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Hi Union Family. The Lord be with you.

This Sunday, June 7th, we will move in-person worship back into the sanctuary. In the midst of the current pandemic, we cannot simply return to “business as usual.” Therefore, we will need to make some adaptations in order to keep our most vulnerable people safe. Please be reminded that these guidelines are not meant to infringe upon your personal freedoms but are simply intended to keep those around us safe and help us be loving and considerate neighbors. Here are the guidelines that the trustee committee and worship leadership team are recommending:

1. When entering the sanctuary, please use the entrance located at the small upper parking lot (the parking lot next to the Boy Scout trail). This will be the only accessible point of entry as the Grace Café doors will be locked. The doors will be opened well in advance to the start of worship so you will not need to open the sanctuary doors. When walking through the parking lot and entering the church building please be mindful to keep 6’ of distance from other worshipers who do not live in your immediate household.
2. When you enter the narthex, someone will be there to take your temperature. If you have a fever, for the safety of others, you will be prayed over and asked to return home.
3. The wearing of masks is strongly encouraged. Please bring your own mask. If you do not have one, we will have some available. If you have a medical condition that prohibits the safe wearing of a mask, please let the ushers know and you will not be required to wear one.
4. We will not be passing the offering plates. Please drop your offering into the offering baskets which will be placed near the entrance/exit of the sanctuary.
5. We will continue to use the pre-packaged Communion elements. At the conclusion of worship, please discard your empty Communion cups into one of the garbage cans in the narthex.
6. Sanctuary pews will be taped off so that 6’ of distance, in all directions, can be maintained by individuals/families while we worship. This means your normal “sitting spot” might not be available. Please be flexible with us as we are still figuring out the best way to seat everyone.

7. If you need to exit the sanctuary during worship, please be mindful to keep 6' of distance from others when exiting the pew and when walking down the aisle.
8. The only restrooms that will be available to use will be the small restrooms located in the sanctuary narthex. Disinfectant wipes will be placed in these restrooms. If you use the restroom, please use a disinfectant wipe to clean the toilet flushing handle as well as the sink faucet handles. Wash your hands for 20 seconds using soap and water. When exiting the restrooms use a paper towel or disinfectant wipe to grab the door handle (sort of like a glove) so that your actual hand doesn't have to touch the doorknob, and discard your paper towel or wipe into one of the narthex garbage cans. When entering the restroom, please bump the door with your hip, or back through the door to minimize the use of your hands on the doorknob.
9. There will be music, but congregational singing will not be allowed at this time. When singing, air is forced out of our lungs at a more concentrated rate and the "spray zone" increases such that 6' of separation might not provide an adequate safe zone. Feel free to close your eyes, sway along, silently mouth the words to the hymns, or hum the tune while our vocalists and musicians play and sing.
10. I know that we all love each other. That's one of the great charms of worshipping together. However, to keep each other safe please do not shake hands or hug. Feel free to wave to one another, wink at one another, bow to one another, or come up with a really nice physical distancing appropriate means of greeting and expressing affection for one another. Use your imagination, you might come up with something really great!
11. Pay attention to the dismissal instructions as we will not be dismissing everyone at once. Once we see how everyone is arranged in the sanctuary, we will make the determination to dismiss by rows or sections.
12. Each week during the worship service a picture will be taken of the congregation. In the event that one or more people from our congregation tests positive for COVID-19, we will use this picture to contact other worshipers so that they can be tested, and if necessary, self-quarantine for a period of two weeks.

Sunday school classes will be allowed to meet in their usual spaces. Here are the guidelines that the trustee committee and worship leadership team are recommending for Sunday school class participants:

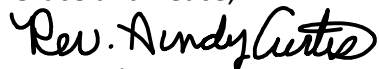
1. Go directly to your Sunday school classroom. We are trying to keep as much of the building as possible from having to be deep cleaned each week as this puts Willie Ruth at greater risk of contracting COVID-19 while cleaning. As well, extra cleaning can have an adverse effect on the church's cleaning budget.
2. While in class, keep 6' of distance between people who are not from the same immediate household.

3. Please keep restroom use to a minimum. We're not suggesting you can't use the nearest restroom if it's absolutely necessary, but we're trying to only use the small restrooms in the sanctuary narthex. If you do use the restrooms in the gym or fellowship hall, please follow the guidelines laid out above for the sanctuary restrooms.
4. When walking through the parking lot and entering the gym or fellowship hall please be mindful to keep 6' of distance from others who do not live in your immediate household.
5. Please do not hug or shake hands. Perhaps we should have a competition to see which Sunday school class can come up with the best physical distancing appropriate greeting or gesture of Christian affection.
6. No food or drinks will be served.
7. The wearing of masks is strongly encouraged. Please bring your own mask. If you do not have one, we will have some available in the sanctuary. If you have a medical condition that prohibits the safe wearing of a mask, please let your Sunday school teacher know and you will not be required to wear one.
8. Each week during your Sunday school class a picture will be taken of the participants. In the event that one or more people from your class tests positive for COVID-19, we will use this picture to contact other class participants so that they can be tested, and if necessary, self-quarantine for a period of two weeks.

I know...it looks like a daunting list of "stuff." Gathering in this way will definitely look and feel different. However, know that our primary concern is the health and wellbeing of our beloved church family. Please respect others by respecting these guidelines to the best of your ability. Please respect those who have a different opinion than you do on this matter. Some feel COVID-19 is a hoax. Some feel COVID-19 is a very real threat. What we are now tasked with is living in the tension of these differing opinions and learning how to worship together in spirit and in truth despite them.

I look forward to worshipping with you this Sunday.

Grace and Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Andy Curtis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rev. Andy Curtis