Checklist
 - Lay Leader (or delegate) will oversee check-in processes and worship service to help usher and greeters ensure compliance with guidelines/restrictions and handle any delicate situations resulting from non-cooperation. If an uncooperative attendee refuses to comply and will not leave, the Lay Leader will ask the Pastor to announce that the service must be canceled to ensure the safety and welfare of all participants. Finally, the Lay Leader will ensure the NYAC Worship Checklist is completed and filed
 - One ‘Usher’ at Main St pedestrian crossing will help with traffic control as necessary
 - Two ‘Greeters’ at each of two check-in points will apply admission criteria, record attendance, and provide reminders of guidelines and service restrictions
- Admission Criteria
 - Quick non-contact temperature check
 - Queries regarding illness or exposure to COVID or symptoms
- Attendance
 - Check name off pre-registration list
 - Record name(s) and primary phone contact for unregistered families
- Communication (using signage)
 - Reminder of mask and social distancing requirements
- Reminder of restrictions on service (see below)
 - Reminder of availability of hand sanitizer
 - Guidance on seating (‘front-to-back’) and ‘free-form’ socially distanced egress
- Handouts to be available at both check-in locations for self-pickup
 - Stack of bulletins for those who did/cannot print at home
 - Spare masks for those that forget
 - Communion ‘kit’ on first Sunday of month (once approach is developed and approved; details to be provided and approval to be sought at a later date)
 - Stack of visitor information cards and cup of sanitized pens
- Collection boxes to be available at both check-in locations
 - A locked box with slot for charitable donations
 - An enclosed box for completed visitor information cards

The following is a summary of the planned worship service signage to remind attendees of social distancing requirements, requirements to wear masks, and other worship service requirements/restrictions:

- Temporary signs indicating ‘reserved’ parking for people with limited mobility near both check-in points
- Banners marking check-in points that are visible from any point on rope boundary

- Small cones at 10-ft intervals delineating waiting line positions at each check-in point
- Warnings to stay at home and take advantage of online services for sick or vulnerable members
- Request that people unable to remove their own masks and children under 2 remain home
- Requirements for mask and social distancing
- Methods for stopping the spread of COVID-19 and everyday protective measures such as hand washing, covering cough and sneezing, properly wearing a face covering, and social distancing
- Obvious availability of hand sanitizer and reminder to sanitize hands upon entry into and exit from roped boundary
- Site/Staging map(s) showing ‘front-to-back’ seating in two areas for the congregation and location of restroom across the street in Fellowship Hall

A concise summary of WUMC-CT’s risk assessment and risk management plan is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of WUMC-CT Phase A Risk Management Plan

Risk Description	Primary Risk Mitigation(s) Planned
Contact transfer of virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Bring your own seating by attendees – Sanitizing of limited seating made available for those who forget and can’t bring seating; Sanitizing of hard touch points within roped boundary – Roping off of gazebo – Stacks of ‘clean’ handouts available for pickup by attendees at two check-in points – Central boxes to drop off donations and basket for visitor cards – Separate microphones for each worship team member – Restrictions on service (e.g., children remain with family at all times, no Fellowship Hour, no pastor greeting line) – Safe counting process (defined in plan compliance matrices)
Airborne transfer of virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Masks to be worn at all times by congregation to eliminate larger droplets – 10-ft social distance between families in congregational seating areas – Outdoor natural ‘ventilation’ to dilute aerosol particles that penetrate masks – 15-20 ft social distancing between worship team members and congregation and each other so can remove masks when speaking/singing – Front-to-back seating; marked waiting line points at check-in points – Restrictions on worship service (e.g., children remain with parent(s) at all times, no Fellowship Hour, no pastor greeting line) – Trained ‘ushers/greeters’ and ubiquitous signage to remind attendees of guidelines/restrictions and correct any deviations
Lack of awareness of risk mitigation guidelines & requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training of church family with online information sessions; posting of guidelines/restrictions, training material, FAQs, etc. on website – Ubiquitous signage – Training of ‘ushers/greeters’
Outbreak despite best efforts to minimize risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Roped boundaries to provide two discrete check-in points to facilitate tracking of attendance and contact tracing if outbreak occurs – Registration process to facilitate tracking of attendance and contact information
Physical injury during ingress/egress to/from worship service area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Trained ‘usher’ at cross walk on Main Street – ‘Reserved’ parking next check-in points for those with limited mobility – Church wheelchair on hand if needed by those of limited mobility – Roped boundary to exclude non-obvious tripping hazards from worship area – Church First Aid kits available at both check-in points

The above plan has been approved by the WUMC-CT Church Council and is being offered to NYAC for review and approval. WUMC-CT believes that sufficient risk mitigation protocols have been included in the Phase A plan to minimize risk of virus spread as a result of holding outdoor services. Detailed compliance matrices, which are based on the NYAC ‘Worksheet for Protocol Planning and Reopening Teams’ and Church Mutual recommendations, are provided for the Phase A plan in the next to last section, entitled ‘Plan Compliance and Certification.

Based on the compliance assessment documented therein, WUMC-CT believes the Phase A plan is in compliance with NYAC guidelines/restrictions with the one exception of our plan to use trained ‘ushers/greeters.’ This is currently not allowed according to written NYAC guidelines/restrictions, but has been verbally encouraged during at least one NYAC webinar to promote social distancing during ingress/egress. WUMC-CT believes the use of trained ‘ushers/greeters’ reduces risk of infection. Additionally, while it is not necessary to hold outdoor services according to the above Phase A plan, we request the following waivers to current NYAC guidelines

- Use of pew Bibles/hymnals, based on ‘long-term’ loan to church family members to be sanitized and treated as personal items until which time these items can be returned to the pews
- Congregational singing while wearing masks and maintaining at least 10-foot social distancing in the naturally ventilated outdoor setting

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Phase B Plan – Indoor Worship Services and Church Meetings

Per Table 1 above, the Phase B reopening plan was created to allow limited pastoral care visits/meetings, ministry/committee meetings of no more than five people, indoor worship services, and weddings/funerals in compliance with federal/state government, NYAC, and Church Mutual guidelines, restrictions, and recommendations.

Pastoral Care Visits and Church Meetings

Pastoral care meetings will be allowed in the Pastor's church office at the Pastor's discretion. Other church business that cannot not be conducted remotely will also be allowed at the Pastor's or Office Manager's discretion. All meetings held within the church office will be subject to the following guidelines/restrictions:

- Meetings must be scheduled ahead of time by phone or e-mail. No walk-in visitors will be allowed. The front door will remain locked with a sign requesting visitors to call the church office to schedule an appointment if one has not been arranged ahead of time.
- No more than five people will be allowed in the church office at any one time. Multiple meetings can be held within the church facility as long as no one meeting has more than five people and the church office has no more than five people in total.
- Screening for active symptoms of COVID-19 or direct exposure to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 will be established by phone when the appointment is made. At this time, in-person visits are not allowed for any visitor that has had COVID-19 symptoms and/or close contact with another person having COVID-19 symptoms within the last 14 days. Screening questions will be asked again upon entry to the office at which time a quick non-contact temperature screening test will be conducted with a remote non-contact temperature 'gun.' Any person presenting an elevated temperature or other potential COVID-19 symptoms will be asked to leave immediately.
- Meetings will be conducted in a no-touch manner, while wearing masks and maintaining social distancing of at least 6 feet.
- All visitors will be asked to apply hand disinfectant upon entry to and prior to exit from the main office.
- If meetings involve being seated, chairs and tables will be disinfected prior to and following each meeting by the meeting organizer (or delegate).
- Common office area touch points will be sanitized daily by the office manager.

Meetings can be held in the following four additional areas of the church: 1) church sanctuary, 2) Fellowship Hall in basement, 3) Assembly Room, and 4) outdoors in the front yard of the church. These meetings will be subject to the same guidelines/restrictions cited above for meetings in the church office and the meeting organizer (or delegate) will be responsible for disinfecting seats, tables, and common touch points for the area used, both before and after the meeting.

Pastoral care visits will also be allowed at off-church facilities at the discretion of the pastor. For the foreseeable future, these meeting should be restricted to the residence of the person for whom pastoral care is being provided (e.g., house, apartment, nursing homes/assisted living facilities/hospitals if allowed). In the case of pastoral care visits to assisted living facilities or hospitals, the person's residence is considered to be the room or apartment in which the person is

residing (not common areas). Such meetings at off-church facilities should be limited to care for people who are incapable of meeting at the church office. Off-church meetings are subject to the above guidelines/restrictions, along with the following additional guidelines/restrictions:

- Visits to nursing homes, assisted living facilities and hospitals must be allowed by the facility and guidelines/restrictions imposed by the facility must be followed
- Screening criteria at the time of appointment should include questions related to all residents or visitors to the residence within the last 14 days.
- Visits to nursing home/assisted living/hospital facilities should be considered only if the facility has had no new COVID-19 cases within the last 14 days. The pastor should leave immediately if it appears that the facility does not impose best-practice guidelines/restrictions, similar to those prescribed by NYAC, within the facility
- No more than five people should be present within the residence during the visit.
- The Pastor and all participants in the pastoral visit must wear masks at all times
- The pastor should carry hand sanitizer and use it upon entry to and exit from the residence or facility and anytime a surface of unknown ‘cleanliness’ is touched.
- If the visit involves the use of chairs and tables, these should be disinfected prior to their use by the pastor. If this is not practical, then the pastor should change clothes, wash up, and disinfect the car after returning home.

Exceptions to the above guidelines/restrictions for off-church pastoral care visits may be possible under extenuating circumstances (e.g., end-of-life), as long as special precautions can be taken and the visit is discussed with and approved by the NYAC DSCD.

Indoor Worship Services

The risks associated with holding indoor services are similar to those associated with holding outdoor services, but more challenging to address for the following reasons:

- Entryways and exits are typically narrow with tendency to create bottlenecks
- Small to medium sanctuaries, such as ours, make achieving desirable social distancing difficult, while still allowing a practical number of attendees
- There are far more touch points to be sanitized for every room to which access is allowed
- Contaminated air is not naturally diluted and dissipated as naturally occurs in an outdoor setting

Different options for addressing each of these four challenges are described in some detail below to substantiate the options selected for implementation within WUMC-CT’s Phase B plan.

The challenge of maintaining adequate social distancing during ingress/egress for Phase B indoor services is much more challenging than for outdoor services held on the North Green. Four ingress/egress foot-traffic flow patterns were considered as shown in Figure 6 on the next page. Each of the optional patterns were designed to achieve one-way flow of foot traffic as highly encouraged by NYAC to facilitate social distancing. The only exception is two-way flow allowed for those with limited mobility who may need to use the handicap entrance, which is allowed by NYAC. The pattern labeled Option 1 in Figure 6 was selected as the preferred ingress/egress pattern. It provides easy access to parking. It also results in the fewest number of cleaning zones, because as indicated in red, all areas of the church will be closed to the congregation in Option 1, except the narthex, sanctuary, first floor bathroom, and limited mobility entrance.

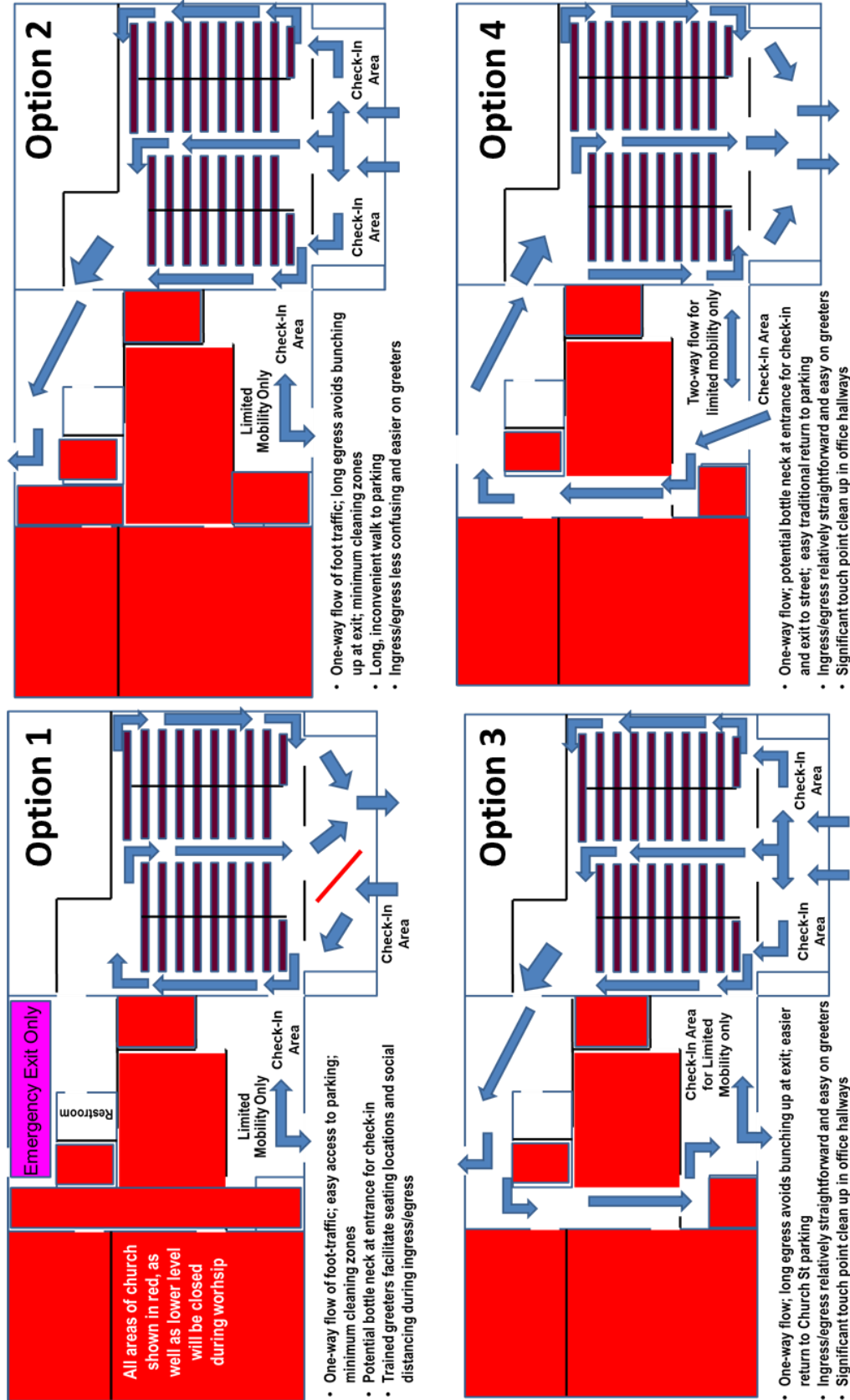


Figure 6: Four Options Considered for Ingress/Egress Foot-Traffic Patterns

Clearly marked check-in areas serve the same purpose as described in the Phase A plan, allowing trained ‘greeters’ to apply admission criteria, inform of mask and social distancing requirements, inform of service restrictions, record attendance, and provide access to hand sanitizer. Trained ‘greeters/ushers’ will be even more important to facilitating social distancing and preventing potential bottlenecks during check-in and egress, due to smaller available space at the check-in area than is possible at the North Green. An ‘usher’ will also facilitate the intermixing of foot traffic from the limited-mobility check-in point with that from the primary check-in point. Two greeters at each check-in point and one usher at the limited mobility entrance to the sanctuary will be used. The same usher will be used to facilitate egress from the church as described below. Otherwise, the check-in process will be much the same as that described for the Phase A Plan and will not be repeated here.

The Lay Leader (or delegate) will oversee the pre-cleaning/check-in processes and worship service to help ensure compliance with guidelines/restrictions. The Lay Leader will also complete and file the NYAC Worship Checklist, noting opportunities for process improvements.

The church will be filled, as shown in Figure 6, from back to front, proceeding from right to left when facing the altar from the back of the church. This enables one-way traffic flow, which will be clearly marked, and first-in-first-out (FIFO) egress. However, this requires proceeding down the leftmost aisle to the front of the church before filling the church from back to front. With clearly marked one-way foot-traffic flow patterns, such an imposed pattern does promote better social distancing and reduce the risk of bumping in to each other, when compared to traditional free-form self-seating using any of the front-to-back aisles in the sanctuary. However, this could be mitigated as shown in Options 2 and 3 in Figure 6 by the use of two check-in points in the narthex. Unfortunately, these options require a roundabout egress traffic pattern to exit (Option 3) and/or lengthy roundabout return to parking (Option 2) in order to maintain one-way flow.

If it were allowed by NYAC, it would be more straightforward to fill the church front to back and empty the church back to front. This would mean two-way flow patterns, precluding the ability to mark required flow patterns. Thus, the use of one or more trained ‘ushers’ would be required to facilitate social distancing and prevent bottlenecks. WUMC-CT seeks clarification on whether this option would be approved by NYAC. It would probably be the preferred option if allowed.

Regardless of flow pattern, the ‘usher’ will release attendees one pew row at a time to avoid bottlenecks at the exit and eliminate waiting lines to exit. This would be less necessary for Options 2 and 3 in Figure 6, because the longer egress route would promote social distancing and minimize the likelihood of bottlenecks at exits. One could simply request that attendees exit one row at a time without the need for explicit usher support. However, these more roundabout egress patterns also create more cleaning zones and risk of viral contact transmission.

Careful control of seating within the sanctuary is critical to complying with NYAC guidelines and minimizing the risk of virus spread. Because WUMC-CT’s pews are so close together, simply restricting seating to every other pew provides only 5-ft social distancing between occupied pews. Thus, we plan to restrict seating to every third pew, as shown in Figure 7 on the next page, providing 7.5-ft social distancing between occupied pews. Figure 7 represents a reasonably well scaled floor plan laid out on a 1-ft grid. However, the seating locations of the congregation is notional to illustrate both: 1) max capacity while complying with desired social distancing guidelines and 2) the need for careful seating arrangements to accommodate families of 3-4+ people in order to maintain side-to-side social distancing with families in adjacent half pews.

