

Guidelines for worshipping in-person at Westside Community United Methodist Church

Prior to coming to church:

- First, make a personal decision as to whether or not you will attend in-person worship.
 - o The church will be cleaned and disinfected every week before worship. So you will be entering an environment safe from any previous residual germs.
 - o If you are part of the population the CDC considers vulnerable, you must determine your risk tolerance. While we will not turn you away, we do recommend that vulnerable worshippers join us on Facebook Live rather than in worship.
 - o Please check your temperature and evaluate your personal health before you decide to attend worship. If you have a fever or are symptomatic in any way, please join us for worship on Facebook Live to protect your fellow worshippers.
 - o If you decide to join us for in-person worship, we would request that you wear a mask for worship. We will have disposable masks available, but our hope is that each of you will bring your own.
 - o While we will have hand sanitizer stations available at the entrance and exits, we would also request that each of you that desire to use sanitizer bring a personal bottle to reduce the number of people touching the stations.
 - o For outdoor worship, you will need to bring personal lawn chairs or blankets.

Arriving at church:

- Parking
 - o On days with outdoor worship, please park in the side and back parking lots.
 - o For every service, we would ask that you park in every other space to maintain social distance entering and exiting your vehicles.
 - o If you are parking at the same time as another family who parks next to you please maintain appropriate distance as you move towards the church building.
- Entering the Outdoor Service
 - o For outdoor services, the parking lot will be taped off to define a worship area with a single entrance and separate exit. Please wait at the entrance, appropriately distant from other families, for the usher who will guide you to your seating area.
- Entering the Church Building for Indoor Worship
 - o For entering the church building, we ask everyone to enter exclusively through the front doors. **Downstairs will be closed to everyone.** Entering will be a two-step staging process.
 - First staging area: the front doors. If there is a family in front of you, please wait at an appropriate distance until it is your turn to enter. When it is your turn, a greeter will be there to welcome you. Please remain at

the door with your family until they direct you to one of the two sets of sanctuary doors.

- Once directed, if you have brought a cash or check offering, you can place your offering in the offering plate located on the table in the middle of the Narthex. ***We will not be passing the offering plates during worship.***
- Second staging area: the sanctuary doors. The greeter will direct you to a specific set of sanctuary doors. Please remain there until an usher guides you to your seats.
 - ***We are designating the right-hand side of the church as seating for people who are “vulnerable.” At the end of service, you will be dismissed first and will exit through the back door to provide you the greatest amount of social distance.***
 - Please understand that you will not be able to sit in your normal spots or to request specific seating.
 - The governor’s standard is 33% of building occupancy, the bishop’s standard is 25% of sanctuary seating capacity. We will respect those, but our driving factor will be ensuring that every family unit that is seated has a six foot radius of space around them. By using ushers to direct the seating we can maximize safe sanctuary seating.
- Follow the usher at a six foot distance to your seats. If it is a communion Sunday, the usher will place your pre-packaged communion elements on the pew for you to pick up as you move into the pew.
- Once seated, please remain in your seats until the end of worship.
- Worshipers must sit in family units and children and youth must remain with their parents. Until we receive guidance directing otherwise, we will not be having nursery or children’s moments where kids move to the front of the church.
- Restrooms
 - o At this time the church council has decided to keep restrooms closed during worship.
 - For future indoor worship services, the restrooms will be open but we ask that only one person at a time use the restroom.
 - Please wait outside the main door for the previous occupant to exit.
 - When you are finished, prior to exiting the restroom we ask that you clean any surface you have touched (flush handle, sink handles, paper towel dispenser, etc.) with the disinfectant provided.
 - o For outdoor worship, the restrooms will not be available.

During Worship:

- We request that everyone older than two years of age wear a mask. Please bring personal masks, but if you do not have one, we will have disposable masks available.
- For indoor worship, with appropriate distance and masks in place, feel free to join the worship team in singing praises to our God. For outdoor, sing to your hearts content.
- We will celebrate communion on the first Sunday of each month, but the manner in which we share will be altered.
 - o Pre-packaged elements will be provided for you as you are seated. Please hold them until the appropriate time during the service.
 - o We will go through our communion liturgy and at the appropriate moment you will be invited as a congregation to open your elements and we will partake at the same time.
 - o We will follow communion with a time of reflective prayer and music. We ask you to remain in your pews rather than coming forward to pray as you normally would, but it is our hope that this quiet reflective time will be a meaningful, intimate connection with our Lord and Savior.
 - o When service is dismissed we ask you to drop the empty packaging in the trash receptacles provided at each exit.
- We will not be having a time of passing of the peace during worship. We know that all of you are anxious to be around each other to reconnect. In-person worship makes that possible, but we ask that any visiting with each other is done outside of the church building with appropriate distancing, away from entrance and exit traffic pathways.
- We will not be having a time of offering during the service where ushers pass the plate. We encourage all who are willing and able to use our electronic platforms for your tithe, but if you bring cash or check there will be an offering plate at the entrance to the outdoor worship area and in the Narthex for indoor worship into which you can place your offering.
- We will not have paper bulletins for the foreseeable future. Announcements will be communicated during services and distributed in our weekly emails.

Dismissing from Worship:

- At the end of worship there will not be an altar call. If you are in need of prayer:
 - o In the sanctuary, you are invited to go to the front corner by the pastor's office when you are dismissed for personal prayer after worship. He will meet you there once everyone has exited the sanctuary.
 - o For outdoor worship, you are invited to go to the flagpole when you are dismissed and wait for the pastor to come pray with you.
- Like previously, the service will end with announcements and then a benediction.
- After the benediction, please remain in your seats and the ushers will dismiss by families to facilitate an orderly and appropriately distant exit from the sanctuary or worship area.
 - o The people seated in the "vulnerable" section will be dismissed first, exiting through the back door of the church.

- For indoor worship,
 - o Those seated in the right half of the sanctuary when facing the platform will be dismissed to exit through the back door of the church. Pews will be dismissed from front to back.
 - o Those seated in the center and left half of the sanctuary will be dismissed to exit through the front door of the church. Pews will be dismissed from back to front.
- Please take all personal items with you and deposit any trash in the trash receptacles located at each exit.
- Hand sanitizer stations are located at each exit.

Part of worshipping is serving God and His people. During this unusual time of CoVid-19, one way to serve is to adhere to these guidelines. They are designed to create a safe and meaningful environment for worship. We look forward to gathering with you both in-person and online.