



COVID 19 GUIDE & POLICIES

*Adopted by session April 27, 2021
Revised May 25, 2021*

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You were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only don't let this freedom be an opportunity to indulge your selfish impulses but serve each other through love. All the Law has been fulfilled in a single statement: Love your neighbor as yourself. But if you bite and devour each other, be careful that you don't get eaten up by each other! - Galatians 5:13-15 CEB

Dear members and friends of Westminster,

In many ways it feels like we've all been in exile over the last year, with the necessity to isolate ourselves in order to protect both ourselves and the neighbors we love. The same is true for the church. The worship of God, which is central to our life as Christians, has necessarily moved into a virtual space, and many of us are missing both the in-person worship experience and the weekly fellowship of this wonderful congregation.

We are now about to embark on a new phase in our journey with COVID. Because of the ever-increasing vaccination rate in both Dane County and in our congregation, and the gradual loosening of restrictions by the CDC and the Dane County Public Health Department, the Session voted this week to return to in-person worship at 9:45a on Pentecost Sunday, May 23.

But out of our love for neighbor and the safety of our congregation, the practices of worship will be different for a time. We will all be wearing masks and physically distanced in congregational seating. Speaking and singing parts will be limited to the worship leaders. The weekly offering, prayers of the people, and monthly communion will all be handled differently. I hope these will be temporary measures as we carry out these COVID-related "best practices" for our worshipping congregation.

Ushers and communion servers will all need to be retained. You'll find an article about this in this newsletter along with training sessions available on Zoom.

The virtual worship option will continue to be available. Those who choose not to join us on Sunday morning in person can access the live-streamed worship service on YouTube in real time at 9:45a on Sundays. A taped version will be available about an hour after the conclusion of worship on YouTube. Worship bulletins will also be available on our website each week. Links to these will be emailed to you each Sunday morning, which is our current practice.

Beginning on Pentecost Sunday we will take our usual summer break from Sunday morning Christian Education. Children's Time will not meet separately but instead special educational packets will be prepared each week for our children who participate in worship. Amy Poland or I will lead the weekly Children's Message in worship. There will be no nursery care available on Sunday mornings until further notice.

Beginning May 23, Sunday morning coffee fellowship will happen outdoors (weather permitting) at the Yuma Dr. entryway similar to the successful "drive-by" fellowship events we held over the last year. The fellowship committee will be preparing coffee and special treats for us, all served outdoors!

The Session has adopted *Churchwide COVID Guidelines and Covenant*, a two-page document you will find in this newsletter. We are asking each person who comes to church to abide by these guidelines to participate in worship and other church activities in the building in as safe a way as possible. Please read these carefully.

I hope you will join me in continuing to pray for God's guidance, wisdom, patience, and peace as we continue to find our way through the worst public health crisis in over a century.

Yours in Christ,

Scott Anderson
Pastor

Westminster Presbyterian Church - Church-wide COVID-19 Pandemic Guidelines and Covenant *

At Westminster church we strive to be a grace-filled, inclusive community of Christian believers dedicated to building disciples and sharing God's love. As a part of loving our community, we hereby covenant with one another to continue the fight against COVID-19 even as we open our buildings for public worship, learning, and use.

- We will not attend any activities on the church grounds if:
 - We are sick.
 - We are experiencing symptoms of illness, even if we are not certain of illness.
 - We believe we may have been exposed to someone who is sick, until we are certain we are not contagious with COVID-19.
 - We are currently in isolation due to testing positive for COVID-19.

- Immediately upon entering the church building, we will either:
 - Disinfect all surfaces of our hands with hand sanitizer until the gel is dry (hand sanitizer is available at all church entryways).
 - Wash our hands with soap and water for the time it takes to pray the Lord's Prayer

- We will not hug, shake hands, or engage in physical contact when we are with others in public spaces.

- We will remain at least 6 feet apart from people with whom we do not live.

