

February 24, 2021

*Congregants and Friends of St John's,*

*We are excited and thankful that in-person worship has been able to resume. Significant prayer, discussion, and research by the leadership and staff have been ongoing to ensure we do the best we can to worship our Lord faithfully and safely. We appreciate your prayers, your flexibility and your understanding as we work to safely navigate the many challenges of Covid-19.*

*Please read the information in this letter carefully as there are many details you will need to know and do to join us for in-person worship. Thank you for your faithfulness, and your patience.*

*Pastor Brad*

- 1. You will need to reserve your attendance at all in-person worship until we notify you that reservations are no longer required**
  - a. Signup Genius, a safe online tool used by St John's in the past, will be used to reserve your attendance
  - b. A link to this website is included in the same email as this letter
  - c. The church unfortunately needs to limit attendance at each worship service in order to provide adequate social distancing. Both our sanctuary and fellowship hall seating will be limited to less than one third of our normal capacity.
  - d. Members of the same **household** will be able to sit together and not observe social distancing requirements that others must observe
  - e. At this time, one of every three pews will be available for seating. Pews not available for seating will be blocked off to provide social distancing. In fellowship hall, individual chairs will be placed at appropriately distanced intervals
  - f. Do not hesitate to email the church to reserve your attendance if you cannot use SignUp Genius

- 2. The sanctuary and balcony will be used for seating and you must have a reservation for this seating.**
- 3. You MUST wear a mask or a clear face shield that fully covers the mouth in the church at all times and there will be no exceptions**
  - a. Please bring your own mask. If you forget a mask, one can be obtained.
  - b. Instructions for correct mask wearing are attached at the end of this letter and will be posted around the church
- 4. You must follow social distancing rules of staying at least 6 feet away from people who are not members of your household.**
- 5. Your attendance at church signifies your acceptance of the Covid Legal Liability waiver that is attached to the Signup Genius reservation tool**
  - a. St John's is doing everything reasonable and practical to ensure the safety and health of you, your family and friends, and the staff
  - b. This waiver only protects the church, staff and volunteers from liability in the unlikely event you do get infected
  - c. The waiver is also attached at the end of this letter
- 6. Bibles, Hymnals and all other cards and materials were removed from the pews.**
  - a. Bring a personal Bible if you want.
- 7. Currently, and until further notice:**
  - a. There will be no Grace Café or kitchen activities.
  - b. There will be no nursery.
  - c. Bible Study, Christian Education and fellowship activities may be scheduled through the office, provided that the number of attendees do not exceed the capacity of the room that is reserved, participants have signed a waiver, and food/drinks are not served. Note that virtual Christian education opportunities will continue.
- 8. Bulletins will not be available at the church**
  - a. You will continue to receive the weekly bulletin and the Order of Worship by email on the Friday before the worship service

b. Please print these at home and bring with you if you want to have these at church, and take them home with you

**9. There will be no singing by the congregation**

a. A small ensemble will perform music during the service

**10. Ushers will be at the church to answer questions and direct you to your assigned seats**

**11. Please do not come to the church if you do not feel in your usual state of health or have any symptoms of Covid recognized by the Centers for Disease Control:**

- a. Fever or chills
- b. Cough
- c. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- d. Fatigue
- e. Muscle or body aches
- f. Headache
- g. New loss of taste or smell
- h. Sore throat
- i. Congestion or runny nose
- j. Nausea or vomiting
- k. Diarrhea

**12. Only the narthex doors (9am) and fellowship hall lobby doors (10:30 am) will be used for all entry and exit.**

**13. Only the rest rooms in the hallway beside the sanctuary will be open (9am); only the rest rooms adjacent to fellowship hall will be open at 10:30 am.**

- a. Occupancy is limited to one person in a restroom at a time
- b. Please clean up what you touch after you use the restroom

**14. The 9am Sunday worship service will continue to be filmed and posted on the church website**

a. The recording will be posted on the website later that day

**15. We appreciate every gift you make during this Covid crisis and at all times**

- a. Collection baskets are in the narthex
- b. Please use automated giving as a safe giving method  
or mail in your donations to the church office

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR STEWARDSHIP!**

*St. John's leadership and staff realize these are difficult times, requiring us all to make sacrifices and follow procedures to ensure the safety and health of others and ourselves. Though we all may not necessarily agree with every step being taken or every requirement being established, these steps and requirements are being implemented in the best interest of every person in the congregation. Therefore, we ask, and expect, that you will comply. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and flexibility.*

*As indicated above, we will have ushers available for any questions or issues that come up. We have discerned and prayed over these steps, and are confident that God will see us through the challenges so we can continue to extend open arms and serving hands such that lives are transformed by Christ. Please continue to keep these plans, the St. John's Family, and our community in your prayers.*

*St. John's Reopening Team*

# HOW YOUR *mask* SHOULD FIT



- ① Place any straps around your ears, or tie behind your head's crown and the nape of the neck to secure mask to face.
- ② Cover your entire nose and mouth. Carefully pull and stretch the mask to adjust it around these areas.
- ③ Be sure to tuck the mask beneath your chin if possible, as this prevents shifting.

**GOOD  
HOUSEKEEPING**

**ASSUMPTION OF THE RISK AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY RELATING TO  
CORONAVIRUS/COVID-19**

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, has been declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. COVID-19 is extremely contagious and is believed to spread mainly from person-to-person contact. As a result, federal, state, and local governments and federal and state health agencies recommend social distancing and have, in many locations, prohibited the congregation of groups of people.

St. John’s United Methodist Church has put in place preventative measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19; however, St. John’s cannot guarantee that you or your children will not become infected with COVID-19 while present in our facilities. Further, your and your children’s presence in church facilities could increase your risk and your children’s risk of contracting COVID-19.

By reserving attendance and attending in-person worship services at St. John’s, I acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume the risk that my children and I may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19 by being present in church facilities and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and death. I understand that the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 at St. John’s may result from the actions, omissions, or negligence of myself and others, including, but not limited to, Church employees, volunteers, members, attendees and others present in Church facilities.

In consideration for being permitted to use St John’s facilities, I voluntarily agree to assume all of the foregoing risks and accept sole responsibility for any injury to my children or myself (including, but not limited to, personal injury, disability, and death), illness, damage, loss, claim, liability, or expense, of any kind, that I or my children may experience or incur in connection with our presence in church facilities (“claims”). On my behalf, and on behalf of my children, I hereby release, covenant not to sue, discharge, and hold harmless the church, its employees, trustees, volunteers, members, agents, and representatives, of and from the claims, including all liabilities, claims, actions, damages, costs or expenses of any kind arising out of or relating thereto. I understand and agree that this release includes any claims based on the actions, omissions, or negligence of the church, its employees, trustees, volunteers, members, agents, and representatives, whether a Covid-19 infection occurs before, during, or after our presence in church facilities.

Signature: **By reserving your attendance with the church and attending St John’s in-person worship you accept this agreement**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Signature: **the records of the reservation tool being used by St. John’s UMC for reserving in-person attendance at worship serve as the verification of this agreement**