

"Covid-19 Preparedness and Response Guidelines"

First United Methodist Church Howell (FUMCH) July 9, 2020

HOPE for Worshiping Together Again

We are in the process of making plans for the return of *in-person worship services* with HOPE in our hearts. A “soft” (practice) reopening for church leadership is scheduled in late July with reopening for the entire congregation in the beginning of August. Beginning July 13, office hours will be available by appointment on Mondays and Thursdays 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM. Please call 517-546-2730 or email jrhodes@howellfumc.com to schedule your office time. Please remember that face coverings are required to enter the building and social distancing will be maintained.

As always, Sundays will have several options will be available for you;

- 9:00 AM in the Fellowship Hall – contemporary style service
- 10:30 AM in the Sanctuary – Traditional style service
- Outdoor streaming via FM radio transmitter in your vehicles or devices. (please keep social distancing and masks are required when distancing cannot be maintained)
- Outdoor streaming via Facebook Live on your own device or on an experimental projection screen on the lawn. (Bring your own lawn chair, social distancing required, and masks are required where distancing cannot be maintained).

Following will be an individual decision of when YOU choose to join us in worship. There should be no guilt or judgment as to when your comfort level permits this. The experts say older adults and persons with certain severe medical conditions are at higher risk for developing serious complications from Covid-19 and should continue to stay home. Video recordings of services will remain available online and by phone.

The following are guidelines that currently are being instituted for our return to church policy;

- ❖ Wearing masks/face covering properly (covering nose & mouth), are required for worship, or any time you are entering the church building. If you do not have a mask, there will be one available for you at the church entrances. Hand sanitizer will also be available at each entrance for your use. **Children under 2 years are not required to wear masks.*
- ❖ We will start out with two Sunday services; 9:00a.m. in the Lawson Fellowship Hall, and 10:30a.m. in the sanctuary. There will be designated entrances and restrooms for each service. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide Children's Church or nursery services at this time. Families and children are invited and welcome to join in worship services.
- ❖ Arrival time for each service will be no sooner than 30 minutes prior to the designated start time, and the doors will be locked 15 minutes after start of each. At the conclusion of each service, ushers will dismiss attendees, the rear rows exiting first.

- ❖ Social distancing (6' safety rule) will be in place. We ask that you abide by the suggested 6 feet apart rule with those not in your household. We are *sorry* to say this includes no overdue hugs, welcoming handshakes, or elbow bumps. *With masks on, you will have to learn to smile with your eyes....*
- ❖ We ask that you abide by the social distancing recommendations before and after services, both inside the church building and out. We request that any and all fellowship socializing be done outdoors in the "Open Air" atmosphere, before and/or after the church services.
- ❖ The Welcome Center and Children's play area will not be available at this time. We HOPE to share and enjoy this space soon!
- ❖ Please do NOT venture into the areas marked as "RESTRICTED" (Emergency Access Only).
- ❖ RSVP - reservations will be requested for indoor worship, as there will be limited seating capacity. To ensure appropriate seating units are available, this will be on a first come, first served basis (single person, couples & family units).
 - ◆ Reservations can be made by contacting our Covid-19 Communications Coordinator, Office Administrator Jennifer Rhodes. These can be made via e-mail (jrhodes@howellfumc.com), or by telephone (517-546-2730).
 - ◆ It would be helpful and appreciated if reservations were made by noon on Thursday, to allow for planning the seating accommodations.
- ❖ If you are not feeling well, have a compromised health issue, or you do not feel you can abide by the above listed health and safety protocols, please refrain from attending services at this time, and continue to worship with us online at our FUMC website (www.howellfumc.com), or via telephone (1-855-546-0735).
- ❖ There will be no bulletins nor handouts at this time. Hymnals and Bibles have been temporarily removed from pew backs.
- ❖ Greeters will be logging our attendance.
- ❖ If you do not participate in the "on-line giving", offerings may be placed in designated tithe plates stationed at the rear of Lawson Fellowship Hall, and at the interior entrances of the Narthex.
- ❖ Per the Bishop's direction, due to the potential increased risk of virus spread, we will not be singing aloud together as a congregation during this beginning stage of re-opening.

DETAILS for the 9:00 a.m. service:

- Door #7 - the canopy entrance by the rear parking lot - the door will be positioned OPEN, as hands free/no contact (all other doors will be locked).
- Restrooms (nearest the kitchen) will be available, also with outer door OPEN as hands free/no contact. Please use one person at a time, when possible. The "family restroom" is also available, if needed.
- Please refrain from bringing coffee or other beverages - as masks are required to be worn at all times.

DETAILS for the 10:30 a.m. service:

- Doors #1, 2 & 3 will be positioned OPEN, as hands free/no contact (all other doors will be locked). Please park along the front circle drive or side lot if you are unable to walk from the rear parking lot.
 - ◆ Door #1 is nearest the church office
 - ◆ Doors #2 and #3 are at each end of the sanctuary narthex entrances.
- Restrooms in HALL C (across from nursery), will be available, also with outer door OPEN as hands free/no contact. The "family restroom" is also available, if needed.

These are temporary inconveniences that we have HOPE will fade away, sooner rather than later. GOD is our constant - He will never change. Let us continue to be "A Caring Community Growing in Faith, HOPE, and Love.

"...If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being likeminded, having the same love, being one in spirit and one in mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." (Philippians 2: 1-3)