The max. capacity is estimated to be slightly over 50 people, including a worship team of 4-5 people, while maintaining at least 6-ft social between families and at least 8-10 feet social distancing between worship team members, and at least 15 feet between the worship team and the congregation. This is achieved by allowing up to 8 people in the balcony and 4 or more non-traditional seats along the back wall. Thus, the envisioned seating plan will accommodate the maximum allowed occupancy of 50 people per worship service, while maintaining greater than 6-ft social distancing. For reference, a max-occupancy of 50 people represents 17% pew occupancy compared to fully occupied unrestricted congregational seating capacity of 264, assuming 5-people per half pew and 24 seats in the balcony.

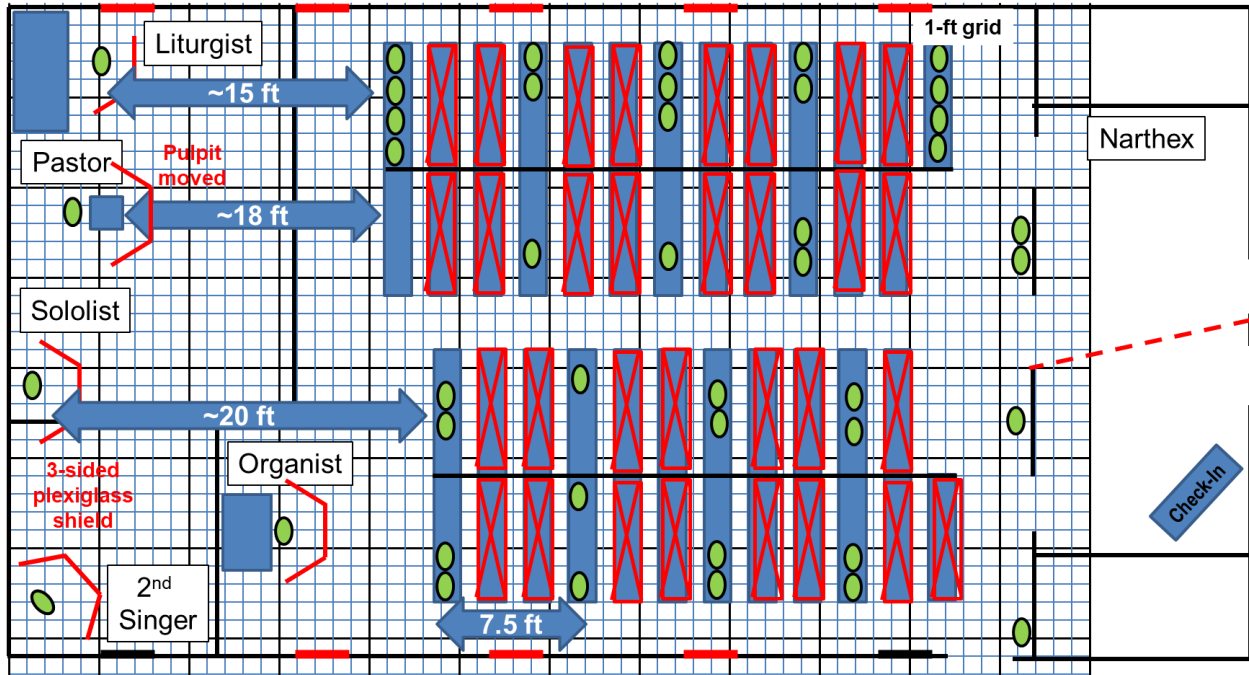


Figure 7: Conceptual Sanctuary Seating Arrangement to Maintain Desired Social Distancing

Achieving at least 6-ft side-to-side social distancing will require a process to guide families in making seat selections. For example, a half-pew is 7-ft long from aisle to pew center divider. Previously, a family of five with three small children could fit comfortably in a half-pew. During Phase B reopening, this would require that only one person be allowed to sit at the far end of the adjoining half-pew in order to achieve 6-ft side-to-side social distancing. To be safer, it would be prudent to allow no one to sit in the adjoining half-pew next to a family of 4-5, one person to sit next to a family of 3-4, and so forth.

Further, achieving at least 6-ft social distancing between nearest neighbors on opposite sides of the center aisle requires the staggering of available rows and no occupancy of seats right next to the center aisle, as conceptually illustrated in Figure 7. Thus, achieving 6-ft social distancing between families through self-seating selections would require either an extremely well-trained church family or ushers that lead each family to an appropriate seating location. The former is unlikely to work, and the latter would be awkward, require multiple ushers, and be of higher risk of deviating from social distancing requirements.

Thus, WUMC-CT plans to achieve appropriate side-to-side social distancing by clearly marking allowable seating arrangements within each half pew in addition to closing off two of three pew

rows in staggered fashion on either side of the center aisle. The alternative is to have a seating assignment system either through: 1) an online registration process where seats are selected at the time of registration and/or 2) assignment by a ‘greeter’ at check-in. If family self-selection, from amongst pew seats marked to be available, turns out to be too confusing, we may augment such markings with some sort of hybrid seat assignment process. This would be a relatively easy augmentation to the online registration system currently planned to help ensure a 50-person max occupancy without having to turn away many late comers. Conceptually, such an online registration process would result in a seating arrangement plan in addition to an attendance list that would be provided to ‘greeters’ to checkoff and augment with attendance information and seating assignments for attendees that do not pre-register. Such a seamless process would have other benefits for contact tracing if the need arises.

While planned indoor worship service restrictions are similar to those listed above for Phase A (outdoor services) the following inclusive list is provided to avoid ambiguity:

- Masks must be worn at all times, except for the Pastor, liturgist, and singer(s), when speaking or singing
- Maintain at least 15-foot social distance between the worship team and the congregation
- Maintain at least 8-foot social distance between worship team members
- Maintain 7.5-foot front-to-back social distance and at least 6-foot side-to-side distance between families
- Children to remain with parent(s) at all times
- No more than two singers, socially distanced as shown in Figure 7.
- No praise band beyond an organist and socially distanced bell ringers. The latter would replace the 2nd singer in the traditional choir loft shown in the lower left corner of Figure 7. The number of allowable bell ringers depends on family ties. Two unrelated or a family of four bell ringers could be appropriately socially distanced from the soloist and organist.
- Separate microphones and lecterns/stands will be used for all worship team members
- No congregational singing; no passing of the peace; no greeting line
- Personal Bibles/hymnals only (both available for long-term loan from the church)

The following is a summary of the signage to be used for indoor worship services to remind attendees of social distancing requirements, requirements to wear masks, and other worship service requirements/restrictions:

- Clearly visible check-in points
- Small cones or tape at 6-ft intervals delineating waiting line positions at each check-in point
- One-way foot traffic flow pattern, which is clearly marked
- Sanctuary map showing foot-traffic flow pattern and back-to-front seating, assuming that Option 1 from Figure 6 is pattern approved by NYAC.
- Sanctuary map showing allowable seating patterns (and seat numbers if a process for assigning seats is established)
- Requirements for mask and social distancing; no singing
- Methods for stopping the spread of COVID-19 and everyday protective measures such as hand washing, covering cough and sneezing, properly wearing a face covering, and social distancing
- Obvious availability of hand sanitizer and reminder to use hand sanitizer before entry to and after exit from sanctuary
- Warnings to stay at home and take advantage of online services for sick or vulnerable members

- Request that people unable to remove their own masks and children under 2 remain home

A robust one-time deep cleaning and recurring sanitization process will be much more important for Phase B indoor services than Phase A outdoor services for obvious reasons. Per NYAC requirements, a deep cleaning of the check-in areas, sanctuary and upper floor bathroom will be performed prior to holding the first indoor service after Phase B plan approval. A checklist will be developed to guide contractor(s) and/or volunteer cleaning teams. This will include a deep cleaning of all carpeting and flooring for areas of the church that will be accessible for indoor services during Phase B. It will also include deep cleaning of pew cushions. The altar, sound system, organ, and all pews, chairs, tables, and worship service components will be sanitized top to bottom. All likely hand-touch services will be sanitized. All pew materials (e.g., Bibles, hymnals, visitor cards) will be removed.

Once Phase B indoor worship services begin, volunteer teams will perform recurring cleaning/sanitizing before each service. A comprehensive checklist will be developed for guiding their work. The Lay Leader (or delegate) will oversee the pre-service cleaning to ensure compliance with established guidelines and checklists. Volunteers will be required to perform proper hygiene afterwards by washing or disinfecting their hands.

Access to the sanctuary will be restricted for other than worship, wedding, and funeral services for which pre-service cleanings are required. Non-service use of the sanctuary is restricted to practice and recording of worship services and small meetings as discussed above. Such use of the sanctuary must be scheduled and approved by the office manager with knowledge of the pastor. Participants will be reminded of the requirement that they sanitize the portion of the sanctuary being used, before and after use.

Selection of a prudent ventilation scheme is the final critical decision required to minimize the risk of a Coronavirus outbreak as a result of holding indoor services. An active ventilation concept (Concept #1 as described in detail below) will be used to provide fresh air to the sanctuary and exhaust potentially contaminated air to the outdoors. This concept was selected primarily because it can be implemented in all four seasons. A detailed discussion of the concepts considered and the rationale for concept selection is provided below, within the context of a detailed discussion of the risks associated with airborne transfer of the virus and prudent mitigation options as they are understood by the CRT/BOT.

The risk of larger droplets is the same for both indoors and outdoors for the same social distance, since they will be blocked by masks and are subject to the forces of gravity that cause them to drop to the ground before they travel far. The ubiquitous 6-ft social distancing guideline likely originates from the distance that larger droplets will travel with normal breathing and speaking, with no mask to block them. However, there are a few studies that indicate that smaller droplets caused by loud speaking, shouting, singing, coughing, and sneezing can travel much farther (up to 10-15 feet, depending on the velocity and back pressure at the source), presumably because of the increased initial kinetic energy upon exhalation.

On the other hand, very small droplets and aerosols can float and linger in the air for an indeterminate length of time within a closed room. And their motion, once initial kinetic energy is dissipated, is more a function of local air currents than gravity. Even in a closed room with

apparently still air, aerosols can be carried throughout the room by non-obvious air currents caused by thermal gradients, body motions, slight breezes from open windows, etc. Further, the density and spread of any viral discharge will inherently increase over the course of time in an enclosed room without dilution (via some source of fresh air) and/or dissipation (via intelligent ventilation). In comparison, the inherent ‘ventilation’ associated with outdoor activities naturally dilutes and dissipates smaller ‘aerosol’ particles.

There has been much debate in the general media regarding the best approach to ventilate enclosed gathering spaces (e.g., restaurants, church sanctuaries) to reduce the risk of viral spread. Some argue that no ventilation is the best approach because it gives more time for droplets/aerosols to drop harmlessly to the ground. Some suggest that the use of fans increases the spread of contaminated air and therefore no fans should be used. The CRT has conducted a literature review, with a focus on scientific sources, and had numerous discussions, including with third-party experts responsible for developing disease containment protocols at local healthcare facilities.

The CRT/BOT drew the conclusion that an intelligent ventilation scheme should be included as an important element of its risk management plan and established the following three options for consideration: 1) passive ventilation with open sanctuary windows/doors as a source of fresh air, 2) active ventilation concept #1, and 3) active ventilation concept #2 with the latter two shown in Figure 8 (top of next page). The passive concept is the easiest approach to comply with NYAC guidelines. However, the CRT proposes to use an active approach to achieve more effective dilution and dissipation of potentially viral contaminated air to the outdoors. Both concepts shown in Figure 8 (on the next page) are similar in nature, employing fan-driven intake of fresh external clean air to dilute any contaminated air, and fan-driven exhaust to the outside to dissipate potentially contaminated air. However, as described below, the two active concepts are quite different in terms of details.

In active concept #1, cool fresh/clean air is brought in from the lower level of the church (Fellowship Hall, which is closed to people) and introduced into the sanctuary using existing heating system ducts. The existing fresh air intake grills are located in the floor of the sanctuary, as represented by short blue lines at the end of every other pew row closest to the external side walls (in Figure 8). Potentially contaminated sanctuary air is exhausted through the two open windows (shown as short red lines) on either side of the altar and choir lofts by standard box fans (shown as grey cylindrical icons). The remaining windows remain closed (as shown by short black lines in the side walls). Fresh air is cooler than sanctuary air in the summer because the heating element will be disengaged and warmed in the winter by the heating system.

Limiting exhaust through four of ten windows allows more effective dilution, as well more effective cooling in the summer and less loss of heat in the winter. If the other six windows were also used with fans to exhaust sanctuary air, the fresh air from the floor mounted intake vents would essentially be exhausted outdoors immediately, before it could spread and mix with air throughout the sanctuary. This would undermine the desired effects of dilution of potentially contaminated air and seasonal cooling and heating. Further, exhausting through the four selected windows will pull air from the most dominant sources of aerosols in the sanctuary (speaking/singing without masks by Pastor/Liturgist/Singers), allowing these aerosols to be mostly exhausted before spreading to the remainder of the sanctuary.

Note that Plexiglass barriers (as indicated red-lined icons in Figure 8 and earlier figures) are being considered for use to contain droplets/aerosols generated by the Pastor, liturgist, and singers when speaking or singing without masks. Impingement on the barrier close to the source minimizes the

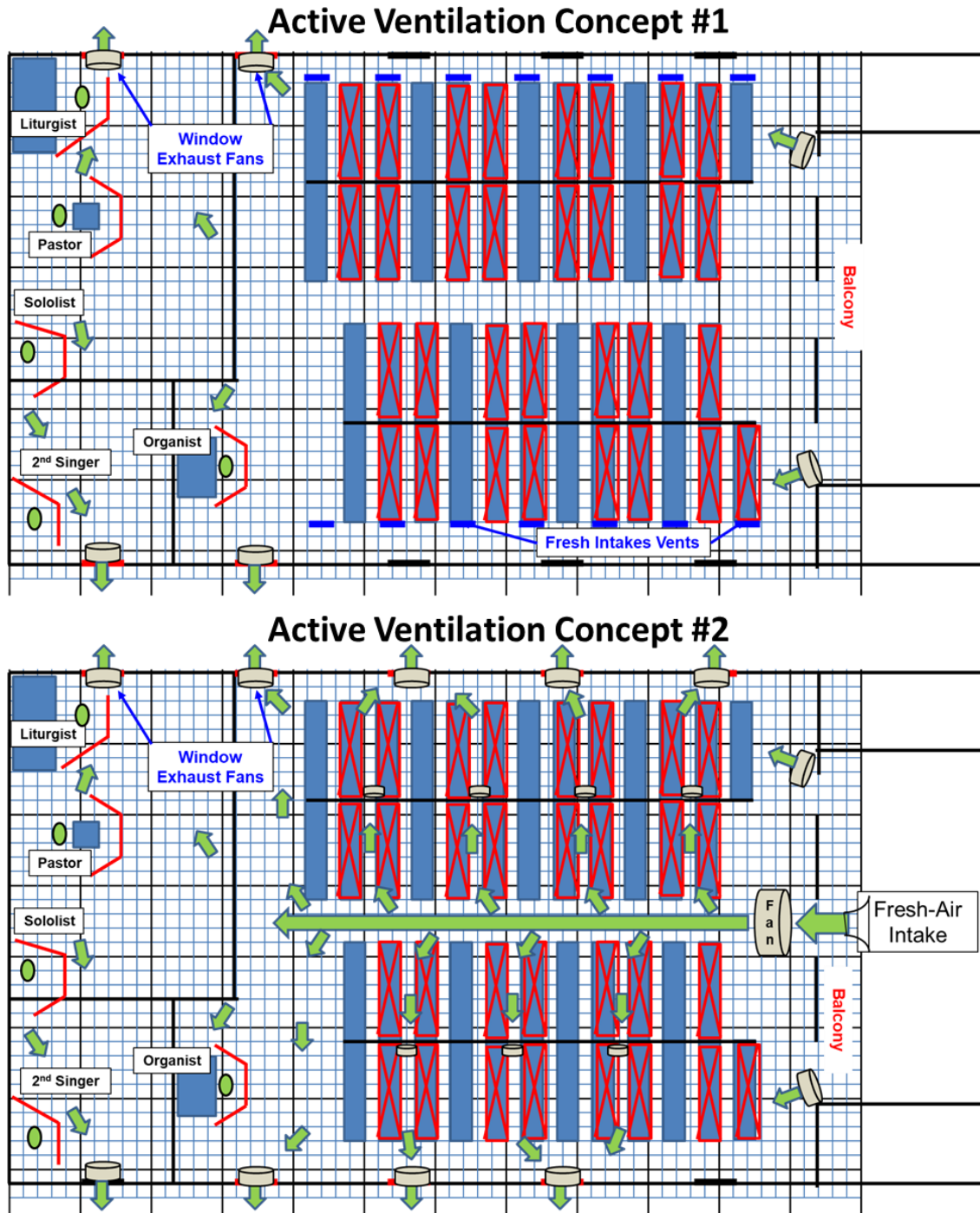


Figure 8: Two Active Ventilation Concepts Considered

number of aerosols that truly become airborne and need to be exhausted. However, such barriers would be visually very distracting and probably unnecessary to further reduce risk, given 1) the significant 15-20 front-to-back social distance between worship team members and the congregation, 2) 8-10 feet side-to-side social distance between worship team members, and 3) exhaust fans near the altar and choir lofts to exhaust potentially contaminated air, preventing build-up of viral density in the air. Less intrusive plexiglass face shields will also be considered. And based on additional discussions with experts, the CRT may recommend that neither is necessary.

Finally, note the fans on either side of the balcony that pull air out of the balcony and direct it toward the side walls so it can mix with the much larger volume of sanctuary air and be exhausted, rather than being trapped in the balcony, which is likely in the summer time.

Active concept #2 is similar to #1, pulling in fresh outdoor air through the Narthex with a centralized fan and exhausting it through all external windows using window box fans. This concept also has the two fans in the balcony as discussed in concept #1. This concept is primarily distinguished by small quiet low-flow fans, which are driven by rechargeable batteries, that are placed in the center of each pair of unoccupied rows with flow directed toward the external windows. This shapes the flow pattern from the centralized source of fresh air to the multiple exhaust outlets, creating an ‘air curtain’ between occupied rows. This reduces the spread of potentially contaminated air between neighboring occupied pew rows. The concept is similar to what is done in grocery store coolers that have no doors, in which barely noticeable flow of air from the top of the cooler to the bottom creates an invisible ‘air curtain’ barrier between warmer ambient air in the store from the cooler air in the cooler. This significantly reduces loss of cool air without the hassle of having physical doors.

In the sanctuary application, the performance of the ‘air curtains’ between occupied pew rows could be enhanced by having two fans for each pair of unoccupied pew rows (one in each pair of half pews). However, the increased performance would be offset by increased noise. And the ‘air curtain’ performance doesn’t have to be perfect to further reduce the risk of spread of potentially contaminated air, when compared to having no active exhaust. Risk of infection is a function of viral load and time of exposure. Viral load within the sanctuary is reduced by masks, dilution with fresh air, and dissipation via exhaust so the viral load does not increase throughout the service.

Before describing WUMC-CT’s selection of its ventilation concept, it seems prudent to revisit the argument that ‘eliminating’ air movement in the room is the best approach (i.e., closed windows/doors), using the rationale that this would keep contaminated air close to the source. While loudly proclaimed by some, this argument seems to ignore the fact that air, even in a closed room, is never quiescent. Very small particles/aerosols inevitably slowly propagate throughout a closed room, as described previously. The viral load from one exhalation by a sick attendee would be slowly diluted by this propagation; however, if a sick attendee continues to expel aerosols, the viral load throughout the room would continue to rise slowly.

This can be illustrated by analogy to a smoker in the far corner of a restaurant. As those of us that are old enough to remember can attest, smoke spreads throughout the entire restaurant unless there is ventilation that introduces fresh air and exhausts contaminated air. Even then, the air can become objectionable. Trying to address the groundswell of objection to smoking in public buildings, initially restaurants created separate smoking and non-smoking sections. This failed, and ultimately smoking in public buildings was legally banned. While the analogy is not perfect, it does illustrate the continuum of risk reduction, proceeding from a closed room with no ventilation being the highest risk of viral airborne transfer. Opening doors and windows to passively dilute contaminated air achieves lower risk, and intelligent active ventilation provides the lowest risk of viral transfer.

Based on our investigations of the scientific literature and consideration of expert opinion, we concluded that the risk of viral transfer is higher from droplets than aerosols, with the former

having higher viral load for each droplet. Aerosols become more of a risk if one is exposed to many small droplets close to the source before becoming diluted through propagation and mixing with uncontaminated or with fresh air. Risk of viral transfer due to aerosols in a closed room with no source of fresh air can increase over time with continued expulsion. The continuous mixing of fresh and contaminated air in an outdoor setting keeps the viral load under a critical level. Likewise, intelligent active ventilation keeps the viral load at a lower level than passive dilution by a source of fresh air only.

Thus, the two active approaches conceived by the CRT are arguably more effective than simply keeping the windows or doors open, which is not really practical during the winter anyway. While active concept #2 would be more effective than active concept #1 in terms of dilution, dissipation via exhaust through all windows, and reducing cross-pew spread, it also is not practical during colder months. Further active concept #2 may be unacceptably noisy for elderly attendees even with low-noise, low-flow fans. Therefore, active concept #1 was selected primarily because it can be implemented in all four seasons.

A concise summary of WUMC-CT’s risk assessment and risk management plan is provided in Table 3. While there are many similarities with that provided above for Phase A outdoor services, an inclusive table is provided here to avoid ambiguity.

Table 3: Summary of WUMC-CT Phase B Risk Management Plan for Indoor Services

Risk Description	Primary Risk Mitigation(s) Planned
Contact transfer of virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Pre-service cleaning of sanctuary – Restriction of use of sanctuary for non-service use – Closure of all areas of the church other than entrances, sanctuary, bathroom – Stacks of ‘clean’ handouts available for pickup by attendees at two check-in points – Central locked box to drop off donations – Central basket at check-in points to collect visitor cards – Separate microphones for each worship team member – Restrictions on service (e.g., children remain with parents at all times, no Fellowship Hour, no pastor greeting line) – Safe counting process (defined in plan compliance matrices)
Airborne transfer of virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Masks to be worn at all times by congregation to eliminate larger droplets and reduce volume of aerosols released to ambient air – Greater than 6-ft side-to-side and 7.5 front-to-back social distance between families in congregational seating areas – 15-20 ft social distancing between worship team members and congregation – Active ventilation approach to dilute potentially contaminated air with fresh source and dissipate via exhaust to outside – Plexiglass barriers or face shield for worship team members are being considered – Marked one-way foot-traffic pattern; marked waiting line points at check-in points – Restrictions on worship service (e.g., children remain with family at all times, no Fellowship Hour, no pastor greeting line) – Trained ‘ushers/greeters’ and ubiquitous signage to remind attendees of guidelines/restrictions and correct any deviations
Lack of awareness of risk mitigation guidelines & requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training of church family with online information sessions; posting on guidelines/restrictions, training material, FAQs, etc. on website – Ubiquitous signage – Training of ‘ushers/greeters’

Outbreak despite best efforts to minimize risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Check-in points to facilitate tracking of attendance and contact tracing if outbreak occurs – Registration process to facilitate tracking of attendance and contact information
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Wedding and Funeral Services

Wedding and Funeral services held within WUMC-CT’s sanctuary will be subject to the same restrictions as described above for worship services. The Pastor may perform a service at an offsite facility at his/her discretion, as long as he determines that the ‘host’ family and management of the offsite facility take COVID-19 risks seriously and have comparable/acceptable guidelines/restrictions in place. If not, the Pastor is strongly discouraged from conducting a wedding ceremony or funeral service at an offsite facility.

However, very small weddings would not need to adhere to overly complex one-way foot-traffic patterns. In this case, social distancing would be maintained during ingress and egress by verbal reminders at check-in and at the end of the service. Also, if a small service is primarily attended by an extended family that is frequently in close contact, there would be no need for preventing contact that the family has been routinely practicing at recent family events.

By their very nature, weddings and funerals pose additional challenges compared to routine weekly worship services. These events represent a momentous occasion. Further, participants may be particularly emotional, needing of emotional support in the form of a hug, and likely to be in somewhat of a state of anxiety. Under such conditions, it would not be unusual for the wedding party or mourning family to temporarily forget to follow social distancing guidelines. Also, guests from outside the church family may be less cooperative because they have less understanding and/or appreciation of risk and the need for restrictions placed on traditional wedding and funeral services.

Therefore, the following guidelines are proposed to increase the likelihood that WUMC-CT guidelines/restrictions are followed and attempts to enforce compliance at the service do not ruin the event:

- The Pastor should meet with the family prior to the service to explain and discuss the guidelines and restrictions. Minor, but compliant, changes can be discussed at the discretion of the Pastor. An assessment should, if practical, be made by the pastor prior to the meeting as to whether it would be helpful to have the Lay Leader participate in the meeting. This might be helpful if, based on an initial phone conversation, the pastor recognizes that the family may not be cooperative. The Lay Leader can be the ‘decider’ so that the relationship between the family and the Pastor is not affected.
- No traditional receiving lines should be allowed. A non-contact alternative can be discussed.
- The Pastor and Lay Leader should decline the opportunity to hold the service at WUMC-CT if the family does not take the risks of COVID-19 and guidelines/restrictions seriously.
- WUMC-CT volunteers should be used as ‘greeters/ushers’ using similar check-in procedures described for indoor worship services. The process can be simplified if the ‘host’ family has a well-defined guest list. In this case, the host family should provide the guest list (with contact info) prior to the service, allowing the ‘greeters’ to check off guests and only have to add surprise guests to the list. Similarly, if the host family knows that no guests will need to use the handicap entrance, the primary check-in point may be sufficient and the other entrance can be locked eliminating the need for manning a second check-in

point. In this case, the ‘usher’ should monitor the small handicap parking and meet people at the door to determine if they need to use the handicap ramp.

- The Lay Leader (or delegate) should attend the service to oversee the check-in process and service and be prepared to handle any deviations from guidelines and restrictions with discretion and sensitivity. If someone is not willing to listen to quiet reason, the Lay Leader may have no choice, but to inform the Pastor that the service must be cancelled.
- The ‘Worship Service Checklist’ must be completed and filed.

Phase B Plan Summary

The above Phase B plan has been approved by the WUMC-CT Church Council and is being offered to NYAC for review and approval. WUMC-CT believes that sufficient risk mitigation protocols have been included in the Phase B plan to minimize risk of virus spread as a result of holding indoor services. Detailed compliance matrices, which are based on the NYAC ‘Worksheet for Protocol Planning and Reopening Teams’ and Church Mutual recommendations, are provided for the Phase B plan in the next to last section, entitled ‘Plan Compliance and Certification.

Based on the compliance assessment documented therein, WUMC-CT believes the Phase B plan is in compliance with NYAC guidelines/restrictions with the one exception of our plan to use trained ‘ushers/greeters.’ This is currently not allowed according to written NYAC guidelines/restrictions, but has been verbally encouraged during at least one NYAC webinar to promote social distancing during ingress/egress. WUMC-CT believes the use of trained ‘ushers/greeters’ reduces risk of infection. Additionally, while it is not necessary to hold indoor services according to the above Phase B plan, we request the following waiver to current NYAC guidelines: use of pew Bibles/hymnals, based on ‘long-term’ loan to church family members to be sanitized and treated as personal items until which time these items can be returned to the pews.

WUMC-CT recognizes that the Phase B plan description for indoor services is much more complex than that for Phase A outdoor services and therefore, may require an iteration before final approval. While we do not plan to routinely hold indoor services until September, we hope to have approval for holding indoor services in early August, allowing time for one Phase B plan iteration, if necessary. We are seeking, if possible, conditional approval of this Phase B plan with explicit requests for changes, if outright approval is not possible.

Plan Compliance and Certification

This section includes the following subsections that substantiate WUMC-CT’s compliance with governing NYAC guidelines and Church Mutual recommendations: 1) WUMC-CT Church Compliance Certification, 2) NYAC Compliance Matrix (Worksheet for Protocol Planning & Reopening), and 3) Church Mutual Insurance Compliance Matrix.

WUMC-CT Church Compliance Certification

A copy of WUMC-CT’s ‘Church Compliance Certification,’ which has been signed by our Pastor and the Chairperson of our Church Council and Board of Trustees is provided in Figure 9 on the next page. A separate standalone document has also been attached to the transmittal e-mail for this plan.

New York Annual Conference | Covid-19 Guidelines For Church Reopening

6 Supplemental Documents

Church Compliance Certification

Dear Church Leaders,

As we plan to reopen our churches, it is absolutely critical that the guidelines and requirements that we have issued be widely communicated, well understood and complied with at each and every one of our churches.

We therefore are asking you to certify the following:

- We have received, read and understand the guidelines and requirements issued by the bishop with respect to the reopening of churches.
- We have distributed these documents to all members of our Church Council.
- We understand that compliance with these requirements is a life and death matter and must be taken extremely seriously.
- We will implement the required measures needed to ensure a safe environment in all spaces where members, outside groups and staff may be present.
- If we encounter obstacles to implementing these measures, we will prioritize safety over in-person gatherings and will immediately consult with the District Superintendent for advice.
- We will promptly report any new outbreaks of Covid-19 within the congregation, outside groups and staff to the District Superintendent.
- We will ensure that our church is in compliance with all protocols for child care and preschool activities and settings.
- We have completed the "Worksheet for Protocol Planning and Reopening Teams" and have attached all referenced plans to this certification.
- We will complete the NYAC "Checklist for Worship Events" for each in-person worship event we host and keep the checklist on file in the church office.

Julius Thomas
Signature of Pastor

6/26/20 Woodbury UMC - CT
Date Church Name

[Signature]
Signature of Trustees Chair

6/26/20
Date

[Signature]
Signature of Church Council Chair

6/26/20
Date



Figure 9: WUMC-CT Church Compliance Certification

NYAC Compliance Matrix (Worksheet for Protocol Planning & Reopening)

(page 1 of 3)

Worksheet for Protocol Planning and Reopening Teams						
Check or N/A	Item Description	Phase A Plan Outdoor Services		Phase A Plan Outdoor Services		Comment or details
		Status	Pg #	Status	Pg #	
	What is your inventory of essential supplies					
X	Cleaning Suppliers					
X	Masks (supplies available for those who arrive without them)					
X	Hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol)					
X	Soap					
X	Toilet Paper					
X	Cleansing wipes					
X	Tissues					
X	No-touch trash cans					
	Identify clearly named and trained 'Cleaning Teams'					
X	Develop your cleaning plan and place special emphasis on pews/chairs, doorknobs, railings, bathrooms, and other high touch areas	In Plan & In Process	13, 16	In Plan & In Process	13, 26	Detailed cleaning checklists will be developed by BOT for both Phase A (outdoor services) and Phase B (services, office, meetings)
X	Make arrangements for professional deep cleaning of carpeting and other flooring prior to reopening	In Plan & In Process	13, 16	In Plan & In Process	13, 26	Carpet/flooring in lower level Fellowship Hall & adjacent bathrooms will be performed before Phase A reopening and in upper level sanctuary, entrances, and bathroom before Phase B reopening. Professional contractor will perform these deep cleanings.
	Determine appropriate and clearly identified paths of entry and exit					
X	Calculate how many people your worship space can hold if every other pew is utilized and congregants are sitting in family groups six feet apart from each other	Completed	14	Completed	19-20	Town of Woodbury North Green can accommodate 200 people with 50 sq ft per person as recommended by Church mutual. Initially, cap of 100 people will be imposed. Sanctuary can hold 264 people without restrictions. Phase B plan is to use every third pew to provide 7.5 ft front-back social distance and 6-ft side-to-side social distance. Cap of 50 people will be imposed (17% of unrestricted capacity).
X	Create a plan for capping attendance when/if the sanctuary/worship space reach 50 percent capacity	Completed	7, 14	Completed	7, 24	Outdoor service will be capped at 100, which is greater than average attendance prior to COVID. Survey indicates that we can expect 42 people for Phase B indoor services. Will provide online video broadcast if anyone needs to be turned away at check-in. Pre-registration will provide heads up if likely to reach capacity. Lay Leader will be available at check-in to kindly turn people away and recommend they watch online video broadcast.
X	Establish a plan to handle any parishioner who wishes to participate in worship without a mask and those who refuse to wear a mask and people who don't cooperate with social distancing	Completed	17	Completed	17, 21, 31-32	Lay Leader will be at check-in to help usher/greeters with delicate situations involving refusal or lack of cooperation with guidelines and restrictions.
X	Make sure that ventilation system operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air	N/A	N/A	In Plan & In Process	21-25	Phase A reopening does not require ventilation since church will not be used except for occasional use of bathrooms. Active ventilation approach developed for indoor services, which requires modifications to heating system, which will be accomplished before Phase B reopening.
	Create/purchase signage that explains the following					
X	How to stop the spread of COVID-19	In Plan & In Process	13, 18	In Plan & In Process	13, 25	As discussed on pages 13 (Phase A) and 21 (Phase B), signage as been identified and will be made or purchased.
X	Everyday protective measures such as hand washing, covering cough and sneezing, properly wearing a face covering, and social distancing					

NYAC Compliance Matrix (page 2 of 3)

Determine how you would handle a variety of specific circumstances by tasking the following steps						
		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	All building use agreements are suspended. One wedding is planned for the fall.
X	Develop a clearly communicated plan for building use agreements to reflect the results of the COVID-19 pandemic	Completed	71-73	N/A	N/A	Church Mutual Insurance has provided 3-page recommendations, which are contained in Appendix E. Compliance with recommendations is shown in the next section of this Appendix F.
X	Contact your local insurance carrier in order to gain guidance on how to remain in compliance with their expectations, cautions, and potential restrictions	Completed	5-6	Completed	5-6, 31	Plan well underway
X	Develop a plan for clearly communicating the restrictions/guidelines to all members of your congregation as well as to those who utilize the building	Completed	5-6, 10	Completed	5-6, 10	In the event of a member being diagnosed with COVID-19, the Lay Leader (or delegate) will determine, based on attendance records, the list of church family members to be notified. Either the Pastor or the Lay Leader will contact the Pomperaug Health District and affected church family members, using HIPAA compliant methods.
X	Develop a plan for how you will communicate with the members of the congregation if someone develops COVID-19	Completed	6-7	Completed	6-7	Survey was conducted and results used to finalize phased reopening plan.
X	Consider conducting a survey of the congregation to determine the degree and under what circumstances the members would feel comfortable returning to in-person worship	Completed	17	In Plan & In Process	17, 25	Online pre-registration will generate attendance list for greeters to check off at check-in and augment for walk-ins that haven't preregistered. This approach may be augmented by assigned seating for indoor services as described on page 21.
X	Develop a plan for taking attendance of those present for the purpose of being able to track if someone were to become sick or exposed	Completed	N/A	Completed	N/A	WUMC-CT has been leveraging existing processes developed by the Family Nurture Ministry Team (FNMT) and a subgroup called Care Corp for staying in touch with extended church family members and attending to spiritual and emotional needs. This includes maintaining a list of concerns and prayer requests that is communicated to a virtual prayer group by e-mail and documented in the weekly Messenger newsletter, while respecting requests for confidentiality. Items are brought forward during joys and concerns (and prayer request cards) at in-person services, at virtual Fellowship Hour and Men's Ministry Zoom meetings; phone calls to the Pastor, Lay Leader, and FNMT members. Spiritual and emotional care needs are met by phone calls and visits, when possible by the Pastor and FNMT members.
X	Work with your leadership team to develop a plan for providing intentional spiritual and emotional care as well as counseling on a flexible, in-person rotation or virtual basis. This would also require that you create a credible listing of print and in-person referrals	Completed	N/A	Completed	N/A	The Pastor and Chair of the Mission and Outreach Ministry team remain in contact with the Community Services Council of Woodbury and social services resources in surrounding towns for two-way communication of and collaboration in meeting identified needs. WUMC-CT has created a COVID-19 Emergency Support Fund for extended church family, which has been communicated via special Life of the Church Letter, during joys and concerns portion of online services, and in the weekly Messenger. The Mission and Outreach Ministry has recently developed a one-page mission/vision statement for a new Helping Hands Service Corps to 1) provide a helping hand to those within the extended community having shorter-term well-defined critical needs and 2) act as a resource to supplement local community social services organizations.

