

# Safer Together Ministry Plan

First United Methodist Church – Red Wing

July 24, 2020

## Contents

<b>Worship</b>	1
<b>Phase Zero</b>	1
<b>Phase One:</b>	1
<b>Phase Two:</b>	2
<b>Phase Three:</b>	3
<b>Congregational Gathering</b>	4
<b>Contact Tracing for Large and Small Gatherings</b>	4
<b>Responding to hot-spots and subsequent “peaks”</b>	5
<b>Cleaning Plan</b>	5
<b>Other considerations</b>	5

## First UMC Red Wing

Our ministry plan for worship is in four phases – throughout the first months of the pandemic we have been in phase zero, phases one through three are not on a strict timeline, but will be implemented as restrictions from the Governor’s office; and Bishop’s office and the Minnesota Annual Conference are lifted and as the pastor and church council discern the next right steps.

### Phase Zero

*No in person worship.*

Worship recorded from separate locations and broadcast digitally.

Online giving and mailed checks encouraged.

Print copies of sermons sent to participants with limited/no internet access.

No in person small groups or teams.

Staff working from home as they are able.

### Phase One:

*When allowed by the Governor’s Office and the Bishop/Minnesota Annual Conference we will carefully begin to open the building, but worship will remain online only.*

Begin recording worship in the sanctuary rather than from different homes/locations. Maintain 12+ feet physical distance between worship leaders including readers, musicians, and preachers during recording.

Worship gathering remains digital.

Online giving and mailed checks will be encouraged.

Viewing parties of fewer than 10 people (including host or tech support) can be arranged for those without reliable internet. Adequate physical distancing and masks will be required.

Participants concerned about the risk of exposure (including people 65 years of age and older, and people with underlying health concerns at a higher risk of covid-19 complications) are encouraged to stay home and join in online worship or request a physical copy of the weekly sermon.

Staff and volunteers who can work from home are encouraged to do so.

## **Phase Two:**

*As the threat decreases, and the Bishop and Governor's offices lift restrictions we will consider offering limited in person worship.*

Before moving to phase two greeters will be recruited, trained, and empowered to ask people to move and follow safety guidelines.

Per the *Minnesota Stay Safe MN Plan*: All participants in indoor gatherings will wear masks.

Hymnals, envelopes, pens, children's bags etc. will be removed from pews and sanctuary.

People will need to RSVP to attend with the number in their household attending. Total participation (including leaders, greeters and tech) will be limited to the current number allowed by *Minnesota Stay Safe MN Plan* (II: 10 or fewer; III 20 or fewer; IV increased capacity)

Pastoral Care will continue as limited and safe practice via phone, zoom or other virtual platforms, or a church per our safe practices.

Doors will be propped open before worship to minimize contact with door handles.

Greeters will stand 6+ feet from the door to offer instructions but will not shake hands, offer hugs etc.

No bulletins – everything will be on the screen.

Two pews will be roped off for every pew that is open to help maintain a 6 foot + physical distance between households.

One household group per pew. Attendance lists will be made and kept for a minimum of 14 days to aid the MDH in contact tracing should an outbreak occur.

No in person singing.

Offering plates will not be passed but will be placed near the entrances of the sanctuary. Online giving and mailed offering will be encouraged.

Household groups will be dismissed one by one and participants will leave the building immediately after worship is concluded.

No food and fellowship time.

Participants concerned about the risk of exposure (including people 65 years of age and older, and people with underlying health concerns at a higher risk of covid-19 complications) are encouraged to stay home and join in online worship or request a physical copy of the weekly sermon.

Services will continue to be broadcast digitally, and sermons will be available online or mailed.

## Phase Three:

*We at First UMC Red Wing are striving to follow the Wesleyan 3 simple rules, specifically do no harm. As we continue to be a Safe Together congregation our decisions are based on Love Our Neighbor theology.*

### Congregational Gathering

- In consultation with The Minnesota Annual Conference and the recommendations of the Minnesota Department of Health and CDC we are setting a reopening worship to all starting September 13-Rally Sunday.

People will need to RSVP to attend with the number in their household attending. Total participation (including leaders, greeters and tech) will be limited to approximately 100 people or as allowed by *Minnesota Stay Safe MN Plan*.

Per the *Minnesota Stay Safe MN Plan*: All participants in indoor gatherings will wear masks.

Continued training of greeters to provide guidance for persons in the building to the current restrictions and empowered to cue to social distance, appropriate mask placement and follow safety guidelines.

Greeters will stand 6+ feet from the door to offer instructions but will not shake hands, offer hugs etc.

No bulletins – everything will be on the screen.

Two pews will be roped off for every pew that is open to help maintain a 6 foot + physical distance between households.

Attendance lists will be made and kept for a minimum of 14 days to aid the MDH in contact tracing should an outbreak occur.

No in person singing.

Offering plates will not be passed but will be placed near the entrances of the sanctuary. Online giving and mailed offering will be encouraged.

Household groups will be dismissed one by one and participants will leave the building immediately after worship is concluded.

No food and fellowship time.

No in person Sunday school. We will be offering a modified education plan.

Participants concerned about the risk of exposure (including people 65 years of age and older, and people with underlying health concerns at a higher risk of covid-19 complications) are encouraged to stay home and join in online worship or request a physical copy of the weekly sermon.

Services will continue to be broadcast digitally, and sermons will be available online or mailed.

Pastoral Care will continue as limited and safe practice via phone, zoom or other virtual platforms, or a church per our safe practices.

Phone calls, email, text, and US mail will be necessary for congregational care.

Choir and handbells rehearsals will remain on break due to the increased risk associated with touching bells and aerosol transmission from singing.

Small groups and leadership teams may gather IF the groups can maintain adequate physical distancing and the group is 20 people or fewer. This should be done outdoors as much as possible or in rooms with open doors and windows. Small groups who meet in the building are responsible for disinfecting all surfaces touched during their meeting.

## **Contact Tracing for Large and Small Gatherings**

Attendance with contact information must be kept for a minimum of 14 days for all in person gatherings so that if one of the participants becomes sick, we will have a record to provide to the Minnesota Department of Health for Contact Tracing. Anyone who has participated in in-person activities at the church should contact the church office if they become ill.

If you develop any new onset of potential COVID 19 symptoms as outlined on CDC website contact your healthcare provider for guidance on evaluation and testing. Even if you are not tested for COVID please contact the church office (651) 388-3262 since any respiratory illness can be transmitted in the same manner as COVID 19.

The church office will disclose your name ONLY IF YOU CONSENT. The following information will be obtained and disclosed.

- A. List of symptoms that caused seeking medical care i.e.: cough, fever, etc.
- B. If evaluation has proven to be viral or bacterial or not. If screened for COVID the MDH will provide notification, guidance on self-isolation and how to care for yourself.
- C. We will ask if you want the prayer team notified of your illness
- D. If you want to have assistance with errands by our care teams; we will arrange support for 2 weeks for those instructed to self-isolate whether you are symptomatic or not.

The church tracking group will contact the members who may have had exposure. ONLY ANSWERS A) AND B) WILL BE DISCLOSED TO THOSE WHO WERE IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH YOU BY THE CHURCH STAFF VIA PHONE.

Managing these reports will be done by Judy Plein, our council chair, LPN and team leader for Safer Together Ministry plan.

## **Responding to hot-spots and subsequent “peaks”**

If a hotspot occurs in Goodhue County or there is a second or third “peak,” we will move back to comply with restrictions per the state mandates. An email will be sent to all congregants. Phone calls will be made to those without email. Signs will be posted on the door for sudden closures or changes in building use.

## **Cleaning Plan**

The Trustees chair, Bob Stone, and council chair, Judy Plein, in collaboration with our building staff have created a cleaning plan to keep our building safe. A week between room use (for example, Sunday to Sunday in the sanctuary) is sufficient for the virus to die naturally and no more than routine cleaning will be necessary. Rooms with higher use will require more frequent disinfection.

Hands should be washed before and after using office equipment. Equipment surfaces should be disinfected by users between different users.

Examples of frequently touched surfaces and objects that will need routine disinfection following an in person small group meeting includes but is not limited to:

- tables,
- doorknobs
- light switches

- countertops
- cabinet handles
- toilets, faucets, and sinks
- any markers, pens, or office supplies used in the group meeting.

## Other considerations

No large group outreach gatherings (Pie Social, VBS, BBQ, Brunch etc.)

Life rituals (weddings and funerals) are limited to 30 or fewer people including the officiant/pastor. Participants in these rituals should maintain physical distance of 6+ feet. No live vocal music at these events. Digital memorial services are an available option. Per the *Minnesota Stay Safe MN Plan* all participants and leaders will wear masks. *Only when we are clear that the risk is extremely small will we re-open for larger life rituals in person.*

Sunday Suppers are cancelled through the end of December. If you would like to be a part of reimagining what our food ministry might look like, please contact Judy Plein [jnesburgplein@gmail.com](mailto:jnesburgplein@gmail.com) or 651-764-3453

Any large gathering activity/building use groups will need to develop a plan for hosting that event in compliance with Stay Safe MN Plan, CDC recommendations, and guidelines from the Minnesota Annual Conference. All plans will need to be submitted and reviewed by Pastor and Safer Together coordinator.