



# PERDIDO BAY

## UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

OUR MISSION: Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.  
OUR VISION: Becoming the heart of the community.

May 28, 2020

### **Guidelines for Returning to In-person Worship**

*Drafted by the Perdido Bay UMC COVID-19 Task Force*

Our lives have been forever changed by COVID-19, and we recognize this as a time for us to continue to adapt and develop new ways of being the church. Now is the time for our witness to shine. We can witness to the love of Jesus Christ by following his example in acts of service and sacrificial love.

Therefore, our return to in-person worship is not, and should not, be based on our own comfort or desires alone. We, as the church, must use precautions in order to care for all people – those who come into our buildings and those who worship from home. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), those who are most vulnerable to contracting COVID-19 are those over the age of 65 and/or those with preexisting health conditions. People who fall into these categories are encouraged by the CDC to avoid crowds and stay at home whenever possible. For these and others, online worship continues to be a vital and necessary part of our ministry even as we reopen our buildings.

We recommend using extreme caution when deciding when to return to in-person worship. We recognize that while PBUMC may effectively follow all of the necessary guidelines put out by health officials, following those guidelines only reduces the risk of infection, it does not mean that an environment is considered “safe.” We know that we cannot completely eliminate the risks in coming together for worship and acknowledge that on some level, there have always been risks.

Sunday, June 7, 2020, PBUMC will host two Beta Test In-Person Worship services to prepare for our transition back to regularly offered In-Person Worship Services. These two opportunities will be offered at 9:00 a.m. in our Activities Center and at 6:00 p.m. on our Front Lawn. These Beta Test services on June 7 will be offered to those who have made reservations to attend worship in-person. We will offer the 9:00 a.m. indoor, in-person opportunity to the first 100 persons who make a reservation, and the 6:00 p.m. outdoor, in-person opportunity to the first 150 persons who make a reservation. These should be unique persons and we will ask all family units to stay together the entire time they are on our church campus. We will not have nursery/childcare ministries offered.

Based on the experience of June 7<sup>th</sup>'s Beta Test Services we will announce plans for future in-person worship opportunities.

## PBUMC's Operating Procedure to Foster a Safer Environment

1. Trained Staff and Volunteers will be wearing masks and nametags and stationed strategically throughout the campus to help monitor the adherence to these guidelines and to offer hospitality to all. We ask everyone on campus to comply with instructions given by these individuals. Baptist Healthcare Faith Health Network recommends that PBUMC limit volunteers to those who do not have preexisting conditions and those who are under 65 years old until further notice.
2. Any person entering the building must be asymptomatic.
3. All persons will be asked to wear masks while in attendance. Please bring your own mask, if you do not have one, we will provide one for you as we are able. Note, The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children 2 years of age and under do not wear masks or face coverings.
4. Hand sanitizer will be made available to every person who enters the building.
5. Safe social distancing will be practiced in all seating. Only those from the same household should sit less than six feet apart. In the in-door worship spaces staff will pre-set the seats. In the out-door worship spaces persons will be asked to bring their own seating and will be directed to set up in family units, six feet from all other units.
6. All entrances to the worship space will be propped open to limit the number of times they are touched.
7. Bulletins will not be handed out.
8. The staff will post signs about not shaking hands, the importance of PPE, and expressions of love using non-contact greetings. The staff will also post signs in the restrooms detailing the importance of cleanliness and proper handwashing.
9. Because viruses can survive on paper and hard surfaces for hours, PBUMC staff will remove all hymnals, Bibles, and papers from the worship areas.
10. If we move to multiple indoor service times on a Sunday morning, we will utilize both worship spaces so as to have ample time to clean and disinfect between services. If we utilize one worship space more than once on a given day then ample time between services will be created to clean and disinfect the space.
11. Offering plates will not be passed from person to person. We will offer several places throughout the campus for members to drop their offering into a container that will allow them to follow safety standards. These places will be monitored by a trained staff member or volunteer. Online giving will continue to be encouraged.
12. Each worship leader will use a unique microphone during a service of worship, no microphone will be passed for any reason during the service.
13. All physical greetings, signs of passing the peace, and congregational hand-holding will be suspended until further notice.
14. Congregational singing and responsive readings may increase potential spread of the virus and will be suspended until further notice.
15. Pre-packaged communion elements that can be safely received upon entering the worship space will be made available when Holy Communion is to be administered.
16. Persons will be escorted to their seating by a trained staff member or volunteer to ensure social distancing during worship arrival. A queue will be created by the staff at the worship entrance to ensure social distancing.

17. Persons will be asked to practice social distancing as they leave the worship space, and trained staff members and volunteers will dismiss the congregation by rows.
18. We will ask persons to consider only using the restrooms in cases of emergency, and there will be a trained team ready to clean the sinks, toilets, and stall doors in the restrooms after each use.
19. The staff will thoroughly disinfect repeatedly touched surfaces after every use, including but not limited to door handles, handrails, light switches, seats, tables, countertops, and any other surface that is touched throughout the building.
20. Hand sanitizer and wipes will be readily available in all areas that are open for use: worship spaces, restrooms, hallways, church office, etc.
21. All food and drink services available for public consumption will be suspended until further notice. The staff will cover water fountains to prevent use.
22. Nursery, Sunday school, children's church, children's moments in worship will be suspended until further notice.
23. The staff will keep the conference room completely clear in case someone presents with an emergency or needs to be self-quarantined for any reason until they can safely leave the campus. As we open the current sanctuary an elementary-aged classroom will be identified by the staff to be used for a similar function in our sanctuary building.
24. Sign-up genius, an online platform for data collection will be used to record names and contact information for persons attending worship until further notice. In the event Sign-up Genius were to malfunction the staff will ensure sign-in cards with a date/time stamp will be available for each family unit that arrives for worship. We will request two methods of contact per family unit. If a worshipper were to test positive for COVID-19 within 14 days of attending a service on our campus, all people who had been present will be notified and a more in-depth cleaning will be utilized.
25. Online Worship will continue to be offered and encouraged.

## Helpful Resources

Florida COVID-19 cases by county

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/96dd742462124fa0b38ddedb9b25e429>

What to do when a congregation member or employee tests positive

<https://www.adamsandreesse.com/news-knowledge/my-employee-tested-positive-for-covid-19-now-what>

Disinfecting your building

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

Research on aerosol stability of COVID-19

<https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2004973?fbclid=IwAR2aGDg8VCiA8g4o5bYyR6TM4GQRIgQzb4e0G8KqGq2xylp-qMmWp6oaEzs>

Federal guidelines for phases of reopening

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/>

CDC resources for vulnerable adults

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>

Congregational singing references

<https://www.drheathernelson.com/singingandcovid19>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFI3GsVzj6Q&feature=youtu.be>

Risks and how to avoid them

[https://www.erinbromage.com/post/the-risks-know-them-avoid-them?fbclid=IwAR3CSdUFs8E8GbdPTlkbqs2UIN1hADd73xr\\_EnJItSNU\\_n\\_YQH5feNOv999I](https://www.erinbromage.com/post/the-risks-know-them-avoid-them?fbclid=IwAR3CSdUFs8E8GbdPTlkbqs2UIN1hADd73xr_EnJItSNU_n_YQH5feNOv999I)