NYAC Compliance Matrix (page 3 of 3))

Determine a plan for collection of the offering, including such things as:		17	In Plan	17, 30	Has been in place for years. Was well communicated at beginning of COVID-19 crisis and is currently well utilized by the church family.
X	A stationary collection box	N/A	Already in place	N/A	
X	Mail-in offerings	N/A	Already in place	N/A	
X	Electronic giving	N/A	Already in place	N/A	
Develop a plan for counting the offering including such things as:		17	In Plan	17, 30	Existing counting process will be modified to include written instructions requiring to two-person team to maintain 8-ft social distance, wear masks at all times, clean counting table/chairs before and after counting, wash or disinfect hands after completing the counting process, and avoid touching one's face until the process is done and hands are washed. At this time it is felt that it is better not to use gloves. The completed deposit envelope will be treated as contaminated and placed in a clean envelop for storage and transport to the bank. This will be done by washing/sanitizing hands prior to dropping the deposit envelope into the larger clean manilla envelope and then washing/disinfecting hands again. The clean envelope will then be taped shut and marked "For Deposit -- Exterior Envelope is Clean"
	Gloves		In Plan	N/A	
X	Disinfectants		In Plan	N/A	
	Deposit time frames with consideration of leaving the offering in a box for 2-3 days to reduce the risk of transmission		In Plan	N/A	

Church Mutual Insurance Compliance Matrix

(page 1 of 3)

Church Mutual Insurance Recommendations for Safe Return to Worship						
Check or N/A	Item Description	Phase A Plan Outdoor Services		Phase A Plan Outdoor Services		Comment or details
		Status	Pg #	Status	Pg #	
Recommendations for Preparation Phase						
Planning						
X	Assign responsibility for monitoring and incorporating government orders and guidance	Completed	N/A	Completed	N/A	New York Annual Conference of United Methodist Church is carefully monitoring Federal, NY, and CT government orders/guidance updating its guidelines/restrictions, as needed. The COVID-19 Recovery Team (CRT) has this responsibility for WUMC-CT. Members of CRT is monitoring evolving CT state guidelines in addition to leveraging NYAC guidelines that are updated regularly.
X	Assign responsibility for coordinating with local health authorities and law enforcement	Completed	N/A	Completed	N/A	The Lay Leader as CRT Chairperson has this responsibility
X	Provide Leaders, staff, and volunteers with masks & other PPE to wear while serving	In Plan	13	In Plan	13	Board of Trustees will procure and maintain supplies, which will be stored in the church office. Leaders of work teams will ensure
X	Establish protocols for physical distancing before, during, and after services, including seating arrangements, modified worship practices and dismissal procedures	Completed	14-16	Completed	21-25	
X	Continue offering online worship options for those who are sick, higher risk or have been exposed to a coronavirus (COVID-19) patient within the last 14 days or are otherwise uncomfortable gathering in person	Completed	10-11	Completed	10-11	Both online video and audio-only telephone broadcast of worship services will continue to be provide.
X	Develop isolation protocols should a staff member, volunteer or attendee becomes ill at your facility	Completed	N/A	Completed	N/A	The classroom closest to the furnace room will be used for isolation if staff member, volunteer or attendee becomes ill at our facility. Depending on circumstances, Lay leader (or delegate) will determine need to call 911 or family member for assistance in returning home.
X	Minimize use of printed or hand-held materials such as bulletins, hymnals, Bibles, and attendance pads	In Plan	17	In Plan	26	Bibles/hymnals will be removed from the sanctuary, but will be made available to church family members on long-term load to disinfect and bring as personal items. Attendance will be taken at check-in points. Bulletins will be sent out Fridays and church members encouraged to print at home and bring with the m. Small stacks of clean bulletins and visitor cards will be available to be picked at check-in table.
X	Do not share equipment used for worship services such as microphones, etc.	In Plan	16	In Plan	25	Separate microphones will be used by Pastor, Liturgist, Singer(s).
X	Minimize areas of your building(s) being used during services and gatherings to minimize disinfecting needs.	In Plan	16	In Plan	21	Only lower level Fellowship Hall and adjacent restrooms will be open for outdoor services. Only upper level entrances, sanctuary, and restroom will be open for indoor services.
X	Block off unused areas of your building(s)	In Plan	N/A	In Plan & In Process	23	This will be ensured by usher/greeters at check-in points in Narthex and Handicap entrances
X	Designate 1-in-1-out protocol for tight spaces	In Plan & In Process	13, 16	In Plan & In Process	26	Facilities used for services will be cleaned shortly before the start of services. Office facilities will be cleaned at the beginning of the day. Participants will clean areas of use before and after meetings or other church activities.

Church Mutual Compliance Matrix (page 2 of 3)

X	Develop admission criteria for worship services, noting that anyone who is ill or appears ill should plan to worship remotely	In Plan & In Process	9, 17	Completed	8	In Plan & In Process	9, 23	Non-contact temp, queries related to symptoms/exposure, compliance with social distancing and masks.
X	Postpone children's activities such as nurse/child care or implement additional safeguard	Completed	8	Completed	8	Completed	8	All in-person children's activities have been suspended.
N/A	Discontinue playground use or implement additional safeguards and limitations	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	WUMC=CT has no playground
X	Postponi mission trips and summer activities such as vacation Bible school (VBS)	Completed	8	Completed	8	Completed	8	All such activities have been suspended
Building								
X	Conduct a thorough facility inspection/walk-through to check on the safety of your building before it is reopened	In Plan & In Process	N/A	In Plan & In Process	N/A	In Plan & In Process	N/A	BOT will conduct inspection/walk-through prior to opening
N/A	Restart systems and reset thermostats and lights	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Church was never fully shut down.
N/A	Flus hot and cold water through all points of use in your bulding if unoccupied for prolonged period	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Church was never fully shut down.
X	Complete spring HVAC (professional) maintenance	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	In Plan	N/A	Prior to reopening for indoor services, the heating system will be maintained and modified to allow cool, fresh air to be supplied to the sanctuary without heating during summer.
X	Make sure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	In Plan	N/A	
X	Address overgrowth and other issues stemming from building vacancy	Completed	N/A	Completed	N/A	Completed	N/A	
X	Check for any rodent/pest activity or infestations	In Plan	N/A	In Plan	N/A	In Plan	N/A	Will be done by BOT as part of walk-through
X	Address any slip, trip, and fall hazards	In Plan	18	In Plan	18	In Plan	18	Will be done by BOT as part of walk-through
X	Thoroughly clean and disinfect the building and contents before reopening	In Plan	13, 16	In Plan	13, 16	In Plan	13, 26	BOT will develop workplan and checklists for pre-opening deep cleaning and recurring cleaning/sanitizing before worship services
X	Ensure cleaning supplies and disinfectant have been ordered and are on hand	In Plan & In Process	12-13	In Plan & In Process	12-13	In Plan & In Process	12-13	
X	Make hand sanitizer and/or hand wipes available through the building	In Plan	12-13	In Plan	12-13	In Plan	12-13	
X	Post signs regarding social distancing, safety measures, and handwashing	In Plan	17-18	In Plan	17-18	In Plan	25	
Supplies								
X	Disinfecting agents for you facility	In Plan & In Process	12-13	In Plan & In Process	12-13	In Plan & In Process	12-13	
X	Hand sanitizer for staff, volunteers, and attendees							
X	Masks and gloves for staff, volunteers, and attendees							
X	Face coverings for attendees							
Communication								
X	Prior to reopening, communicate your plan via multiple channels such as e-mail, website, newspaper, social media, phone calls, etc.	In Plan & In Process	5-6, 9-10	In Plan & In Process	5-6, 9-10	In Plan & In Process	5-6, 9-10	Communication strategy has been created and underway.
X	Communicate the plan and make it available to members and non-members alike							
X	Update and share details of the plan as circumstances change							
X	Reinforce messaging that persons who are ill or higher risk should continue worshipping remotely							
Instructional Materials								
X	Develop on-site instruction materias such as signs or projected impages to generate awareness of new protocols and procedures	In Plan	9	In Plan	9	In Plan	9	Is planned as part of communication strategy.
X	Directions to aid the flow of people and vehicles							
X	Information on physical distancing and face coverings							
X	Messaging to stay home if sick							
X	Importance of handwashing and hygiene practices							

A. IMPORTANCE OF TRANSFORMING OUR HYGIENE PRACTICES									
Training									
X	Train staff, leaders, ushers, and volunteers on established plans and protocols for worship services and gatherings	In Plan		In Plan				In Plan	
X	Addressing higher(er) risk individuals that arrive or those presenting signs of illness	In Plan	10	In Plan				In Plan	10
X	Maintaining physical distance requirements among those that attend	In Plan		In Plan				In Plan	
X	Understanding cleaning and disinfecting procedures, as well as the supplies used	In Plan		In Plan				In Plan	
Recommendations for Implementation Phase									
Before Services									
X	Disinfect the worship area	In Plan	N/A	In Plan	16			In Plan	26
X	Disinfect worship materials such as microphones and music stands	In Plan		In Plan				In Plan	
X	Disinfect restrooms and other common areas	In Plan		In Plan				In Plan	
X	Replenish restrooms and other common areas	In Plan		In Plan				In Plan	
X	Replenish disinfecting and covering suppliers	In Plan		In Plan				In Plan	
During Services									
X	At entrances, prop doors open (weather permitting)	In Plan	N/A	In Plan				In Plan	
X	Apply admission criteria and provide hand sanitizer	In Plan	17	In Plan				In Plan	23
X	Seat individuals or family units from front to back if building entrance is located rear of the worship area	In Plan	16	In Plan				In Plan	21-23
X	Modify "passing of the peace" or greeting time to avoid physical contact	In Plan	17	In Plan				In Plan	25
After Services									
X	Dismiss attendees from closest to furthest from the exit	N/A	N/A	In Plan				In Plan	21-23
X	Disinfect your worship area, materials, rooms used and frequently touched items such as doors, light switches, chairs, etc.	In Plan	16	In Plan				In Plan	20, 26
X	Provide hand sanitizer and new PPE (masks and gloves) to those that have post-service responsibilities such as counting offerings, etc.	In Plan	N/A	In Plan				In Plan	N/A
Children's Activities									
N/A	Disinfect activity areas and equipment before, between, and after activities	N/A		N/A				N/A	
N/A	Establish admission criteria and have parents drop children off outside the activity area	N/A	8	N/A				N/A	8
Office Operations									
X	Create accountability for yourself and your co-workers regarding established protocols	N/A	N/A	N/A				Completed	N/A
X	Maintain physical distance and wear face coverings to protect each other	N/A	N/A	N/A				Completed	20
N/A	Consider having office spaces deep cleaned on a weekly basis	N/A	N/A	N/A				N/A	N/A
<p>Office is staffed by Pastor and one Administrative Staff that work in their respective areas. Each is responsible for cleaning their own area. Instituted in March</p> <p>Will be deep cleaned prior to reopening. Pastor and Staff member will clean their respective areas before and after use. Common touch points will be sanitized at the beginning of each day.</p>									

Concluding Remarks

The reopening plan documented herein describes the strategy and approach used to develop a phased plan for slowly reopening the church and ultimately returning to a new ‘normal’ church life. Detailed plans have been provided for Phase A and B, which represent the first two of four phases envisioned to be required to reach this end goal. Later phases remained to be defined, allowing, it is hoped, fewer restrictions and associated distractions on church life activities than Phases A and B, perhaps as a result of lessons learned from earlier phases and/or development of a safe and effective Coronavirus vaccine.

WUMC-CT hopes that this document provides sufficient evidence that the risks associated with reopening at this stage of the COVID-19 crisis and NYAC’s guidelines/restrictions and Church Mutual recommendations have been taken seriously. This is further substantiated by WUMC-CT’s compliance certification document that has been signed by our Pastor and the Chairpersons of Trustees and Church Council and is provided in the previous section.

We look forward to NYAC’s feedback and approval of our Phase A plan for holding outdoor services and our Phase B plan for conducting indoor worship services. Our CRT stands ready to discuss and respond to any questions, concerns, and requests for improving our current plans. It is our hope that we have approvals in time to hold our first outdoor worship as early as July 12th and our first indoor worship service, in the event of bad weather, as early as August 9th.

Appendices

Appendix A

WUMC Important Announcement: Response to Rising COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Concerns

March 13, 2020

**WUMC Important Announcement:
Response to Rising COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Concerns
by Mark Davis, WUMC Lay Leader**

This is an important message from the leadership team at Woodbury United Methodist Church (WUMC) in response to increasing concerns regarding COVID-19, otherwise known as Coronavirus. This message is being sent in lieu of *The Messenger*, which was ready for release today, because much of the information contained therein has been overcome by WUMC's response to recent events as summarized below. *The Messenger* will be revised and released early next week.

The WUMC Church Council has been monitoring guidance by the CDC, local officials, and the New York Annual Conference. Over the past week we have seen the inevitable spread of COVID-19 across our country, recently progressing to our state. While we do not appear to have any confirmed or active cases in the towns served by WUMC, state officials expect that the spread of the virus will move into and become more prevalent in Litchfield and New Haven counties over the next several weeks. Therefore, after prayerful consideration, the Church Council decided in a conference call meeting last night to take precautionary measures to ensure that church members, families, and staff are all in a position to protect themselves from illness and do our part to slow the spread of the virus. Please understand that the decision to take these steps was made out of an abundance of caution to protect the ones we love, many of whom are at higher risk than the general population, while recognizing the essential role that WUMC serves in the lives of its members and our communities. The life of the church goes on, albeit with temporary changes that are deemed to be prudent in the near term.

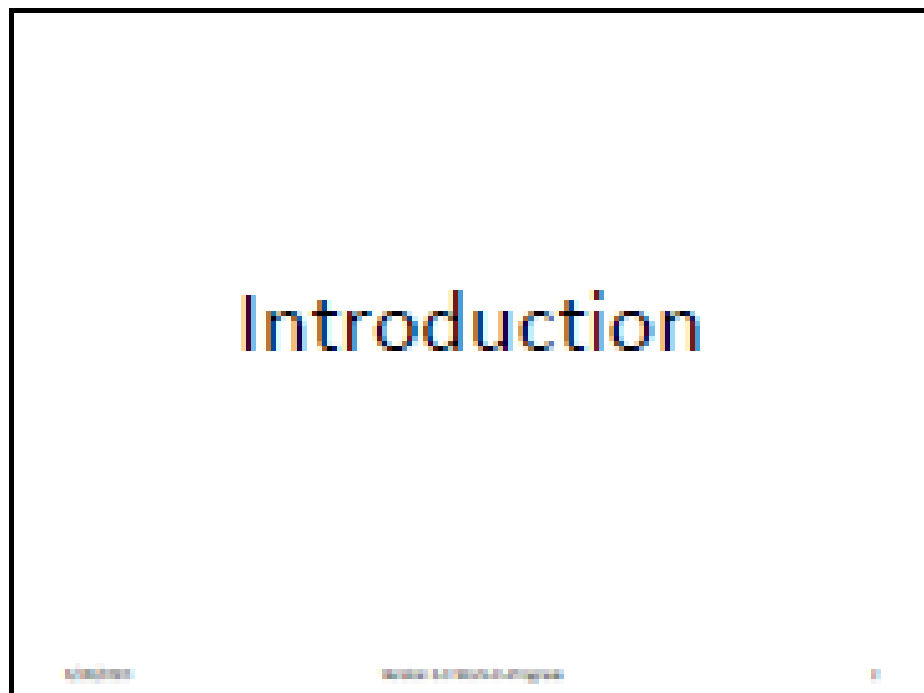
The following steps are effective immediately and will be re-evaluated at the end of March:

- Through March 31st, church services will be held. However, in-church attendance is restricted to people deemed necessary to conduct an abbreviated service to be live-streamed online. Pastor John, Chris Shay, and Theron Kissinger will be the only members required for conducting the service this Sunday, March 15, 2020. There will be no choir participation this week. To watch live or archived recordings of worship services on Facebook, go to www.woodburyumc.net and click on the Facebook icon. No personal Facebook account is required. Live streaming of services can also be viewed on Instagram at woodburyumcnet from within one's own Instagram app. For those with an Instagram account the service may be more interactive and may be easier for some to hear. Please contact Theron Kissinger via e-mail at theronk@hotmail.com if you have any issues with either method.
- Pastoral visitations will be conducted by phone unless face-to-face support is deemed essential.
- All 'non-essential' meetings and events will either be held remotely or rescheduled/cancelled. Committee chair persons or meeting organizers will communicate decisions regarding their respective meetings/events. This week's *Messenger* will be revised and published early next week to reflect these decisions. Every effort will be made to communicate on a timely basis through multiple channels (*Messenger*, e-mail, phone).
- Meetings deemed to be both essential and to require face to face participation will be scheduled on a case-by-case basis by WUMC Chairpersons in consultation with Church Council.
- Regular office hours will be maintained by Pastor John and Kathy Craig. Meetings that cannot be conducted by phone will be scheduled by appointment only. Please minimize unannounced drop-ins.
- The 2020 Lenten Study "The Walk" will be held remotely via teleconference (203-633-3808 -- no PIN required) as originally scheduled on Tuesday evenings (6:30 – 8:00 pm) through April 7th.
- A teleconference (203-633-3808 -- no PIN required) will be held this Sunday after the live-streamed service (at 11:45 am) to provide an opportunity to express joys/concerns, ask questions, and seek assistance. Similar opportunities for remote fellowship will be held on Sundays at 11:45 am and Mondays/Wednesdays at 7:30 pm, using the same call-in #.
- The Pasta Dinner scheduled March 21 will be rescheduled or cancelled. Stay tuned.
- WUMC meetings/events scheduled for April and beyond will be re-evaluated at the end of March.
- Participation in non-WUMC meetings or events is at the discretion of each individual. Please contact outside organizers regarding cancellation/rescheduling and steps being taken to reduce the risk of community spread.
- The Church Council will continue to monitor rapidly evolving status and guidance. All the above steps will be re-evaluated with new developments communicated as-needed.

