



Covid-19 Return Implementation Plan

May 14, 2020

Dear WMC Church family,

We are excited to begin the process of reopening up the church. We have been announcing some of the details of what to expect as we start to gather back for worship. I understand the following information is very lengthy, but I wanted to give you as many important details as I could to keep you informed and prepared for when we see you again.

Our relaunch will be Sunday, May 24. Our plan that we have developed is in compliance with the Indiana Governor's guidelines. The current phase of the plan allows groups of 25 or less to gather together. Starting on May 24, that number will increase to 100. That is when we are planning on opening up the doors.

In addition to the number of people that are allowed to gather, the Governor has encouraged people to practice the following suggested guidelines in accordance with the CDC.

1. Continue to practice social distancing when gathering together.
2. Engage in best practices of personal hygiene (washing hands, not touching your face, and sanitizing spaces before and after use.) Please note that we will not be requiring people to wear masks in the building but encourage people to use them if they feel more comfortable.
3. Encourage those who are older than 65, those who are at higher risk due to reduced immunity, and those who are sick to stay home and watch the service online. Please note that we are NOT requiring people over 65 to stay at home, just passing along the guidelines that the Governor has recommended.

We are planning 3 services for May 24. We will have our regular 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services in the Sanctuary and we will be adding a contemporary worship venue at 10:30 a.m. in the newly renovated youth space.

Please note that on June 14 the 100 number will increase to 250; then on July 4 there is hope that we can be moving back to a new normal. In the meantime, we will block off portions of the building to stay within the guidelines.

It is important to keep in mind that as we progress through the Governor's plan, we will continue to practice social distancing, sanitation and will encourage those at high risk or sick to stay at home until we are advised otherwise.

While the Governor's plan has specific timeframes and increasing numbers that can gather, there is always a possibility that the increased capacity may be delayed due to a rise in Covid-19 cases, and could possibly return to a previous phase if there were a rise in Covid-19 cases. We will continue to monitor the situation and communicate with our congregation as we progress through the plan.

Here are a few things you need to know about each of the 3 services that we will be offering on the May 24 date and beyond.

1. We will continue to provide the sermon online for those who cannot attend each Sunday either live at 9:30a.m. on our web site or ANYTIME after 10:30a.m. on Sundays recorded on our web site, Facebook or YouTube platforms.
2. In this next phase (May 24), there will be a limit of 100 people allowed to attend each service. We will be monitoring to make sure we do not exceed that number in any of our given services.
3. You will be asked to sign up online @ our website for a ticket for the service and time you desire to attend. You can also call the church office to reserve your spot each week for the service you desire to attend. The tickets are FREE and are just a tool to allow us to manage the number of people attending for your safety. **You will NOT need to print off and bring your ticket with you.** This tool is just designed to help us manage the numbers of people planning on attending the service.
4. We will have a team cleaning before each service to make sure that all surfaces are cleaned for your safety. If you would be willing to help this cleaning crew, you can contact the church office and give us your name and we will set you up to help us clean in between services.
5. There will be limited greeters at each service and they will be present solely for the purpose of giving you a friendly and welcoming hello and assist you with any questions you may have. They will NOT be shaking hands or passing out any papers to people entering the service.

6. There will be NO bulletins distributed during the services. They will continue to be available online at woodburnmc.org and sent to you through email each week.
7. There will be NO offering plates passed during the service. We are going to provide offering boxes outside the doors and in the main hallways as well as encourage people to continue to give through our online platforms. You can also mail your offering to the church.
8. There will be NO friendship time during the service. We will be practicing social distancing. In fact, when you enter the main Sanctuary, we have roped off sections of the facility for your protection and in the youth room chairs are set up with safe social distancing in mind. NOTE that couples and families will be allowed to sit closer together.
9. We will be including in each service some singing and an element to engage your children in Worship. There will be NO regular children's ministry, nursery or youth ministry programming offered separate from the main service until a later date.
10. Also note that our café will be closed until further notice. You are welcome to bring your own cup of coffee with you.

Based on the service that you attend; you will be encouraged to enter through the doors closest to the appropriate venue space. For example, if you have reserved a ticket for the main Sanctuary, you would use entrance #1 or entrance #2. If you are attending the service in the youth space, you will use entrance #4. All our entrances are marked and note that all main doors will already be open as you enter the building.

Children's Ministry. One essential area that we are thinking through carefully is our Children's Ministry. Children's Ministry thrives on a culture of trust and a reputation for safety. In the spirit of cultivating and maintaining that culture, our Kids Ministry staff is actively investigating policies, procedures, and best practices on reopening. There are a number of issues that need to be explored. How do you implement social distancing with young children? How many kids can you have in each room? Where do you get the extra room space? How do you keep things clean and sanitary? How do we take care of vulnerable volunteers and those who serve during multiple gatherings? Where do we find more volunteers to fill in until the regular volunteer team member feels confident in returning? How do we make our sickness policy clear? Who do we respond to in the likelihood that separation anxiety will be increased? We are assembling a team of leaders to wrestle through these tough issues.

At this time we do not envision Children's Ministry being fully ramped back up until we reach a level where we break the 500 barrier. Until that time

our team will continue to provide Sermon Helps for Kids for our parents to use at home to disciple their children. We will also work to find ways to connect with the kids using technology and some other small gatherings and events. Kids Ministry will also be working to come up with child and family-friendly components to add to the Sunday in-person worship experience.

Youth Ministry. WMC Youth will begin meeting together again on May 20. These first few Wednesday nights will be focused on reconnecting and building core small group relationships. In an effort to prioritize the health of our students and their families, students will only be gathering in their separate small groups, not as a whole. Normal programming elements, such as worship and teaching, will be added as we move into June. Social distancing and increased sanitation will be carefully exercised throughout this entire process. For now, there will also be no Youth programming on Sunday mornings. We will continue to communicate with students and parents as our programming develops along as we are allowed to move more toward our normal activities.

FLOCKS: Each FLOCK leader will be determining when and where their class will meet. Please contact your FLOCK leader for details.

After the worship services, we are encouraging you and your family to leave the building and not linger long, so that we can transition people coming and going and not have a pile up of people in the hallways.

We appreciate your faithful prayers for our staff and leadership as we seek to provide the safest possible worship experience for you and your family during this crisis. We also appreciate your patience as we navigate through these challenging times. I can assure you that as we launch back into reopening, that we will make some mistakes along the way. We are committed to giving the Lord and your family our very best and constantly evaluating and adjusting to meet the ongoing needs and challenges of our congregation.

Thank you for taking the time to read this plan. