



Fact Sheet

COVID - 19 and the Path Ahead

July 2, 2020

First United
Methodist
Church
Salem, Oregon

Overview. This Fact Sheet summarizes where we are and where we are heading on the path leading to the resumption of worship services in our historic sanctuary and MICAH during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Process. We are in a four-phase process that will eventually lead to the resumption of full worship. To advance from one phase to the next, we must meet the requirements established by the Greater Northwest Area of the United Methodist Church. The four phases are summarized below:

- Phase 1** Began on March 13, 2020 when our Bishop suspended in-person worship and other all other in-person gatherings. Both of our church buildings were closed except for essential personnel and essential tasks.
- Phase 2** Allows 10 or fewer people in the church and 10 or fewer in MICAH at any given time. Entry is still limited to what is needed for the essential work of the church, such as custodial services and to record and produce online worship resources.
- Phase 3** Increases the allowable number of individuals to 50. Once in Phase 3, our buildings will become available for weddings, memorial services, and other small gatherings. Strict safeguards will continue. Portions of our facilities may be opened to other users.
- Phase 4** Has no limits on the number of people who can gather, but carries over many of the protective measures from the earlier phases.

For more information, click [here](#) to read *Reimagining Life Together*.

We now are a Phase 2 Church. On May 21, our Administrative Council established a “Reentry Task Force” to help plan, coordinate, and implement the many actions necessary to gradually reopen our facilities. Our *Plan to Get to Phase 2* was approved by District Superintendent Overton-Harris on June 21. We are now working on our Phase 3 plan. Among the safeguards during Phase 2 to reduce risks of infection:

- No in-person worship
- No in-person singing
- Masks are required while inside
- Six feet distancing is required
- To enter, one must be in good health
- Access is limited to essential personnel
- Safety and sanitation supplies will be pre-positioned
- Advance online reservation of building use is provided to manage numbers
- There is only one approved entry and exit per building; all others will be signed as closed
- There will be one authorized restroom per building; all others will be closed
- Frequent cleaning of surfaces is required
- Sign in/Sign out logbooks will be used to track individuals entering the buildings and, if necessary, for contact tracing
- Signs will be posted throughout reminding occupants of the requirements

Why we do this. The precautions our church takes represent more than simple compliance with a mandated process. We are all part of the same faith community and this makes us all part of the same family. What we do and how we do it reflects our genuine love and care for one another. We all recognize that for everyone who suffers from the disease, there will be others who suffer out of compassion and concern. In truth, everyone is a member of the vulnerable population. We do this for our family.