We understand that this is a difficult time with much uncertainty. Some will experience direct effects of the virus, while others may undergo economic hardship due to reduced hours or inability to work. Rest assured that there is no need for panic and the principles being taught to our Sunday School students from the book "Uraimid" remain valid and useful in addressing this pandemic. The WUMC Leadership team will continue to do everything it can to provide support to those in need. Please stay in touch with fellow members, bring forward any concerns or need for support, and pray for those affected, including health care workers that put themselves at risk. Please do not hesitate to call Pastor John (845-707-5152), Mark Davis (860-882-4427) or the WUMC office (203-263-4775) to seek assistance.

Appendix B WUMC CRT/BOT COVID-19 Recovery Strategy & Plan

The following slide deck represents a high-level summary of the reopening plan of Woodbury UMC of Connecticut (WUMC-CT), which is further described in the main body of this document in detailed narrative form. The format in this appendix is two reduced images per page. For convenience a separate PDF document with full-sized slides has also been provided as a separate attachment with the e-mail transmittal of our plan to the Connecticut District Superintendent of the New York Annual Conference.



COVID-19 Recovery Team (CRT)

- The ad hoc COVID-19 Recovery Team was formed by the WUMC Church Council at its monthly meeting on 14-May-2020 with the objective of developing a strategy and plan for re-opening the church for in-person worship services in a manner that ensures the safety and welfare of the church family and community and compliance with NYAC reopening guidelines.
- The CRT includes the following members, who represent key committees/ ministries:
 - Pastor John Thomason
 - Bud Behlman (BOT/Adult Ministry),
 - Mark Davis (Lay Leader and /Finance Committee)
 - Rae Ann Hockenberry (Open Doors Ministry/Membership Secretary)
 - Catherine Mason (Children and Youth Ministry),
 - Chris Shay (Worship Ministry)
- The CRT is responsible for developing a re-opening strategy/high-level plans and act as a catalyst to prepare the church and church family for reopening. The CRT will work with BOT to develop and implement detailed plans for preparing the church for re-opening and cleaning/sanitizing the church before/after each worship service.

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Path to Reopening

- COVID-19 Recovery Team (CRT) formed during May 14th Church Council meeting to act as catalyst for reopening WUMC
- CRT will work with Board of Trustees (BOT) to develop and implement detailed plans, which must be approved by Church Council & NYAC

CRT/BOT augmented with team of trained volunteers will enable efficient reopening.

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Strategic Planning Responsibilities



- Worship Service Risk Assessment & Mitigation Strategy
 - Lay Leader (M. Davis) and BOT (B. Behlman and others)
- Purchase of long-lead supplies (e.g., signage, PPE)
 - BOT (B. Behlman and others)
- Worship Service Modifications to Meet NYAC Guideline Restrictions while Minimizing Impact on Worship Experience
 - Pastor John, Worship Comm. (C. Shay) and Youth Ministry (C. Mason)
- Augmented Worship to Meet the Needs of Those Who Can Not Attend
 - Pastor John and Lay Leader (M. Davis)
- Communication Strategy
 - Pastor John and Lay Leader (M. Davis)

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Summary of NYAC Guidelines



- 50-person max occupancy in sanctuary; < 5 person small group meetings
- Vulnerable individuals encourage to remain at home and take advantage of online worship experience
- Masks required, except for age 2 yrs and younger, who should stay home
- No Baptisms, altar calls nor laying on of hands.
- No-touch alternatives to passing the peace, offering collection, greeters, and printed materials. No pew Bibles/hymnals.
- No choirs or praise bands. Soloist and instrumentals allowed with social distancing. No congregational singing.
- Alternate pew seating. Families sit in same pew.
- No passed or shared microphones
- No in-sanctuary receiving line or Fellowship hour
- Children should stay with family unit at all times. No traditional Sunday School or Children's Moment group gatherings.
- No Vacation Bible Schools, Mission Trip travel, no fund-raising or social activities that involves food preparation and distribution.
- NYAC approval of certified opening plan required
- Checklist for each worship service or equivalent event

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Strategy



- Follow “The General Rules” created by John Wesley: Do no harm. Do Good. Stay in Love with God.
- Reconcile and comply with
 - NYAC: *COVID-19 Guidelines for Church Reopening*
 - Church Mutual Ins: *Recommendations for Safe Return to Worship*
- Be disciplined and systematic in assessing and minimizing the risks posed by the coronavirus in reopening the church
- Be creative in determining and meeting the needs of our church family
- Engage the entire church family in developing and implementing the reopening plan
- Develop and implement a communication strategy to prepare and train our church family for a successful reopening of our church

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Approach



- Identify and prioritize all elements of church life for which a risk assessment and mitigation approach is required
- Establish a phased reopening plan for returning to a fully open church allowing all elements of church life to be conducted in a safe manner
- Establish work teams with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for implementing the reopening plan
- Establish a early warning system for identifying need for renewed restrictions or improved processes
- Communicate early and often to all members of the church family

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Identified Elements of Church Life

- Church Office and Administration Activities
- Worship Services and Associated Activities
- Sunday School and Bible Studies
- Church Ministries
- Church Committees
- Pastoral Care
- Weddings and Funerals
- 3rd Party Facility Use

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Worship Service Risk Management

Systematic evaluation of risk of viral exposure/transfer, implementation of risk mitigation restrictions/protocols, and education of church family through multi-faceted communication strategy, including ubiquitous signage within church facility

Risk	Mitigation
Contact transfer	Deep one-time recurring clean of touch points Remove seat cushions & bibles/hymnals No handouts/bulletins Central plate(s) to drop off donations
Airborne respiratory droplets	Max attendance of 50, fans in windows to draw out air Masks required Social distancing between different family units Non-contact pastor greeting line
Preaching/singing	Virtual choir; no congregational singing Pastor/Liturgist/Soloists on separate mics & plexiglass barriers
Cross-pollination between family units	Each available pew limited to one family unit or two singles (at either end of pew) Children must remain with family unit at all times No Sunday School; No child care; No Fellowship Hour; Non-contact pastor greeting line

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Protocols to Ensure Safety of Church Family



- Protocol(s) for limiting sanctuary capacity to 50 people
 - Online registration (with perhaps seating assignments)
 - Non-confrontational talking points for turn-away of walk-in attendees if have reached capacity
- Greater than 6-ft social distancing; Greater than 15 feet from worship team to congregation
- Method for documenting attendees (at check-in) and locations within sanctuary (tracking lists to be retained on rolling retention basis, length of time determined to enable contact tracking while ultimately protecting privacy)
- Trained adult Greeters/Ushers for facilitating traffic flow, encouraging social distancing, reminders of deviations from guidelines, documenting attendees
- Method(s) for identifying outbreak, contact tracing, and HIPAA compliant notifications

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Potential Modifications to Enhance Restricted Worship Service



Multi-Sensory Modes of Worship


- Enhanced Scripture readings with sound effects
- Non-Traditional Song/Choir
 - Virtual Choir
 - Instrumental pieces accompanied by sign language, body motions, and/or congregational reading of lyrics
- Worship Song PowerPoint with Inspirational Images & Lyrics
- Hymn Stories: Delve into history of faith songs bringing inspiration, reflection & a fresh perspective.
- Guided Prayer
- Chants & Taizé prayer
- Guided Meditations & reflections accompanied by video
- Christian poetry reading
- Purposeful silence
Ecclesiastes 3:7– “There is a time to keep silence and a time to speak”
- Use of visual design elements: artful displays with props, art, flowers, etc.

Let's view this as an opportunity to explore worship through a wider variety of our God given senses & modalities.


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Communication Strategy




- Review of draft re-opening strategy, high-level plan, and survey by Church Council and key Committees (e.g., BOT, SPRC, Worship)
- Conduct survey of church family to assess comfort level, determine preferences on key decisions to be made, estimate likely attendees and identify vulnerable members that are thinking of attending
- Church Council and NYAC review/approval of final detailed plan
- Transmit high-level summary of final plan to church family via Life of the Church Letter
- Hold Zoom meeting(s) to educate church family and solicit support for work teams
- Post guidelines, plan, checklists, FAQs, and concise educational /training articles, graphics, and/or videos on WUMC website and communicate to church family via multiple channels
- Provide mechanism(s) for submitting questions to WUMC CRT/BOT online or by e-mail and/or calling to discuss concerns in private with Chairperson of CRT
- Send following videos prior to reopening.
 - Pastor providing reassurance; describing re-opening procedures, changes, and requirements; and encouraging vulnerable to be "safer at home"
 - Lay Leader walks through & explains new traffic patterns for entering, seating & exiting sanctuary/building.
- Conduct training of volunteers that will help implement plan
- Post ubiquitous signage within church facility
- In the event of a member being diagnosed with COVID-19, the Lay Leader (or delegate) will determine, based on attendance records, the list of church family members to be notified. Either the Pastor or the Lay Leader will contact the Pomperaug Health District and affected church family members, using HIPAA compliant methods.

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Proposed Phases & Target Dates



• Current – Remote/Virtual Church Life	
• Phase A – Initial Reopening with Outdoor Worship Services	July 12 th
• Phase B – Reopening Indoor Services, Pastoral Care, and Other Church Ministries	Aug 7 th
• Phase C – Further Safe Restoration of Key Restricted Church Life Elements	TBD
• Phase D – Final Transition to New Normal	TBD

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Phase A – Initial Reopening of Worship Services



- Administrative Office Hours remain on appointment only basis for business that cannot be conducted remotely
- Worship services reopened outdoors according to NYAC Guideline Stage 3 restrictions
- Other Church Ministry and Church Committee meetings and work conducted remotely
- No Sunday School or in-person Bible Studies
- Pastoral Care conducted remotely
- No Weddings or Funerals

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Phase B – Partial Reopening of Pastoral Care and Other Church Ministries



- Administrative Office Hours remain on appointment only basis for business that cannot be conducted remotely
- Worship services reopened for indoor services according to NYAC Guideline Stage 3 restrictions
- Small group meetings of 5 or less participants allowed with proper social distancing and risk reduction protocols
- Sunday School and other Children & Youth activities remain suspended
- Face-to-face Pastoral Care visits allowed at Pastor's discretion, while practicing prescribed social distancing and risk reduction protocols
- Weddings or Funerals allowed following same restrictions imposed on Phase 1 worship services as well as other no-touch alternatives to receiving lines, etc.

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Phase C – Further Safe Restoration of Key Restricted Church Life Elements



- Open with new protocols and protections
- Safe 'no-touch' alternatives developed for restricted worship service elements and associated activities
- Safe methods for Sunday School and Youth Group activities established
- Safe Methods for face-to-face group meetings of more than 5 people established

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Phase D – Final Transition to New Normal



- To be developed

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Preliminary Survey Results

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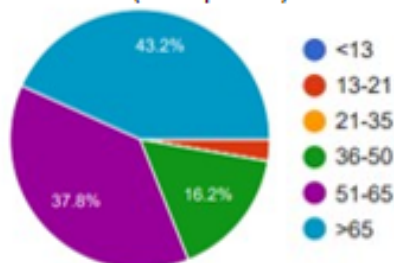


WUMC Survey Results General

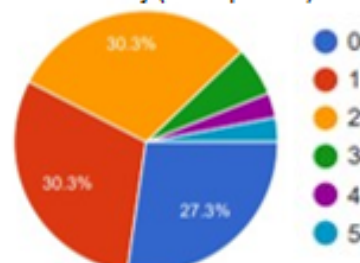


- Three parts: Reopening, Online Services, and Demographics
- Released June 10th ; soft deadline of June 20th
- 38 responses by June 18th; basis of preliminary results shown herein
- 81% > 50 years old
- About 42 likely attendees during Phase 1 reopening if held indoors
- See next slide for preferences related to timing of reopening and indoor vs outdoor services

Age Range of Responders
(37 responses)



Number of Likely Attendees in
Family (33 responses)

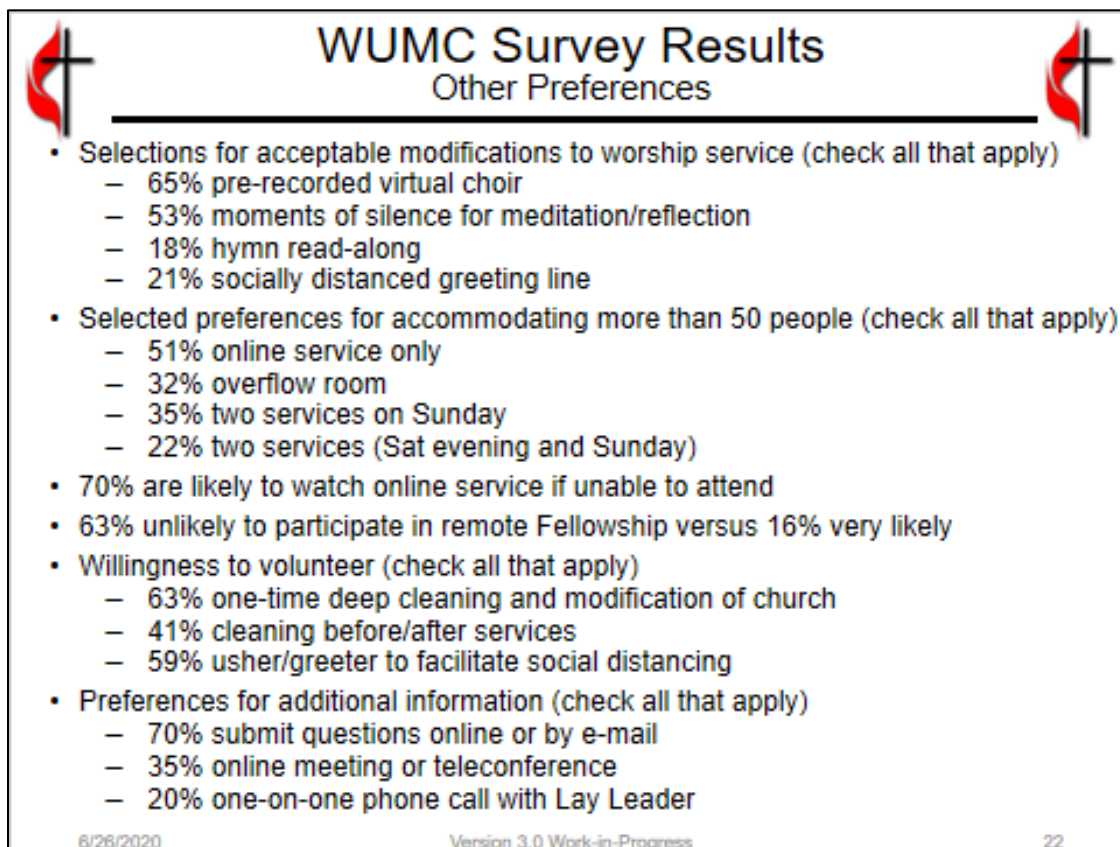
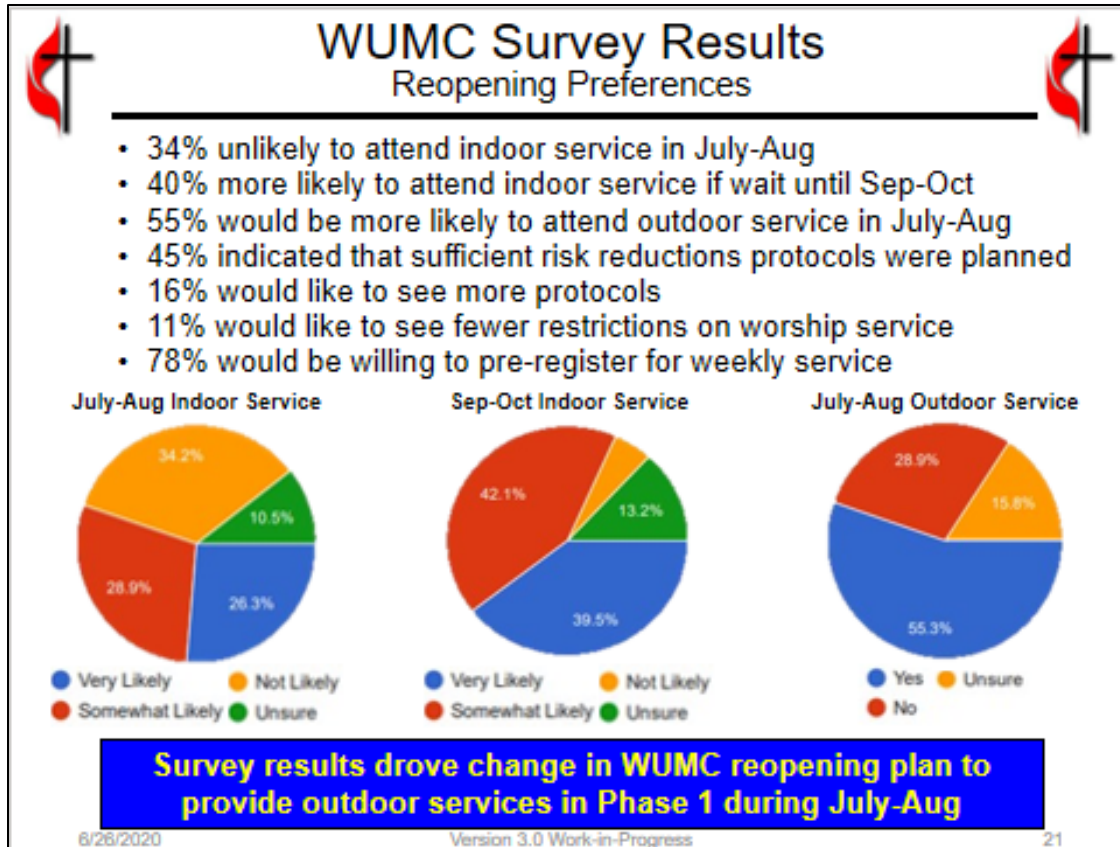


Survey results have been extremely helpful in final planning

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Phase A Plan

Outdoor Services

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Phase A – Outdoor Worship Services

Summary

- Services to be held on Town of Woodbury's North Green, weather permitting. After Phase B is approved, will move indoors when weather is poor.
- Services will be recorded and be available for broadcast Sunday afternoon.
- Church's lower entrance/restrooms will be open. All other areas will be closed.
- Town Green (see 'Location' slide) has 10,000 square feet within natural boundary of trees planted along periphery (well back from street). Can accommodate 200 people using Church Mutual guidelines of 50 sq-ft per person. Will cap at 100 people or lower limit if one is imposed by NYAC or CT.
- Boundaries will be roped off the day of service to provide two check-in points, allowing greeters to apply admission criteria, inform of mask and social distancing requirements, inform of service restrictions, take attendance, and provide access to hand sanitizer (see Staging' & 'Check-In' slides).
- Seating will be from N.E. to S.W and from West to East from check-in points #1 and #2, respectively. ('front-to-back'). Rope boundaries will be removed at end of service to allow unrestricted exit, while maintaining proper social distancing.
- Attendees will be asked to bring own seating or sit on the lawn. Hard-surface touch points within roped boundary (benches) will be sanitized. Gazebo will be roped off to all. Sanitized chairs will be set up for those with limited mobility
- Restrictions on worship service in compliance with NYAC guidelines.

