

# Return to Worship Plan

## Emanuel Church, United Church of Christ

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed much of what we understood of the word, “normal.” This has surely extended to our practice of worship as a community of faith. Over the past three months while we have been absent in the physical space of our church building, we’ve been connected virtually with online services so wonderfully facilitated by Rev. Bill Utke, Rev. Ann Utke and Music Director Mark Breutzmann, with the strong administrative support of Office Manager Karin McElrone. These leaders of the church had to adapt almost immediately to a completely foreign style of worship, and we are incredibly grateful for their efforts during these challenging times.

As communities, businesses and churches begin to open, we are eager to return to worship with each other in our beloved church building. Below are guidelines to help us worship together while maintaining safe social distancing and following CDC recommended sanitization guidelines.

As we begin to welcome you back to worship, please be aware the services will be about 30 minutes in length. ***We encourage any worshipper who does not feel safe to continue to worship online, and through the audio recording uploaded each Monday.***

Additionally, if you feel that you cannot follow the guidelines as set forth, we encourage you to continue to worship with us online. **The weekly worship service will be held at 9:30am**

### **Things to know prior to Sunday Service:**

- **No nursery services will be available.**
- **No Children’s Time or Sunday School in person.**
- **No gathering in the Narthex prior to or after service.**
- **All worshippers are required to wear a mask. We have some masks available if you need one. When you mask, it allows someone else to feel safer attending.**
- **All worshippers are asked to thoroughly wash their hands at home prior to coming to church.**
- **All worshippers are asked to use the restroom at home. There will be unrestricted access to the restrooms, but you are asked to maintain safe social distancing.**
- **Bottles of hand sanitizer will be placed at each entrance.**
- **No bulletins will be distributed - we will begin by sharing the service only on the Screen but are open to adding bulletins if they are needed.**
- **We will limit attendance to 45 people, please sign up by Thursday noon the week before using email or calling the church office.**
- **The Sign up will provide information for contact tracers should it be needed.**
- **We ask that you email announcements to the church office by Thursday noon. They may also be handed to the Usher Sunday Morning who will give them to the Pastor to make all announcements.**
- **Seat cushions will be removed from the sanctuary.**

### **ARRIVING AT CHURCH AND SEATING:**

- **Pews will be marked green, yellow and red. At [green pews](#) households may sit on the ends of the pew. At [yellow pews](#), households may sit in the center of the pew, [red pews](#) are restricted. Please maintain social distancing minimum of 6 feet at all times!**
- **Only families and persons who live in the same dwelling will be allowed to sit together. Friends and family who do not live in the same dwelling are asked to sit separately.**
- **If you are in the at-risk population, (those over age 60 and individuals with chronic health issues or compromised immune systems) and decide to attend, you are asked and strongly encouraged to arrive at church and be seated by 9:10am.**

- The at-risk population are asked to use the southwest door nearest the elevator to enter and exit the building. Please use safe social distancing when entering the building. If you see someone entering, remain outside until they have entered the church. Doors will be propped open as they can and an usher will be monitoring the entrance from a safe distance.
- The at-risk population are asked to be seated on the southwest (right-hand as you face the altar) side of the church. Please sit on the ends of the green marked pews and in the middle of the yellow marked pews.
- The less at-risk population (59 years and younger and individuals without chronic health issues or compromised immune systems) are asked to enter through the main door by the preschool front desk. Doors will be propped open as they can and an usher will be monitoring the entrance from a safe distance.
- The less-at-risk population are asked to arrive between 9:10am-9:25am to allow the at-risk population to arrive and be seated by 9:10am.

#### **DURING THE SERVICE:**

- Those who are feeling sick, unwell, or show any symptoms of COVID-19 must not enter the building. Those who begin to feel sick, unwell or experience any symptoms of COVID-19 must leave the building immediately.
- There will be no passing of the peace or greeting the pastor before or after worship.
- There will be no choir nor singing by anyone other than possibly a soloist.
- Collection plates will be located at each of the entry doors to the Sanctuary. Please place your offering in the plate prior to or after service or you are encouraged to utilize the on-line giving options.

#### **AFTER SERVICE:**

- There will be no time of fellowship following service. Pews will be dismissed one at a time starting in the rear by an usher following the postlude. Please exit through the same door you entered. If there was someone you wanted to speak with following service, please do so outside away from other people's vehicles, or give them a call.

#### **OTHER INFORMATION:**

- The church building, including all touch points will be sanitized prior to and after worship. This includes, but is not limited to door handles, pews, all bathroom fixtures etc.
- If needed the Air Conditioning will be turned on hours before worship and turned off before worship begins to prevent blowing germs around the sanctuary
- The church leadership has assembled a Return to Worship Coordinator and a team of volunteers. They will be working with ushers and other volunteers to ensure the safest possible return to worship at Emanuel.
- Worship, devotions and other Spiritual resources will continue to be shared on YouTube for those who want to participate that way.

**This return to worship plan was developed using the guidelines from the CDC and was reviewed by the Hales Corners Health Department. We trust everyone will follow these guidelines for the safety of all of our worshipers.**

We are grateful for your cooperation as we begin to resume worship services in person. We are hopeful and prayerful that this pandemic ends soon, allowing God's children to celebrate with a loud and joyful song again, but, until then and forevermore, we'll give thanks for God's guidance and protection during these uncertain times.