- For those of us age 5 and above, we will wear masks that cover our nose and mouth to protect others. ** Disposable masks are available near the church office if needed.

- When we worship:
 - We will sit six feet apart from those who are not in our immediate family and allow the ushers to direct us to our seating. Families with younger children may leave the sanctuary if necessary. There is alternate seating in the church lounge.
 - We will wear our masks throughout the worship service.
 - We will leave our offerings in the offering plates located at the entryways to the sanctuary.
 - On Communion Sundays, we will pick up our individually sealed communion cups and wafers when entering the sanctuary, and when leaving worship will place them in marked containers at the sanctuary entryways to be recycled.

If you have been fully vaccinated ***:

- We will wear our masks and maintain social distancing in common spaces in the church (e.g., church office, walkways, narthex, sanctuary, bathrooms, etc.) or in a group of any size that includes unvaccinated persons (including children).

* *A covenant is a solemn promise made between at least two parties and God. In this case, it is an agreement that is being made between the staff, members, and friends of Westminster Presbyterian Church.*

** Dane County [Public Health Order #14](#) includes updated guidance on face coverings that

aligns with [CDC guidance](#). Face coverings must be secured with ties, ear loops, or elastic bands that must go behind the head and fit snugly against the side of the face. Cloth face masks must be made with two or more layers of tightly woven fabric. The Dane County Public Health Department suggests holding up the face mask to a light. If light does not pass through, the fabric is sufficiently “tightly woven.” Bandanas, single layer neck gaiters, face shields, goggles, scarves, ski masks, balaclavas, shirt or sweater collars, and masks with slits, exhalation valves, or punctures are not face coverings under the order. (As the public health order is updated, these details will be updated.)

**** According to the CDC, people are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 ≥ 2 weeks after they have received the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or ≥ 2 weeks after they have received a single-dose vaccine (Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen).*

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Public Health Emergency Guidelines for All Groups Using Church Facilities
Revised April 2021, May 2021

Westminster Presbyterian Church is committed to a safe and healthy environment in the midst of public health emergencies. These guidelines must be followed by all church and outside groups using church facilities:

1. **Scheduling meetings:** meetings should be scheduled through the church office. All groups using the church during the COVID 19 pandemic will be provided these guidelines in writing and must agree to them before building use is granted.
2. **Attendees:** only healthy individuals should attend church events. Individuals who are sick or who are showing any symptoms related to COVID-19 should not enter church grounds.
3. **Room capacity:** Dane County's current Public Health order states that maximum room capacity for all meeting spaces is limited to 50% of approved capacity levels for each room. Please consult with the church office about an appropriate meeting space for your group and the latest public health guidelines for room capacities
4. All participants must wear face masks and practice regular handwashing, with the exception that if everyone in the group has been fully vaccinated, masks are optional.
5. All participants must stand or sit 6 feet apart and observe this physical distancing rule at all times.
6. All participants should either wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after each meeting. Hand sanitizer is located in each meeting room, in all public spaces throughout the church, and in all restrooms.
7. Following each meeting, participants must wipe down their meeting space. Please bring appropriate materials for this purpose. In addition, the church custodial staff will clean and disinfect all room surfaces following the guidelines from Dane County and the Centers for Disease Control. As a result of these additional custodial services, the church will be incurring additional costs during this time. We encourage all groups using the church facilities to make a contribution to help cover those costs.
8. Church volunteers and contractors doing work in the church building are subject to these same guidelines. Specific arrangements should be negotiated with the Church Administrator on a case-by-case basis.
9. The church should be notified immediately if a member of a group using the building contracts COVID-19.

I have received a copy of these guidelines and agree to abide by them while our group is meeting at Westminster Presbyterian Church.

Signed: _____ Phone: _____

Name of Group: _____ Date(s) to be used: _____

Room to be used: _____ Max. capacity: _____

Group Leader: _____ Today's Date: _____

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Public Health Emergency Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines Revised April 2021

Westminster Presbyterian Church is committed to a safe and healthy work environment in the midst of public health emergencies. These guidelines must be followed to clean and disinfect properly against the coronavirus.

