



FPC Guidelines for Resuming Building Operation

A holy place set aside for worship. A place of refuge or protection. There's a reason we worship in a sanctuary—it's a place of comfort, catharsis, connection—where we feel God's presence in shared worship, shared prayer, shared community. We feel connected to this particular sacred place, and through this place, we feel connected with one another, guiding us to trust each other to offer support and companionship on the journey of faith.

So it's no small thing that for the past three months, our church building has closed to all but essential staff and volunteers. Our church—the people—has never been “shut down.” We continue to be God's people in this place. Congregational care, community outreach, worship, and education that make FPC what it is have continued. And God has been present in other sanctuaries—our homes—because God is present everywhere, all the time. And yet, of course, we long to be together in worship again!

Throughout this time, Session has discussed and planned diligently how to worship in person again. We consulted guidelines from the Presbyterian Church (USA), Lake Michigan Presbytery, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and expertise of the medical professionals on our Health Ministry Team and Session. With all that in mind, we have decided to proceed with caution. Limited office hours began on June 8. **The building is open for necessary business Monday-Thursday, from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Our target date for in-person worship, subject to change, is Sunday, July 12.** We decided not to resume in-person worship without an adequate option for those who must or wish to continue to worship from home to keep themselves or others safe. To that end, live streaming equipment is now operational in the sanctuary. You will still be able to access worship via YouTube.

Please remember: our ability to gather does not mean the pandemic is over. Mitigation depends upon our efforts to limit risk and to keep the curve flattened. The Session, guided by the Health Ministry Team, has adopted the following guidelines intended to keep all of us as safe as possible.

- Please monitor your own health. If you don't feel well, stay home! It would help to take your own temperature before coming to church for any reason and stay home if it's above normal.
- Please sanitize your hands often—bring your own sanitizer and we also plan to have sanitizer available throughout the building. Please use it and wash your hands often.
- Please maintain physical distancing—6 feet from people not in your household.
- You must wear a mask for worship and other activities—if you don't have one, we have some that we can provide (Supplies are limited. Please bring your own mask, if at all possible). Children under the age of 2 are exempt from this, by CDC guidelines. If you aren't able to wear a mask for some reason, please stay home for now. (Masks are important for when physical distancing can't be maintained or for long periods of exposure to groups of people.)

In addition to these general guidelines, here are specific details for groups, activities, and worship:

Building access

- All weekday access to the building will be through the Lovell Street (parking lot) entrance. On Sunday mornings the South Street Entrance and the large red doors will **also** be available.
- The third floor will remain closed for the immediate future.

Groups (in-house & guests)

- Church committees and groups may begin meeting in the building. You will be assigned space pre-arranged to maintain 6-foot distance. Please use that space as arranged and wear masks.
- Please abide by state-established size limits, which may expand during the summer.
- You must schedule your meeting with Ann Johnson. If you do not schedule your meeting, a space will not be available.
- At this point, we are limiting access to groups that are explicitly FPC groups. Outside groups will be permitted at some point, but not in this initial phase of return.
- Zoom meetings are still possible and encouraged. To schedule Zoom, contact Pastor Chrissy.
- Celebrate the Vision will not serve meals indoors until we can do so safely for our volunteers and our guests. Bagged meals will continue to be provided on Wednesday evenings.

Worship

- In person worship will begin on Sunday, July 12, assuming no setbacks before then.
- Worship will be at 10:00 a.m. There will be no fellowship hour or coffee or donuts provided.
- Please maintain 6 feet distance as you enter the building and go directly to sit in the sanctuary. If many people enter church at the same time, please wait in your car for space to open up.
- You may enter the building from the parking lot, the South St doors or the large red doors. Enter the sanctuary through the Narthex doors on the South Street side (back of the sanctuary).
- Doors will be kept open; please refrain from touching them.
- Pews will be marked for physical distancing. Ushers will guide you to a seat, filling from the front to the back. People living in the same household may sit together.
- Pew Bibles, hymnals, attendance pads, pencils will be removed from pews where people sit.
- Children's worship bags will not be provided at this time. Please feel free to bring books, crayons, paper from home to allow for busy hands and creative expression during worship.
- Remember that the sanctuary is not air-conditioned. The hand-held fans will not be provided. Dress for comfort in these warm months.
- Nursery care and Sunday School will not resume until at least September.
- Services will be shortened to 45 minutes for less time spent together in the sanctuary.
- Paper bulletins will be at every seat. Please take them as you leave and recycle them at home.
- Music will be included in worship, but we will not sing hymns. (CDC and experts warn against deep breathing required and droplet spread farther than 6 feet and possibly up to 25 feet.)
- Offering will be received before and after the service in designated locations.
- Ushers will dismiss people by rows after the postlude. Please exit the building as soon as possible, maintaining physical distance
- Services will also be live-streamed so all may participate. If all available space in the sanctuary is full when you arrive, we will try to find space to view worship live-streamed in the Gathering Place or the Dining Room. If we find overflow to be consistent, we will add a second service.

We hope these guidelines will help us reduce risk for everyone and allow us to move forward. All of this is subject to change as our situation unfolds over the summer. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Seth, Pastor Chrissy, or any member of Session.

On Behalf of Session,

Pastor Seth Weeldreyer and Pastor Chrissy Westbury