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Outdoor Services – Location

Town of Woodbury, CT on North Green

- Located directly across Main St. from Woodbury UMC
- Accommodates 200 people with 50 sq-ft per person within roped boundary
- Church's lower entrance/restrooms will be open. All other areas will be closed

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Outdoor Services – Staging

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Outdoor Services – Signage



- Temp signs indicating parking for people with limited mobility near both check-in points
- Banner marking check-in points visible from any point on rope boundary
- Small cones at 10-ft intervals delineating waiting line at check-in points
- Warnings to stay at home and take advantage of online services for sick or vulnerable members
- Requests that people unable to remove their own masks and children under 2 years remain at home
- Requirements for mask and social distancing
- Obvious availability of hand sanitizer and reminder to sanitize hands upon entry into roped boundary
- Site/Staging map(s) showing 'front-to-back' seating in two areas and restroom across the street in Fellowship Hall

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Outdoor Services – Check-In Process



- Ushers/greeters (wearing same color shirts, masks, name tag; socially distanced)
 - One 'Usher' at Main St pedestrian crossing to help people with limited mobility and traffic control as necessary
 - Two 'Greeters' at each of two check-in points
- Admission Criteria
 - Quick non-contact temperature check
 - Query regarding exposure to COVID or symptoms
- Attendance
 - Check name off pre-registration list
 - Record name(s) and primary phone contact for unregistered families
- Communication (using signage)
 - Reminder of mask and social distancing requirements
 - Reminder of restrictions on service (see 'Restrictions' slide)
 - Reminder of availability of hand sanitizer
 - Guidance on seating ('front-to-back') and 'free-form' exit process
- Handouts
 - Stack of bulletins for those who did not print at home
 - Spare masks
 - Communion 'kit' on first Sunday of month (once approved)

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Outdoor Services – Restrictions

- Masks must be worn at all times, except Pastor, liturgist, and soloist, can speak/sing without masks by maintaining 20-foot social distance
- Separate microphones and lecterns/stands for all worship leaders
- Socially spaced praise band in N.W. area of green
- At least 10 feet social distance between families (can go to greater distancing if allows congregational signing)
- Children to remain with parent(s) at all times
- No congregational singing (looking for waiver allowing singing while wearing masks because increased social distancing)
- Personal Bibles/hymnals only (both available for long-term loan)

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Phase A Risk Mitigation Plan Outdoor Services

Risk Description	Primary Risk Mitigation(s) Planned
Contact transfer of virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bring your own seating by attendees - Sanitizing of limited seating made available for those who forget and can't bring seating; Sanitizing of hard touch points within roped boundary - Roping off of gazebo - Stacks of 'clean' handouts available for pickup by attendees at check-in points - Central locked box to drop off donations and basket for visitor cards - Separate microphones for each worship team member - Restrictions on service
Airborne transfer of virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Masks to be worn at all times by congregation to eliminate larger droplets - Masks and 10-ft social distance between families in congregational seating areas and outdoor natural 'ventilation' to dilute aerosol particles that penetrate masks - 15-20 ft social distancing between worship team members and congregation and each other so can remove masks when speaking/singing - Front to back seating; marked waiting line points at check-in points - Restrictions on worship service; ubiquitous signage
Lack of awareness of risk mitigation guidelines & requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training of church family with online information sessions; posting on guidelines/restrictions, training material, FAQs, etc. on website - Ubiquitous signage; Training of 'ushers/greeters'
Outbreak despite best efforts to minimize risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roped boundaries to provide two discrete check-in points to facilitate tracking of attendance and contact tracing if outbreak occur - Registration process to facilitate tracking of attendance and contact information
Physical injury during ingress/egress to/from worship service area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trained 'usher' at cross walk on Main Street - 'Reserved' parking next check-in points for those with limited mobility - Church wheelchair on hand if needed by those of limited mobility - Roped boundary to exclude non-obvious tripping hazards from worship area - Church First Aid kits available at both check-in points

Phase B Plan

Indoor Services

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Challenges of Indoor vs Outdoor Services



- Entryways and exits are typically narrow with tendency to create bottlenecks
- Small to medium sanctuaries make achieving desirable social distancing difficult, while still allowing a practical number of attendees
- There are far more touch points to be sanitized for every room to which access is allowed
- Contaminated air is not naturally diluted and dissipated as naturally occurs in an outdoor setting

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Phase B – Indoor Worship Services

Summary

- Services will be recorded and be available for broadcast Sunday afternoon.
- All areas other than entrances, sanctuary, and restrooms will be closed to general church family.
- One-way, first-in/first-out flow of foot-traffic from ingress to seating to egress maintained by signage
- Two check-in points (primary and handicap) allow admission criteria, attendance tracking, and reminders of social distancing, mask wearing, and other requirements/restrictions
- Social distancing maintained as follows
 - 15 to 20-foot between each worship team member and the congregation
 - 8-ft social distance between worship team members, augmented with plexiglass partitions
 - 7.5 feet front-to-back social distance and at least 6 feet side-to-side distance between families through marking of available seating in every third pew
- Active ventilation approach used to exhaust residual aerosols not captured by masks or plexiglass barriers
- Restrictions on worship service in compliance with NYAC guidelines.

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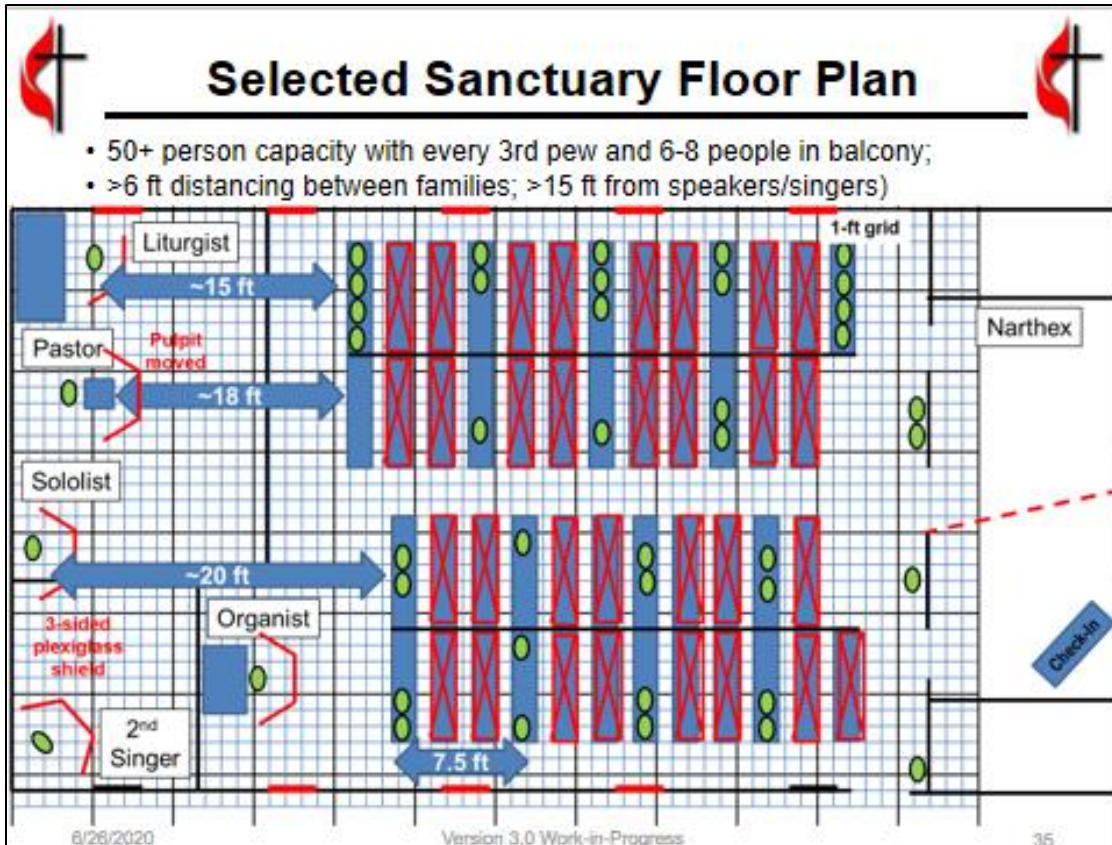
Selected Ingress/Egress Flow Pattern

One-Way Flow Ingress/Egress to Ensure Social Distancing

All areas of church shown in red, as well as lower level will be closed during worship

- One-way flow of foot-traffic; easy access to parking; minimum cleaning zones
- Trained greeter(s) facilitate seating locations and social distancing during ingress/egress

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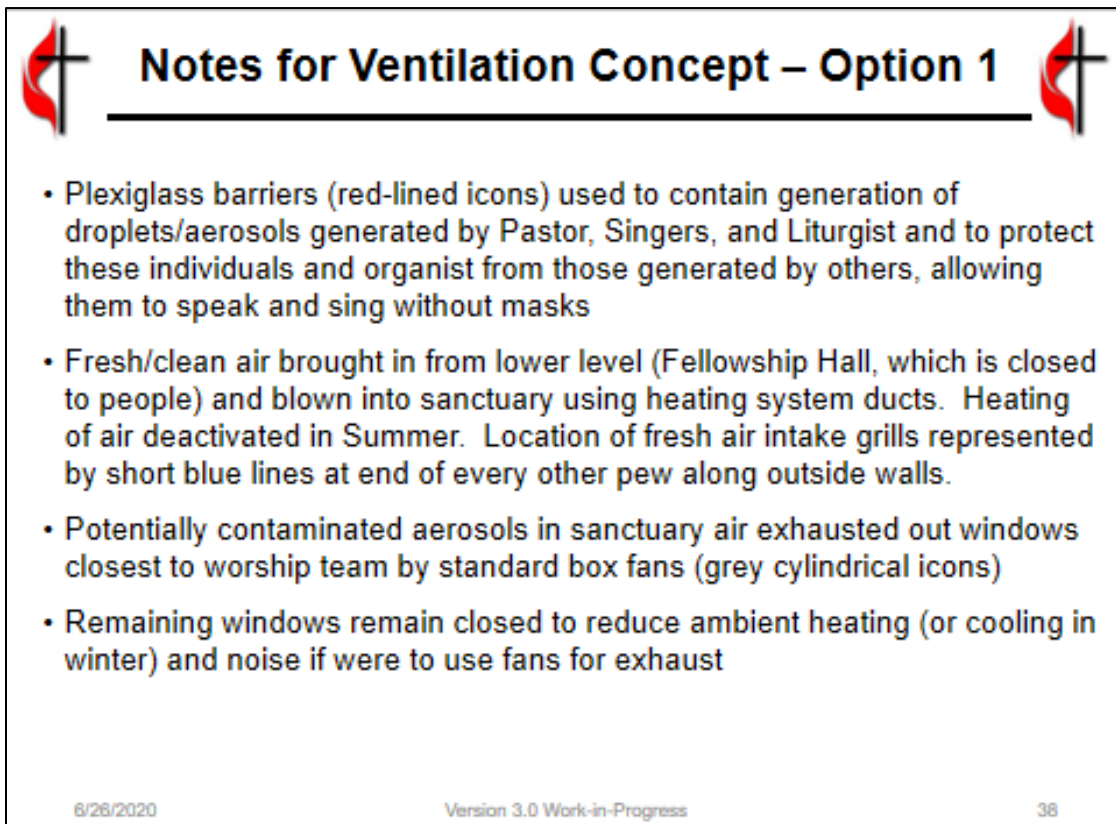
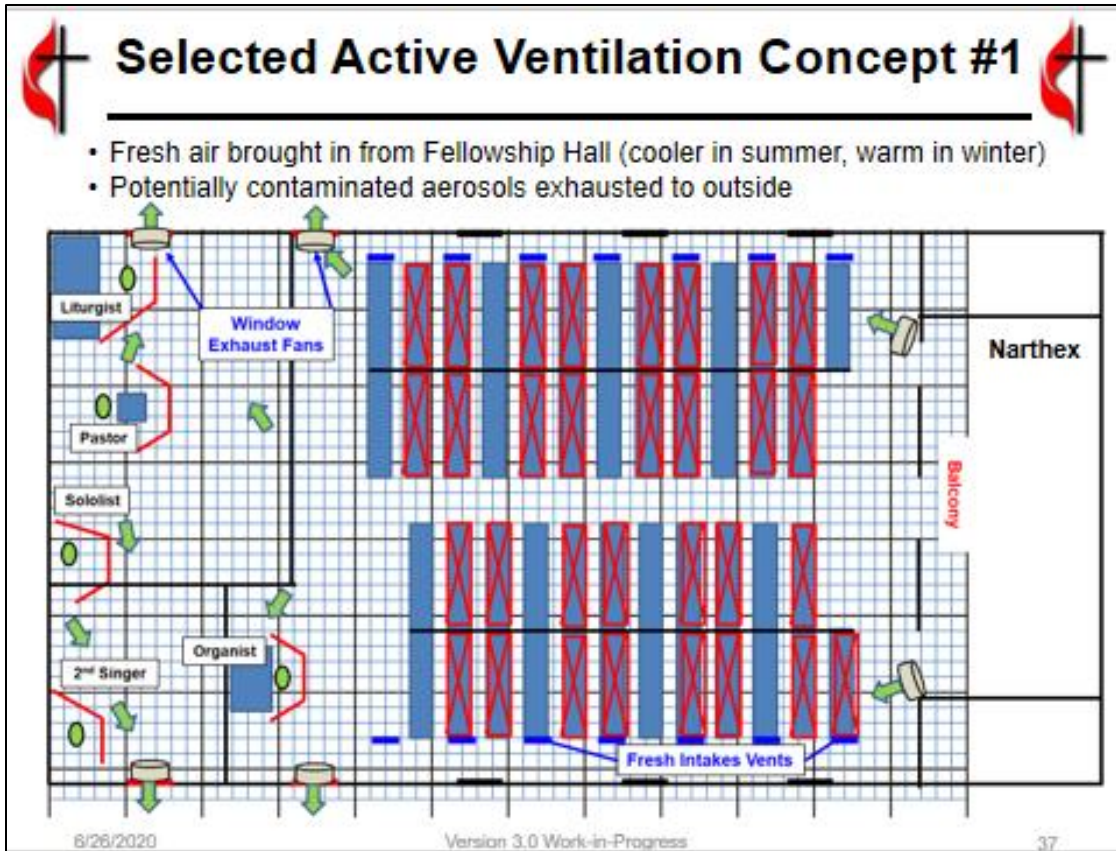


Ventilation Considerations*

- **The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.**
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within ~6 feet)
 - Through respiratory droplets/aerosols produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks or sings.
 - These droplets/aerosols can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
 - COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.
- **Droplets versus aerosols.**
 - Larger droplets remain airborne only briefly before settling because of gravity (reason for 6-foot social distancing without masks)
 - Smallest aerosol particles are too small to settle and are carried by air currents and dispersed by diffusion and air turbulence. Some aerosol particles can pass through masks.
 - Aerosols from infected persons may therefore pose an inhalation threat even at considerable distances in enclosed spaces
- **Risk mitigation.**
 - Risk from droplets minimized by social distance and masks
 - Aerosols addressed with masks; plexiglass partitions around Pastor, liturgist, and singers; and active ventilation bring in fresh air and exhaust air to outside
 - Risk of infection increases with density of aerosol droplets and time of exposure
 - Ventilation helps decrease density and time of exposure

*See Backup slide with letter published 4/15/20, at NEJM.org.
N Engl J Med 2020; 382:2063
DOI: 10.1056/NEJMc2009324

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Proposed Church Facility Signage



- Clearly visible check-in points; small cones or tape at 6-ft intervals delineating waiting line positions at each check-in point
- One-way foot traffic flow pattern
- Sanctuary map showing foot-traffic flow pattern and back-to-front seating, assuming that Option 1 from Figure 6 is pattern approved by NYAC.
- Sanctuary map showing allowable seating patterns (and seat numbers if a process for assigning seats is established)
- Requirements for mask and social distancing; no singing
- Obvious availability of hand sanitizer and reminder to use hand sanitizer before entry to and after exit from sanctuary
- Warnings to stay at home and take advantage of online services for sick or vulnerable members
- Request that people unable to remove their own masks and children under 2 remain home

