



May 26, 2020

Weddings and Funerals at Covenant During the Pandemic

As we make faithful decisions about how and when to reopen our campus and resume in-person events at Covenant, we remember we are called to love God and love our neighbor. Difficult decisions that may feel uncomfortable to some are rooted in the intrinsic relationship between love of God and love of neighbor.

The following plan was developed by our Re-opening Task Group of Elders appointed by the Session. In undertaking this work, they consulted with medical and infectious disease experts in the congregation. Covenant leadership has decided on a re-opening approach that may be slower and more deliberate than some will prefer, but we will carefully calibrate competing hopes while prioritizing our love of God and love of neighbor. Therefore, we expect that the rules and practices at Covenant will be more stringent than state guidelines. This will be a living document; we know it will change as we monitor public health trends for the Corona virus.

Weddings and Funerals

As we continue to care for our members during the pandemic, we recognize that weddings and funerals are sacred events that are important in the life of our parishioners. At the same time, we have a Christian and moral obligation to protect our staff and those within our midst. Therefore, to demonstrate our love of God and love of neighbor, all persons involved in planning weddings and funerals must agree to the following guidelines during the planning stages, and all attendees must adhere to these guidelines at the time of the event:

- For indoor observances, total attendance by non-church staff is limited to 25 people in the Sanctuary/Welcome Center and 10 people in the Chapel/Parlor. All gatherings will strictly observe social distancing guidelines.
- All attendees at indoor observances **must wear masks at all times**. Those who do not bring a mask will be provided one before entering the building and will be required to wear the mask while inside the church.
- Attendees will follow physical distancing rules (6' or more between household groups) while on any part of the campus.
- No group singing will occur. A soloist will be considered for the Sanctuary with a minimum of 15 feet social distancing required from all other participants.
- For outdoor events, limits on the number of attendees may be relaxed, but those present must wear masks unless they keep appropriate distance from one another.

We pray our members will understand the reasons for these guidelines and will prayerfully consider their response. The cooperation of all who would attend is of the upmost importance. For members who are more comfortable in delaying a wedding or funeral until the church can provide a different setting, we are happy to reschedule at a later time.