1. All areas of the church that are utilized by staff should be cleaned and disinfected daily.
2. Meeting rooms that are utilized during the week should be cleaned and disinfected after each meeting.
3. When in-person worship resumes on Sunday morning, clean and disinfect all surfaces in the sanctuary after every use.
4. Handwashing stations will be provided with soap and water and paper towels, or hand sanitizer.
5. Hand sanitizer will be placed in the church office, in every meeting space, at the entry points to the church, in the narthex and at entry points to the sanctuary.

How to clean and disinfect (CDC Guidelines)

1. Clean

- a. Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect.
- b. Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use disinfectant.
- c. Cleaning with soap and water reduces number of germs, dirt and impurities on the surface. Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces. Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.
- d. More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required based on level of use.
 - i. Surfaces and objects in public places, such as shopping carts and point of sale keypads should be cleaned and disinfected before each use.
 - ii. High touch surfaces include: Tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.
- e. Vacuum as usual.

2. Disinfect

- a. Recommend use of EPA-registered disinfectant that has been proven effective against COVID-19. See <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- b. Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- c. Many products recommend keeping surface wet for a period of time (see product label).
- d. Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
- e. Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used if appropriate for the surface. Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection and has a sodium hypochlorite concentration of 5%–6%. Ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening may not be suitable for disinfection.
- f. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Leave solution on the surface for at least 1 minute.

3. Electronics

- a. Use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.

4. Cleaning and disinfecting our building or facility if someone is sick

- a. Close off areas used by the person who is sick.
- b. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area if possible.
- c. Wait 24 hours before you clean or disinfect. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- d. Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person who is sick, such as offices, bathrooms, common areas, shared electronic equipment like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls, and ATM machines.
- e. Vacuum the space if needed. Use vacuum equipped with high-efficiency particular air (HEPA) filter, if available.
- f. Consider temporarily turning off room fans and the central HVAC system that services the room or space, so that particles that escape from vacuuming will not circulate throughout the facility.
- g. Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
- h. Workers without close contact with the person who is sick can return to work immediately after disinfection.
- i. If more than 7 days since the person who is sick visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary.
- j. Continue routing cleaning and disinfection. This includes everyday practices that businesses and communities normally use to maintain a healthy environment.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Public Health Emergency Guidelines for Church Staff
Revised April 2021

Westminster Presbyterian Church is committed to a safe and healthy work environment in the midst of public health emergencies. All employees of the church must follow these guidelines:

1. If you are sick, or a family member is sick, stay home. If you feel sick, go home. If you see another staff person or member of the congregation who is sick, send them home. In the case of the COVID-19 emergency, typical COVID-19 symptoms include: fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, loss of sense of smell.
2. No handshaking.
3. Wash hands often during the day with soap for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol.
4. Masks must be worn in all public spaces in the church building, and when there is more than one person in an office setting. Practice physical distancing by maintaining a minimum distance of 6-feet from other individuals in meetings, in breaks, and during lunch. For meetings where every participant has been fully vaccinated, masks are now optional.
5. All in-person meetings on church grounds must follow physical distancing practices (see #4 above).
6. Conduct all meetings with parishioners via Zoom or by using a “hybrid” meeting model that combines Zoom and limited in-person attendance subject to the guidelines in #4 above. Face to face meetings are now permitted in the church building as long as #4 above is followed combined with any room use capacity restrictions imposed by Dane County.
7. Be sure to use your own water bottle and coffee cup, and do not share.
8. To avoid external contamination, we recommend everyone bring food from home. Again, do not share.
9. Cover coughing or sneezing with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash and wash hands, if no tissue is available then cough into your elbow.
10. Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with your hands.
11. To avoid sharing germs, please clean up after yourself. Don’t make others responsible for moving, unpacking and packing up your personal belongings.
12. Please do not share equipment (phones, computers, etc.). If you must share equipment, please sanitize it before and after using.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Public Health Emergency Guidelines Music and Worship (final draft 4-26-21)

Introduction

The weekly worship of God is the centerpiece of the church's life. While Westminster Presbyterian Church (WPC) follows the standards of Presbyterian Church liturgy rooted in our *Book of Common Worship*, the congregation and staff have learned to adapt during the COVID-19 pandemic by moving our weekly worship service on-line and making changes appropriate to the new format while maintaining the standards of Presbyterian worship.

