***Worship Beginning 10/18/20***

Greetings Church Family,

First Christian Church, Bloomington, is on schedule to re-open for in-person worship on October 18, 2020. In this document you will find a general description of what being at FCC will be like that day and on Sundays in the weeks after. Below that you will find further details about what to expect, as well as a question and answer section.

In the most recent *Messenger* newsletter, both our Board President, Joe Bandy, and our Senior Pastor, Rev. Jim Warren, penned articles discussing the re-opening. The overriding theme of both leaders’ messages was that the safety of worshipers and staff is of utmost importance. All persons need to take personal responsibility for their health, the health of loved ones, AND the common good of others. For those desiring to gather in person, we will do so with clear directions, guidelines, and expectations.

Whether you choose to worship AT church or from the comfort of your home, we appreciate your mindfulness of the work of the church continuing. Please give as you so faithfully have been doing -- your intentional giving continues to help us to be the church in our community even as Sunday gatherings have been postponed. Please also continue to pray for your church leadership and others, and be sure to share your prayer requests with FCC at [office@blmfcc.org](mailto:office@blmfcc.org).

Take this opportunity to re-connect and engage with your church family, and invite a friend or family member to worship with you online or in-person.

The Re-opening Team, Staff, and Board appreciate your prayers, understanding, and flexibility as we take steps to emerge from isolation.  We will continue to assess the environment and adapt plans as needed for your well-being, as well as the well-being of our neighbors in the community.

In Christ’s love,

FCC Re-opening Team

**General Notes**

* We will resume in-person worship only for the 9:00 a.m. service. The 10:15 a.m. One and All service will resume after we evaluate how things are going. In the meantime, the first service of the month will have One and All music.
* The church, including restrooms and Sanctuary, will be cleaned professionally regularly and before and after the worship service.
* There is no need to make reservations and we do not anticipate the need to limit the number of people who can attend, as we can accommodate close to 100.
* Face masks must be worn properly by everyone during the entire time present at FCC. Masks must be worn over nose and mouth. If you’ve arrived at church and realize you forgot your mask, a disposable one will be given to you.
* We must maintain a distance of six feet between guests, and so shaking hands and hugging are prohibited.
* Temperatures will be taken as worshipers enter the church.
* Traffic will flow in one direction, and no socializing will be allowed in the Foyer, Centrum, or Narthex.
* Every other pew will be open for safely-distanced seating of individuals or family units.
* Rev. Jim Warren will speak live in the worship service behind a clear shield; most music will remain pre-recorded and shown on the video screen. No singing or humming, please.
* Offering plates will not be passed – a basket will be available for your offering as you exit the Sanctuary.
* Weekly communion will be shared via pre-packaged individual containers, and a trash can for refuse will be located near the offering basket. Please do not leave anything in your pew, including used or unused communion supplies.
* Coffee and donut holes will not be served.
* No childcare will be provided. Children & Youth, including Worship & Wonder, will not meet on Sunday mornings. Children will be encouraged to worship with their families.
* The 9:00 a.m. Traditional worship service will continue to be live streamed on www.blmfcc.com and on our Facebook page.
* The use of the church building, other than the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings at 9:00, continues to be limited, except for small groups using the Conference Room. Procedures and Policies are available from Maggie Burton when the room is reserved, and reminder signs are posted on the Conference Room walls.
* The office staff will continue to work from home, as recommended by the Illinois Department of Labor.

**The Process of Entering FCC, Worshipping, and Leaving FCC**

1. Park in the north parking lot and proceed to the elevator Foyer, east door, being careful not to crowd the person or family unit in front of you. We ask that you arrive no earlier than 8:40 a.m. and no later than 8:55 a.m. and that all family members enter together.
2. You will be asked for the names of all in your group, and the temperature of each individual will be taken using a no-touch thermometer. Those with temperatures above 100.4 Fahrenheit will be asked not to proceed any farther into the church but to consider resting and continuing to monitor health.
3. Proceed up the stairs or up the elevator.
4. Pause briefly to use the touchless hand sanitizer station outside the church office (these are located in other areas throughout the path to the Sanctuary).
5. Social distancing is key to preventing spreading in the case that someone is ill and does not know it. Keep at least 6 feet between yourself (or family unit) and others. Do not sit or pause in the Centrum, but follow signs and arrows to the Narthex. Do not hang coats in the coat closet, but take them with you into the Sanctuary to keep traffic flow simple.
6. If you will be participating in communion, each member of your group may carefully take a pre-packaged communion unit off the table in the Narthex. This unit contains a wafer and juice. There will be a gluten-free version – please read the signs on the table.
7. Enter the center door of the Sanctuary, or use a side door, being careful not to come close to others as you do. Proceed to the forward pews and sit in one that is not roped off and will allow for you/your family unit to sit safely-distanced from others.
8. As you wait for the service to begin, read the announcements and safety reminders on the video screen.
9. Rev. Jim Warren will be leading worship and will give any instructions you might need throughout the service.
10. The Time for Children will be pre-recorded, so children will remain with you in the pews during that portion of the service.
11. Minimal talking, and no singing or humming will be allowed throughout the service, to discourage increased breath aerosol spreading. This restraint may be difficult, but is an important safety precaution that helps allow us to return to in-person worship.
12. We will not have bulletins, hymnals, Bibles, attendance pads, or prayer cards in the pews. Nor will offering plates be passed. We encourage you to continue to reach out to those on our prayer list (included in each Friday’s Connected/Friday Email) on your own or to bring notes from home and place them with your offering in the offering basket as you leave worship.
13. When the service (postlude, if any) is finished, pew occupants will leave starting at the front of the Sanctuary. Pick up all of your belongings, including trash and any offering you want to make, and proceed to the front door of the Sanctuary on the pulpit side. There you will be able to toss your trash into a wastebasket and place your offering/notes in an offering basket.
14. Continue toward the Foyer. Proceed down the steps or take the elevator down to the Foyer and exit the building into the parking lot. Please maintain a safe distance from others as you do this.
15. Please remember to notify the church right away if you find that you have COVID-19 so others will know to consider monitoring their health and even being tested.

**Q&A**

* Do I need a reservation? No. We don’t anticipate filling the Sanctuary beyond 25% capacity, or approximately 100 worshipers. If we are close to surpassing this amount, we will discuss a reservation system.
* Can I bring a visitor or have them meet me at FCC? Yes, please do! All the same procedures are applicable to visitors, and we will give them a small gift as they give us their name and email address or phone number (just in case we’ve had a reported infection).
* Can I wear a face shield instead of a mask, even if I have a doctor’s note? CDC guidelines advise shields are not as effective as properly-worn masks, covering mouth and nose. For now we are requiring masks and we will communicate any changes in that policy.
* Are the communion elements gluten-free? A gluten-free version is available.
* What if I need to go to the restroom? Please do so before or after the service, if possible, or please proceed from and back to the Sanctuary carefully, keeping socially-distanced.
* May I sit in the balcony? No. Unless absolutely necessary, we would like to reserve that area for the tech crew so they can focus on their work with fewer concerns about social distancing.
* What if I find that I am diagnosed with COVID-19 after I attend worship? Please call the church right away, at 309-829-9327, so we may advise all who attended the service you attended to watch for symptoms.