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Indoor Services – Check-In Process



- Ushers/greeters (wearing same color shirts, masks, name tag; socially distanced)
 - One 'Usher' to facilitate intermixing flow from primary check-in and check-in for limited mobility
 - Two 'Greeters' at each of two check-in points
- Admission Criteria
 - Quick non-contact temperature check
 - Query regarding exposure to COVID or symptoms
- Attendance
 - Check name off pre-registration list
 - Record name(s) and primary phone contact for unregistered families
- Communication (using signage)
 - Reminder of mask and social distancing requirements
 - Reminder of restrictions on service (see 'Restrictions' slide)
 - Reminder of availability of hand sanitizer
 - Guidance on seating ('front-to-back') and 'free-form' exit process
- Handouts
 - Stack of bulletins for those who did not print at home
 - Spare masks
 - Communion 'kit' on first Sunday of month (once approved)

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Indoor Services – Restrictions




- Masks must be worn at all times, except for the Pastor, liturgist, and singer(s), when speaking or singing; No more than two singers
- Maintain social distance
 - 15 to 20-foot between each worship team member and the congregation
 - 8-ft social distance between worship team members, augmented with Plexiglass partitions
 - 7.5 feet front-to-back social distance and at least 6 feet side-to-side distance between families
- Children to remain with parent(s) at all times
- No praise band beyond an organist and socially distanced bell ringers. The latter would replace the 2nd singer in the traditional choir loft. The number of allowable bell ringers depends on family ties.
- Separate microphones and lecterns/stands for all worship team members
- No congregational singing
- Personal Bibles/hymnals only (available for long-term loan from the church)

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Phase B Risk Mitigation Plan

Indoor Services



Risk Description	Primary Risk Mitigation(s) Planned
Contact transfer of virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Pre-service cleaning of sanctuary – Restriction of use of sanctuary for non-service use – Closure of all areas of the church other than entrances, sanctuary, bathroom – Stacks of 'clean' handouts available for pickup by attendees at two check-in points – Central locked box to drop off donations – Central basket at check-in points to collect visitor cards – Separate microphones for each worship team member – Restrictions on service
Airborne transfer of virus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Masks to be worn at all times by congregation to eliminate larger droplets and reduce volume of aerosols released to ambient air – Greater than 6-ft social distance between families in congregational seating areas – 15-20 ft social distancing between worship team members and congregation and plexiglass barrier so can remove masks when speaking/singing – Active ventilation approach to dilute potentially contaminated air with fresh source and dissipate via exhaust to outside – Marked one-way foot-traffic pattern; marked waiting line points at check-in points – Restrictions on worship service – Trained 'ushers/greeters' and ubiquitous signage to remind attendees of guidelines/restrictions and correct any deviations
Lack of awareness of risk mitigation guidelines & requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training of church family with online information sessions; posting on guidelines/restrictions, training material, FAQs, etc. on website, ubiquitous signage – Ubiquitous signage; Training of 'ushers/greeters'
Outbreak despite best efforts to minimize risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Check-in points to facilitate tracking of attendance and contact tracing if outbreak occurs – Registration process to facilitate tracking of attendance and contact information

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Plan Submittal Document Outline



- Introduction
- Overall Strategy and Approach
- Communication Strategy and Church Family Survey
- Risk Management and Compliance
- Phased Reopening
- Phase A Plan Description – Outdoor Worship Services
- Phase B Plan Description – Indoor Worship Services and Church Meetings
- Concluding Remarks
- Appendices
 - A. WUMC Important Announcement: Response to Rising COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Concerns
 - B. WUMC Church Compliance Certification
 - C. WUMC CRT/BOT COVID-19 Recovery Strategy & Plan (slide deck summary)
 - D. Church Family Survey
 - E. Church Mutual Insurance Recommendations for Safe Reopening
 - F. Phase A Plan Compliance
 - NYAC 'Worksheet for Protocol Planning & Reopening'
 - Master Compliance Matrix
 - G. Phase B Plan Compliance
 - NYAC 'Worksheet for Protocol Planning & Reopening'
 - Master Compliance Matrix

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Backup



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Ingress/Egress, Seating, & Accessibility

Critical to Social Distancing & Cleaning Workload

- **Ingress/Egress Process**
 - NYAC strongly encourages one-way ingress/egress people traffic
 - Somewhat conflicting requirements to implement one-way flow, encourage > 6-ft social distancing, and minimize zones requiring regular cleaning
 - Longer egress route better avoids egress bottle necks, while enabling 6-ft distancing during wait to exit; but may require larger cleaning zones
 - Front-to-back (or back-to-front) seating avoids need for pre-assignment of seating location, but will require trained users
 - Trained ushers could potentially reduce need for one-way flow
 - NYAC guidance currently precludes use of ushers/greeters, which seems impractical and requires clarification
- **Facility Accessibility**
 - Non-sanctuary portions of facility unnecessary to ingress/egress should be closed to general attendees to maximum practical extent to minimize extent of cleaning zones
 - Ideally would close downstairs completely (leaving only one bathroom)
- **Seating**
 - Every other pew seating is min requirement, but does not meet 6-ft distancing
 - Every third pew with careful seating of 3+ family units and some non-traditional seating accommodates 50-person max capacity with better than >6-ft social distancing

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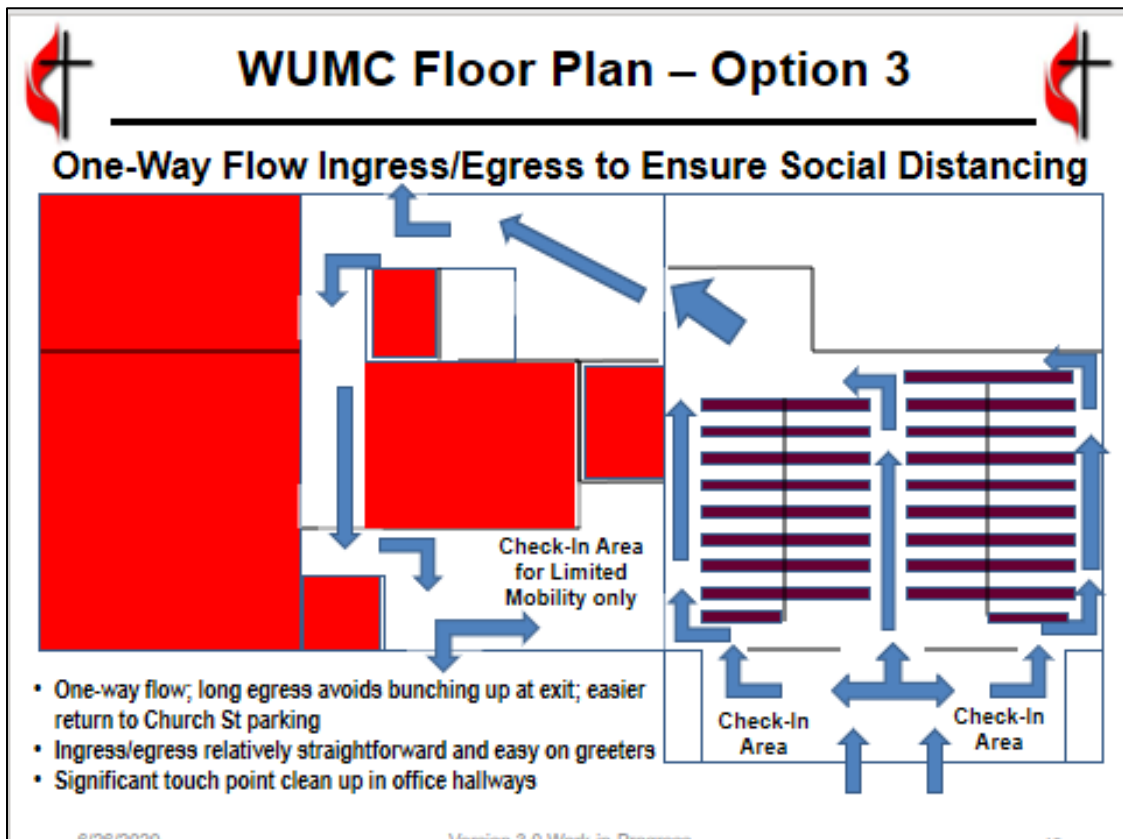
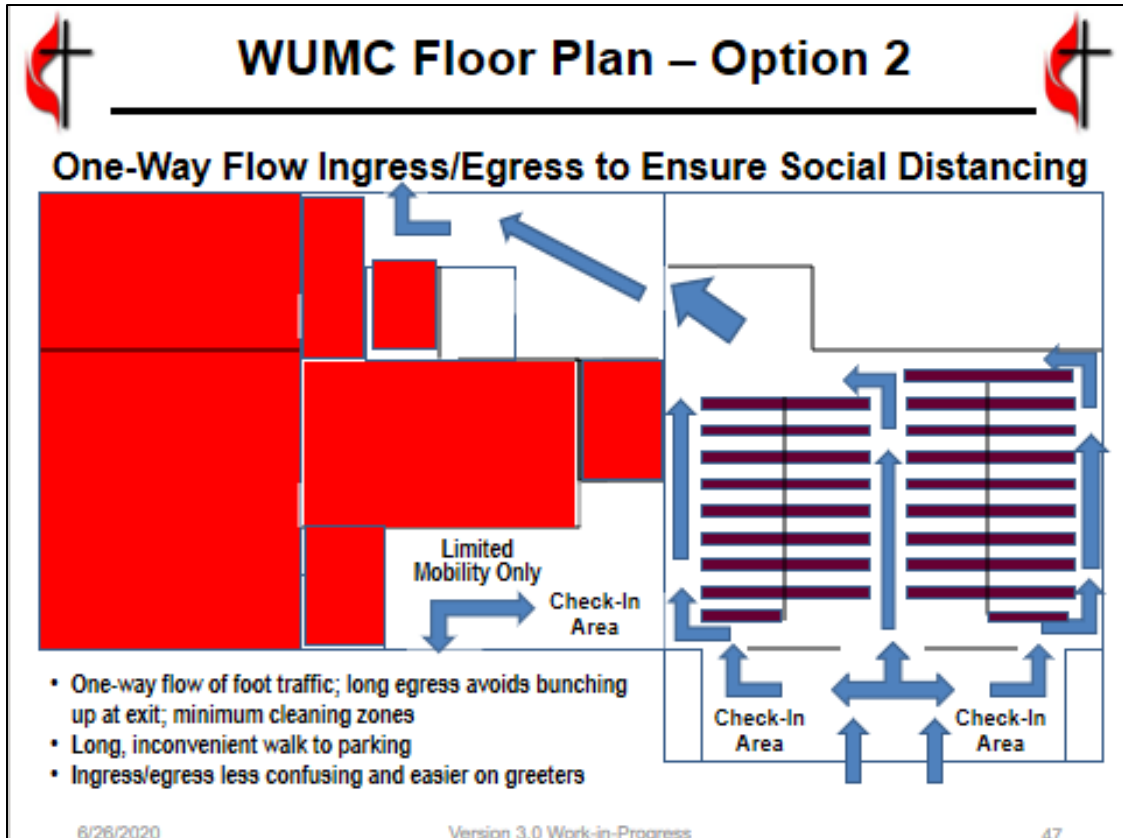
WUMC Floor Plan – Option 1

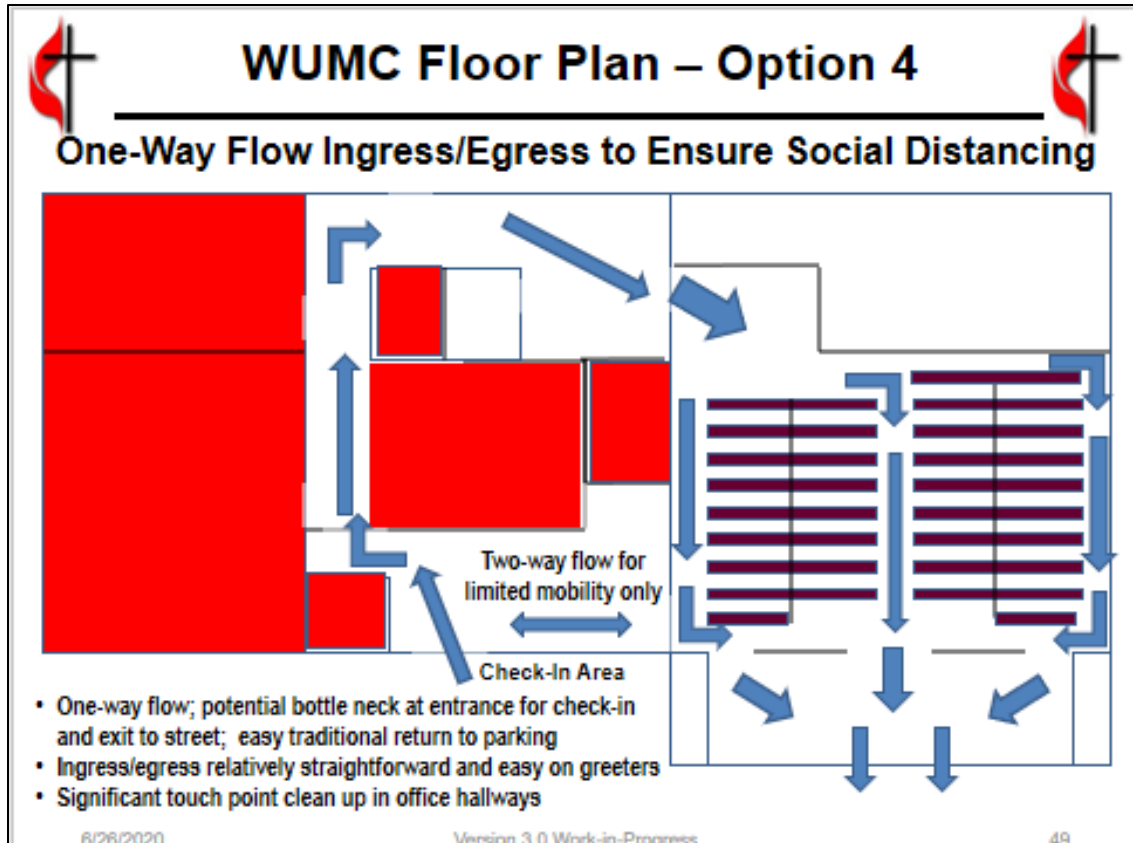
One-Way Flow Ingress/Egress to Ensure Social Distancing

All areas of church shown in red, as well as lower level will be closed during worship

- One-way flow of foot-traffic; easy access to parking; minimum cleaning zones
- Potential bottle neck at entrance for check-in
- Trained greeters facilitate seating locations and social distancing during ingress/egress

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Droplets and Aerosols in the Transmission of SARS-CoV-2

Letter published on 4/15/20, at NEJM.org.
N Engl J Med 2020; 382:2063
DOI: 10.1056/NEJM2009324

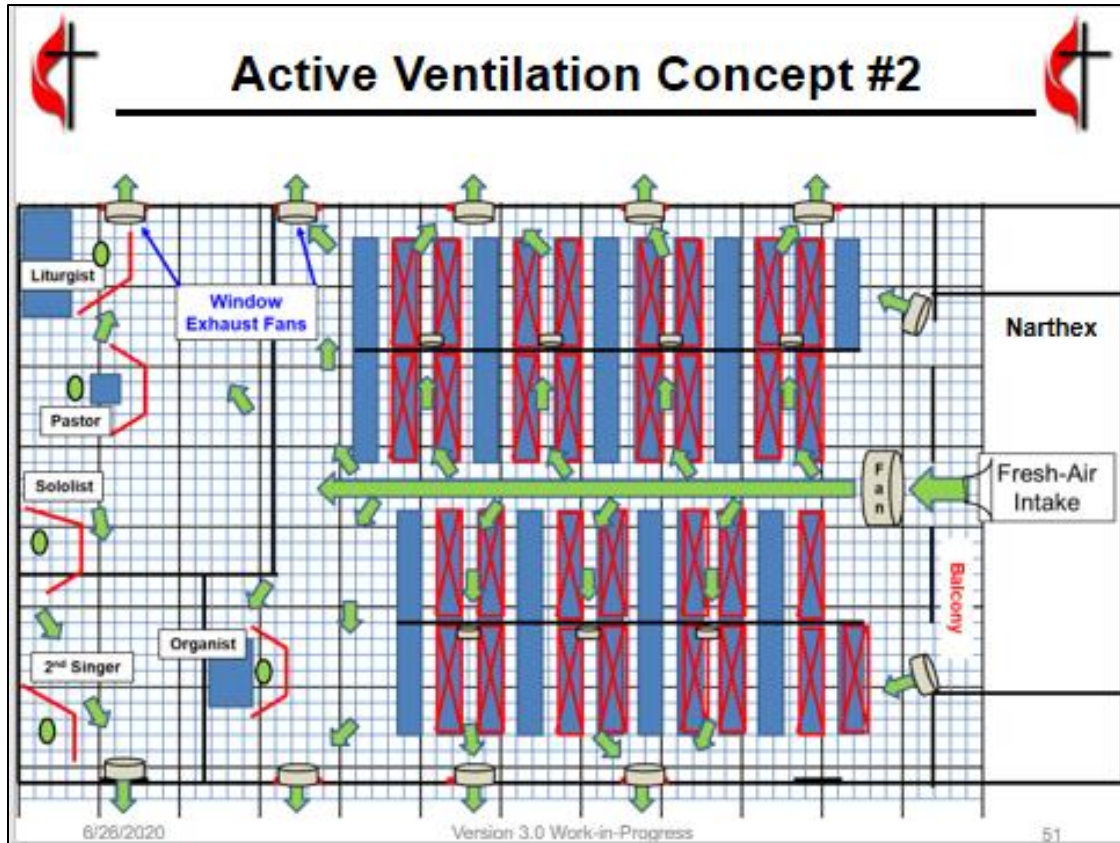
Anfinrud et al. now illustrate in the Journal¹ how liquid droplets exhaled during speech can linger in the air. The large particles to which they refer remain airborne only briefly before settling because of gravity; these particles may pose a threat of infection if they are inhaled by persons close by as well as a contact hazard if they are transferred to another person's nasal or oral passages. In this way, persons infected with severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) may contribute to the spread of the infection. Breathing and talking also produce smaller and much more numerous particles, known as aerosol particles, than those visualized in the laser experiment of Anfinrud and colleagues.²⁻⁴ Certain persons called "super spreaders" produce many more aerosol particles than other persons. The diameters of these particles are in the micron range. These particles are too small to settle because of gravity, but they are carried by air currents and dispersed by diffusion and air turbulence.