With ever-larger numbers of Americans receiving one of three COVID-19 vaccines each week, the Session has set a target date of May 23, 2021 to return in in-person worship (subject to change), with the additional option of worshipping on-line for those who cannot attend in-person. Each individual and family in the church will need to make its own decisions as to when they can physically return to in-person worship.

The return to in-person worship will require further adaptation of the worship service for the purpose of maintaining (1) CDC-recommended best practices for minimizing the risk of spread and creating as safe a worship space as possible; and (2) compliance with Dane County Public Health Orders currently in effect. Changes will include:

Worshipper Etiquette

1. Worshipers who are sick or exhibiting any of the symptoms of COVID-19 should plan to stay home.
2. Worshipers will wear masks throughout the worship service. Families with children who need to leave the sanctuary may do so. The lounge behind the sanctuary provides alternate seating if needed.
3. Upon entering the sanctuary, worshippers will pick up a bulletin at one of the marked tables in the narthex and will allow the ushers to direct them to their seats.
4. Worshipers will sit six feet apart from those who are not in their immediate family. Seating will be limited to every other pew to preserve social distancing.
5. Worshipers will leave their offerings in the offering plates located at the entryways to the sanctuary.
6. Worshipers will record their attendance by filling out a 3x5 card in their bulletin and dropping it in the offering plate as they leave worship.
7. On Communion Sundays, worshippers will pick up their individually sealed communion cups and wafers when entering the sanctuary, and when leaving worship will place them in marked containers at the sanctuary exits to be recycled.

The Liturgy

1. Worship leaders with speaking parts may remove their masks when leading worship from the chancel area (pulpit, lectern and communion table).
2. There will be no Passing of the Peace. Worshipers can nod to those around them indicating their welcoming acknowledgement.
3. Joys and Concerns to be shared publicly by worshippers can be emailed or texted to Pastor Scott (608-358-6153) by either in-person or on-line worshippers prior to the start of worship each Sunday as he will announce them before the Prayers of the People.
4. Worship leaders will continue to plan for a 30–40-minute worship service to better accommodate an on-line congregation and to help mitigate the COVID-related risks.

Music in Worship

1. The Minister of Music will lead the hymns.
2. All other music during worship will be instrumental until further notice.

3. Guest musicians must be always masked and socially distanced.
4. The choir will return to worship leadership once the public health authorities determine it is safe to do so.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Public Health Emergency Guidelines
Instructions for Communion Preparation (adopted 4-26-21)

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to be a communion server during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The return to in-person worship during the COVID pandemic will require adaptations to the weekly worship service, including changes in the way we serve communion, for the purpose of maintaining (1) CDC-recommended best practices for minimizing the risk of spread by creating a safe and welcoming worship space; and (2) compliance with Dane County Public Health Orders currently in effect.

