

OAK RIDGE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

IN-PERSON WORSHIP SAFETY PLAN

Theological Rationale

Jesus teaches us to love one another, just as God loves us. In 1 Corinthians 12-13, Paul applies this absolutely central Christian belief to the Church, whom he calls “the body of Christ.” The apostle points to the beauty of the variety of gifts found in the body, noting especially how each part of the body needs the other: “The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you’, nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you’ (12:21).” Paul’s purpose here is to emphasize unity within the Church, and that unity extends even to a physical sympathy—a feeling together: “If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it” (12:26).

It is this theology of love that has provided the impetus for the discussions and planning of the ORPC Session and Health Team. Every consideration, every design, has been evaluated in light of the integrated nature of the body of Christ, so that the plans will affirm the God-given value of each individual’s welfare. Session and the Health Team has feet of clay, meaning that we will surely have to adjust our strategies to accommodate unforeseen circumstances. But the goal along the way has been and will always be love.

Safety and Health Process

On March 8, Session met for our regular monthly meeting. At the meeting we discuss the new Coronavirus. Within a few days, Session voted to move to online worship starting, March 15. A COVID Taskforce was put together to give health guidance to the Session about safety concerns for COVID 19. A Health Team was established in June to implement safety concerns as Session and staff developed plans for returning to worship inside the sanctuary and meeting inside. In the process, we have read articles, talked with members of other churches, and discussed in depth when and how to return to worship. The driving focus was always to keep the health and wellbeing of the congregation first and foremost in our work. COVID metrics as outlined by Governor Cooper and local authorities continue to play a major role in determining when we return. Multiple sources of information contributed to discerning how to return. The congregational survey provided insight into how much our congregation misses worship in the sanctuary, but also demonstrated significant hesitation about a return inside the sanctuary without clear protective measures.

What is presented below may differ from what you hear from other churches, but represents a consensus amongst the Session and Health Team members as to when and how to resume services at our church. As time goes by, there will be a need for an ongoing effort to improve and edit this plan during this difficult pandemic.

Return Date

Sunday October 18.

At any point, if the situation worsens, we may need to reverse this plan.

Sunday Morning Schedule

10:00 Sanctuary & Live Stream

Community Safety

- **Face Masks** are required to be worn properly over the nose and mouth for the entire duration of one's time on campus for all people over 5 years old. In keeping with the Governor's guidance about school aged children, masks are not required for children under 6 years old. Children ages 3-6, are encouraged to wear masks when seated. If you do not have one, a disposable face mask will be provided.
- **Social distancing** of 6' or more is required at all times. Worshipers will be seated in a pre-set socially distanced arrangement.
- **Hand Sanitizer** will be provided at entrances. We also encourage attendees to bring their own.
- **No food or drink** will be provided. Please do not bring drinks to sip on during worship as sipping requires temporary removal of face masks.
- **No singing** by the congregation will take place. As much as possible, singing will be pre-recorded and shared on a screen. There will still be live instrumental music throughout the service.
- **Contact Tracing** will take place through worship sign up and attendance when you are inside.

Join us online!

- The Sanctuary service will still be live streamed on Facebook and our website at 10:00 am. If you tune in late, the full recording will be available at 11 am.
- Older adults and persons with underlying medical conditions are especially encouraged to join us for worship online from the safety of their homes. Please consult CDC guidelines for more information.
- Those who have recently traveled are encouraged to stay at home for two weeks following your return home.
- If observing any of the community safety measures will be difficult for you, we encourage you to worship with us online at home.

What to expect on Sunday Morning

Arriving

- When you arrive on campus, remember to wear your mask as you exit your car.
- Doors open 20 minutes before the service. The Sanctuary opens at 9:40 am.
- You may enter only through the Sanctuary door.

Getting Seated

- Once in the building, all possible doors will be propped open and an usher will direct your household to a seat.
- We will have a sign-up for 50 people to attend worship each week.
- Ushers will seat groups front to back. The first groups to arrive will be seated toward the front of the Sanctuary.
- The Nursery will remain closed. Children must stay with their household through the duration of the service and their time on campus.
- Once seated, please remain in your seat unless you need to use the restroom. You may greet your neighbors with a wave.

Worship

- There will be no bulletins, friendship pads, or hymnals. Please bring a Bible from home.
- All liturgy will be projected on the screen and will also be available to download on a personal digital device (ie, phone, tablet).
- To reduce cross-contamination, worship leaders will lead from separate locations.
- Offering containers will be near doors for you to place your offering as you exit.
- While offering containers will be available, you may utilize digital methods of payment.

Departure

- Ushers will dismiss your household to exit. They will dismiss back to front.
- As you exit, you may place your offering in a container near the doors.

How Can I Help?

In order to return to in-person worship safely, we will need many volunteers each Sunday.

Volunteer positions:

- **Greeters** *Stands near campus entrances to welcome, direct traffic, answer questions, requires community safety precautions. Times: 9:40-10:05.*
- **Ushers** *Seats people in group zones, counts attendance, and requires community safety precautions. Times: 9:40-10:05.*

Q&A/Scenarios

What if I have a doctor's permission not to wear a face covering? We understand that there are medical reasons for not wearing face coverings, but, for the safety of everyone else, if you cannot properly wear a face covering throughout the entire service and time on campus, we'll ask that you livestream with us from home until that requirement can be safely lifted.