Inhaled droplets and aerosol particles have different sites of deposition in the recipient. Inhaled droplets are deposited in the upper regions of the respiratory tract, from which they may be removed in nasal secretions or carried upward by the mucociliary escalator, to be expelled or swallowed. In contrast, inhaled aerosolized particles can penetrate to the depths of the lungs, where they may be deposited in the alveoli.

A recent study, the results of which were also published in the Journal, showed that experimentally produced aerosols containing SARS-CoV-2 virions remained infectious in tissue-culture assays, with only a slight reduction in infectivity during a 3-hour period of observation.⁵ Aerosols from infected persons may therefore pose an inhalation threat even at considerable distances and in enclosed spaces, particularly if there is poor ventilation. The possible contribution of infective aerosols to the current pandemic suggests the advisability of wearing a suitable mask whenever it is thought that infected persons may be nearby and of providing adequate ventilation of enclosed spaces where such persons are known to be or may recently have been.

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Notes for Ventilation Concept – Option 2

- Plexiglass barriers (red-lined icons) used to contain generation of droplets/aerosols generated by Pastor, Singers, and Liturgist and to protect these individuals and organist from those generated by others, allowing them to speak and sing without masks
- Fresh air brought in from main entrance by relatively large, low flow fan (grey cylindrical icon)
- Potentially contaminated aerosols exhausted through all windows by standard box fans (grey cylindrical icons) set on low
- Flow pattern (from inlet to exhaust fans) shaped by small low flow fans located in each pair of unoccupied pews, creating amongst other things 'air curtains' (similar to grocery store no-door refrigerated displays) between occupied rows of pews
- Downside to this concept potential noise of fans located in pews and all windows and impracticality during colder months.

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Appendix C WUMC-CT Church Family Survey

The following survey was transmitted to members of WUMC-CT's extended church family on June 1st and a soft response deadline of June 10th. Key results that helped shape the phased reopening plan are discussed in the main body of this document. Detailed results of the survey can be available upon request to the Lay Leader,

WUMC Survey Regarding Reopening Plan and Online Worship

The WUMC Church Council is seeking your opinion and feedback regarding the best way to be the church during this challenging time and into the foreseeable future.

This survey can be completed and submitted using any one of three methods: 1) online via Survey Monkey, 2) written via U.S. mail or 3) verbal via telephone.

Thank you for taking the time to thoughtfully respond to the following questions.

Sincerely,
WUMC Church Council

INTRODUCTION:

The United Methodist New York Annual Conference (NYAC) has set strict standards for reopening churches. Like the state government, they have prescribed a phased approach to a safe opening.

WUMC Church Council has formed a COVID-19 Recovery Team (CRT) that is working hand-in-hand with the WUMC Board of Trustees (BOT) to develop and implement a plan for safely reopening the church in a manner that is compliant with governmental, NYAC, and insurance company guidelines. Details of governing guidelines and WUMC's plan are available on our website: <https://woodburyumc.net/covid-recovery%2Freopening>.

A significant effort will be required to reopen the church, including:

- Performing a deep cleaning of the entire church
- Performing cleaning and disinfecting after each worship service
- Purchasing appropriate cleaning and disinfecting supplies
- Purchasing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) such as gloves and face masks
- Increasing supplies of hand soap and hand sanitizer
- Developing a plan for safe entry and exit
- Developing a seating plan that permits social distancing
- District Superintendent's review and approval of our plan

Once approved for reopening there will be certain restrictions within the worship service during Phase 1, including:

- 50-person attendance limit
- 6-foot social distancing
- Face masks will be required
- No congregational singing
- No live choir (soloists only)

- Persons under the age of 2 and over the age of 65, as well as others considered to be vulnerable, will be strongly urged to not attend live worship services at this time
- Children will not be allowed to come forward for Children's time, but rather participate from their pew
- In person Sunday School will not be permitted
- Traditional distribution of Communion elements will not be allowed
- Pastors will not be permitted to greet people in line after the service
- Fellowship Hour will not be permitted

The WUMC CRT and BOT are willing to take on the effort to safely reopen and ensure the modified worship service is as meaningful as possible. At the same time, it will be important to know how many persons are likely to attend under such conditions. Just as important, we want you to be well-informed about NYAC guidelines, worship service restrictions, potential risks if attending in person.

Ultimately, we are concerned about continuing God's work at WUMC without compromising the welfare of our congregation or our community.

Part 1: Reopening WUMC

- 1) Do you feel you are well-informed about the United Methodist Church's response to COVID-19 and plans to reopen the church?**
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
- 2) If WUMC reopens for Sunday services with required Phase 1 guidelines (see survey Introduction), how likely are you to attend on a regular basis during July and August.**
 - Very likely
 - Somewhat likely
 - Not likely
 - Unsure
- 3) Would you be more likely to attend in September-December if the same restrictions were imposed?**
 - More likely
 - About the same
 - Less likely
 - Unsure
- 4) Would you prefer to attend outdoor services during July and August if they were held at a remote location (e.g., Woodbury town green, Hollow Park) with social distancing and bringing your own seating?**
 - Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
- 5) What would cause you to be more likely to attend services in person during Phase 1 reopening (check all that apply)?**
 - More protocols/processes to further reduce risk of exposure to the coronavirus.
 - Fewer restrictions on worship service.
 - Not applicable – I think there are adequate protections in place
 - Not applicable – I don't plan to attend in-person services during Phase 1
 - Other, please specify: _____

- 6) Which of the following modifications to enhance worship service in lieu of singing would you find acceptable during Phase 1 guidelines (please check all that are acceptable to you)?**
- Pre-recorded virtual choir for playback during service
 - Read-along to hymns accompanied by music
 - Moments of silence for meditation/reflection
 - Non-touch, socially distant greeting line outside
 - Other. Please specify: _____
- 7) Would you be willing to pre-register to attend worship services in order to help comply with the 50-person limit in the sanctuary?**
- Yes
 - No
- 8) In order to serve as many people as possible, while complying with limit of 50 attendees in the sanctuary, which of the following would you prefer (check all that apply)?**
- Two services (Saturday evening, Sunday morning)
 - Two services (twice on Sundays)
 - Overflow participation by audio or closed-circuit TV in Fellowship Hall
 - Online service only
 - Other. Please specify: _____
- 9) If you are uncomfortable attending services in person during Phase 1, how likely are you to participate in a remote (online or call-in) worship service?**
- Very likely
 - Somewhat likely
 - Not likely
 - Unsure
- 10) How likely are you to participate in a remote (online or call-in) Fellowship Hour during Phase 1?**
- Very likely
 - Somewhat likely
 - Not likely
 - Unsure
- 11) Would you be willing to volunteer for any of the following to help in reopening the church? (please check all that apply)**
- One-time deep cleaning and modification of the church?
 - Cleaning of church before/after each service
 - Ushers to help facilitate social distancing before, during, and after services
- 12) Would any of the following be useful in making your final decision to attend services in person in the near future (check all that apply)?**
- Online or telephone meeting led by WUMC CRT/BOT to go over plans and answer questions
 - Ability to submit questions to WUMC CRT/BOT online or by e-mail
 - Ability to call and discuss concerns in private with Lay Leader
 - Other. Please specify: _____

- 13) Please provide any questions, comments or suggestions you have regarding resuming in-person worship:

Part 2: Online Worship and Remote Fellowship

Online and remote worship and fellowship is likely to be an essential component of WUMC's ministries now and into the future. As such, please consider and respond to the following questions to help us improve these capabilities.

- 1) **Are you aware that our Sunday services are broadcast online in video format and on the telephone in audio only format?**

- Yes – I am aware of video broadcast
- Yes – I am aware of audio (telephone) broadcast
- Yes – I am aware of both broadcast options
- No – I am not aware of either broadcast option

- 2) **Have you been watching the video broadcast of our Sunday services?**

- Yes, every Sunday
- Yes, 1 to 3 times per month
- Only occasionally
- No

- 3) **How do you typically access the video broadcast?**

- WUMC Website
- Facebook
- Instagram
- Not applicable – I don't watch the video broadcast

- 4) **How satisfied are you with the video broadcast service** (starting Good Friday, April 10th after technical difficulties were addressed)?

- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Not Satisfied
- Not Applicable – I have not seen any

- 5) **What suggestions do you have for improving the video broadcast?**

- 6) **When do you typically watch the video service broadcast?**

- During the premier at 10:30am on Sunday morning
- At my convenience
- I do not watch the video broadcasts
- Other, please specify: _____

7) Have you listened to the audio-only (telephone) broadcast of our Sunday services?

- Yes, every Sunday
- Yes, 1 to 3 times per month
- I only call-in occasionally
- No

8) How satisfied are you with the audio-only telephone broadcast given the current situation (starting Good Friday, April 10th after technical difficulties were addressed)?

- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Not Satisfied
- Not Applicable – I have not called in

9) What suggestions do you have for improving the audio-only broadcast?

10) If you regularly call into the audio-only broadcast, what prevents you from watching the video broadcast online?

- I prefer audio only
- Lack of computer, smart phone or internet access
- Need training to access online video worship service
- Not applicable – I already watch the video broadcasts

11) Have you participated in remote Fellowship Hour (check all that apply)?

- Yes on Sunday
- Yes on Wednesday
- No
- I was not aware of the remote Fellowship Hour, but am interested in participating
- I was not aware of the remote Fellowship Hour, but am NOT interested in participating

12) What changes would make it more likely that you would participate in remote Fellowship Hour (check all that apply)?

- Different day/time
- Different format (e.g., more structure, daily devotion, prayer time)
- Other, please specify: _____
- Not applicable – I already participate or have no interest

13) Please provide any other suggestions for improving remote services and fellowship

Part 3: Demographics (optional)

Please answer the following questions to help us to better understand the number of people who will likely attend in-person worship services under New Your Annual Conference guidelines (see Survey Introduction for guidelines)

1) Please select your age range:

- < 13
- 13 – 20
- 21 – 35
- 36 – 50
- 51 – 65
- > 65

2) Please indicate number of family members that are likely to attend worship services in person while the NYAC Phase 1 guidelines are in effect. PLEASE ENSURE THAT ONLY ONE MEMBER OF THE FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD ANSWERS THIS QUESTION.

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- Other: _____


3) Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please feel free to provide any additional questions, comments or suggestions below:

Appendix D Church Mutual Insurance Recommendations for Safe Return to Worship

The following reopening recommendations were provided by Church Mutual Insurance, which underwrites WUMC-CT's liability insurance. Page 1 of 3:

Recommendations for a Safe Return to Worship

PROTECTING THE GREATER GOOD



Preparation

PLANNING

- Assign responsibility for monitoring and incorporating government orders and guidance.
- Assign responsibility for coordinating with local health authorities and law enforcement.
- Provide leaders, staff and volunteers with masks and other protective equipment to wear while serving.
- Establish protocols for physical distancing before, during and after services including seating arrangements, modified worship practices and dismissal procedures.
- Continue offering online worship options for those who are sick, higher risk, have been exposed to a coronavirus (COVID-19) patient within the last 14 days or are otherwise uncomfortable gathering in person.
- Develop isolation protocols should a staff member, volunteer or attendee become ill at your facility.
- Minimize use of printed or hand-held materials such as bulletins, hymnals, bibles and attendance pads.
- Do not share equipment used for worship services such as microphones, etc.
- Minimize areas of your building(s) being used during services and gatherings to minimize disinfecting needs.
- Block off unused areas of your building(s).
- Designate 1-in-1-out protocol for tight spaces.
- Establish frequency and processes for enhanced cleaning and disinfecting — between services at minimum.
- Develop admission criteria for worship services, noting that anyone who is ill or appears ill should plan to worship remotely.
- Postpone children's activities such as nursery/child care or implement additional safeguards.
- Discontinue playground use or implement additional safeguards and limitations.
- Postpone mission trips and summer activities such as vacation bible school (VBS).

CRITICAL NUMBERS

- Six feet of distance = 50 square feet per person when removing overlap.
- The virus may live on surfaces up to seven days.
- Disinfectants may need 2-10 minutes of contact to be effective (see EPA list).
- Symptoms typically show within 7-14 days.

BUILDING

- Conduct a thorough facility inspection/walk-through to check on the safety of your building before it is reopened.
- Restart systems and reset thermostats and lights.
- Flush hot and cold water through all points of use in your building if unoccupied for a prolonged period.
- Complete spring HVAC (professional) maintenance.
- Address overgrowth and other issues stemming from building vacancy.
- Check for any rodent/pest activity or infestations.
- Address any slip, trip and fall hazards.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect the building and contents** before reopening.
- Ensure cleaning supplies and disinfectant have been ordered and are on hand.
- Make hand sanitizer and/or hand wipes available throughout the building.
- Post signs regarding social distancing, safety measures and handwashing.

*Church Mutual is a stock insurer whose policyholders are members of the parent mutual holding company formed on 1/1/20. SJ - a stock insurer.

Preparation	Implementation
<p>SUPPLIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Disinfecting agents for your facility. <input type="checkbox"/> Hand sanitizer for staff, volunteers and attendees. <input type="checkbox"/> Masks and gloves for staff and volunteers. <input type="checkbox"/> Face coverings for attendees. <p>COMMUNICATION</p> <p>Prior to reopening, communicate your plan via multiple channels such as email, website, newspaper, social media, phone calls, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Communicate the plan and make it available to members and non-members alike. <input type="checkbox"/> Update and share details of the plan as circumstances change. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinforce messaging that persons who are ill or higher risk should continue worshipping remotely. <p>INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS</p> <p>Develop on-site instructional materials such as signs or projected images to generate awareness of new protocols and procedures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Directions to aid the flow of people and vehicles. <input type="checkbox"/> Information on physical distancing and face coverings. <input type="checkbox"/> Messaging to stay home if sick. <input type="checkbox"/> Importance of handwashing and hygiene practices. <p>TRAINING</p> <p>Train staff, leaders, ushers and volunteers on established plans and protocols for worship services and gatherings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Addressing high(er) risk individuals that arrive or those presenting signs of illness. <input type="checkbox"/> Maintaining physical distance requirements among those who attend. <input type="checkbox"/> Understanding cleaning and disinfecting procedures, as well as the supplies used. 	<p>BEFORE SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Disinfect the worship area. <input type="checkbox"/> Disinfect worship materials such as microphones and music stands. <input type="checkbox"/> Disinfect restrooms and other common areas. <input type="checkbox"/> Replenish disinfecting and covering supplies. <p>DURING SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> At entrances, prop doors open (weather permitting), apply admission criteria and provide hand sanitizer. <input type="checkbox"/> Seat individuals or family units from front to back if building entrance is located rear of the worship area. <input type="checkbox"/> Modify "passing the peace" or greeting time to avoid physical contact. <p>AFTER SERVICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Dismiss attendees from closest to furthest from the exit. <input type="checkbox"/> Disinfect your worship area, materials, rooms used and frequently touched items such as doors, light switches, chairs, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide hand sanitizer and new protective equipment (masks and gloves) to those that have post-service responsibilities such as counting offerings, etc. <p>CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Disinfect activity areas and equipment before, between and after activities. <input type="checkbox"/> Establish admission criteria and have parents drop children off outside the activity area. <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for activities that maintain appropriate spacing. <p>OFFICE OPERATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create accountability for yourself and your co-workers regarding established protocols. <input type="checkbox"/> Maintain physical distance and wear face coverings to protect each other. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider having office spaces deep cleaned on a weekly basis.
<p>SI - a stock insurer</p>	

Resources

Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-buildingfacility.html>

Recommendations for Community Facilities with Suspected/Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/cleaning-disinfection.html>

EPA's Registered Antimicrobial Products for Use Against Novel Coronavirus
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticideregistration/listn-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

Federal Guidelines for Opening America Up Again
<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Guidelines-for-Opening-Up-America-Again.pdf>

Resources for Community- and Faith-Based Leaders
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/index.html>

Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>

Basic Guide for Returning to your Church Building after COVID-19 (Georgia Baptist Mission Board)
<https://gabaptist.org/reopening-your-church-building/>

Guidelines for Returning to In-Person Worship Services (National Apostolic Christian Leadership Conference)
<https://www.upci.org/file/177/Guidelines%20For%20Returning%20to%20In-Person%20Worship%20Services.pdf>

COVID-19 Suggested Church Reopening Guidelines (Christian Law Association)
<https://christianlaw.org/covid-19-suggested-church-reopening-guidelines/>

Post-Coronavirus Facility Re-Opening Checklist (Smart Church Solutions)
<https://try.espace.cool/post-coronavirus-facility-reopening-checklist/>

Hartford Steam Boiler Equipment Checklists and Logs
<https://www.munichre.com/hsb/en/products/commercial-lines/insurers/equipment-breakdown/commercial-equipment-breakdown/logs-and-checklists.html>

HERE TO HELP!

If you have questions about safely returning to worship, contact Risk Control Central.

Call: (800) 554-2642 (Option 4) Ext. 5213
Email: riskconsulting@churchmutual.com

Visit coronavirus.churchmutual.com for more COVID-19 resources.

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