Communion Preparation

1. Communion servers agree to abide by the *WPC Churchwide Guidelines and Covenant* which are enclosed and are available in the narthex.
2. Communion servers should arrive 45 minutes prior to the service on Sundays when communion is served.
3. Servers should thoroughly sanitize their hands by way of handwashing or hand sanitizer before preparing communion.
4. For the communion table: Prepare the silver serving pitcher with grape juice and a silver platen with a loaf of bread, which will need to be secured in advance. Cover bread with a white cloth and place the pitcher, platen, and chalice on the communion table for use by the pastor.
5. The church has ordered individually packed and sealed recyclable communion cups with gluten free wafers for use by the congregation during the pandemic. They are stored with the communion supplies in the first-floor kitchen.
6. We will not be serving communion using the ecumenical method (intinction) or the traditional Presbyterian method (serving the congregation with the silver trays in the pews).
7. Prepare communion for 100 people (this number may change over time). Use the traditional communion serving trays for the small communion cups (the bread trays will not be used). You will need at least two communion trays. Remove the cover and upper insert of each tray that holds the individual communion cups in place. Place the prepackaged sealed communion cups with wafers in the trays, with the blank seal (without writing) facing upward.
8. Once each tray is filled, replace the covers, and move the trays to the table outside of the narthex where marked. Remove tray covers and place beside each tray.
9. The church office will designate baskets or small trash cans for worshippers to place their used communion cups when exiting from worship.
10. After worship, gather up the used communion cups and rinse them out. Place them in the recycling bin in the main floor kitchen.
11. Walk through the sanctuary and pick up any used or unused communion cups in the pews.
12. Return the unused communion cups to storage. Wipe the communion trays and clean the communion ware on the communion table before returning to storage.

Westminster Presbyterian Church
Public Health Emergency Guidelines
Ushering Instructions for Worship (final draft 4/26/21)

Introduction

The return to in-person worship during the COVID pandemic will require adaptations to the weekly worship service, including changes the role and responsibilities of ushers, for the purpose of maintaining (1) CDC-recommended best practices for minimizing the risk of spread by creating a safe and welcoming worship space; and (2) compliance with Dane County Public Health Orders currently in effect.

Usher Instructions

13. All ushers agree to abide by the *WPC Churchwide Guidelines and Covenant* which are enclosed and are available in the narthex.
14. Two ushers are needed for weekly worship until further notice.
15. Ushers should be always masked.
16. Since we will not be using greeters initially as we return to in-person worship, worshippers entering from main doors at the Nakoma Rd entrance or at the elevator or the top of the stairwell from the Yuma Dr. entrance should be verbally welcomed by one of the ushers as they approach the sanctuary for worship. No hugs or hand shaking.
17. Disposable masks and hand sanitizer are available at the entrances to the church and in the narthex near the entryways to the sanctuary. All worshippers must be masked.
18. Direct worshippers to pick up a bulletin from one of the tables near the sanctuary entryways. Each bulletin will contain a 3x5 attendance card for worshippers to fill out and to leave in one of the offering plates. We will not be using the red attendance pads until further notice.
19. While socially distanced (6 feet), ushers should assist worshippers in finding a seat in the sanctuary. Available seating will be clearly marked at every other pew. Immediate families can sit together. Otherwise, worshippers should sit six feet apart from others.
20. At present, the sanctuary is limited to 72 people in worship. If attendance exceeds this, worshippers should be directed to the lounge or to sit in the narthex as alternate seating.
21. Ushers should monitor the congregation to assure that everyone is (1) socially distanced, and (2) wearing a mask. Worshippers who move too close to one another as the worship service progresses or remove their masks should be invited by one of the ushers to abide by the *WPC Congregational Guidelines and Covenant* everyone has agreed to.
22. Ushers will not be taking up the offering. Instead, worshippers will be directed to leave their offerings in the offering plates near the exits of the sanctuary as they leave worship.
23. If a parishioner arrives without a mask for medical reasons, encourage him or her to sit in the narthex for the duration of the service.

Additional items to note since session approval:

- After worship starts, remove the bulletins trays and set them on the desk under the name tag display (Katie will grab them on Monday).
- Put out the offering trays on the tables for patrons to place their offerings AND attendance cards as they leave. These can be found on the desk under the name tag display.
- After everyone is sat, feel free to join your party. Please just keep an eye out for anyone not following guidelines.
- We are not opening the back/parking lot doors. There are signs instructing members to come to the Yuma side to enter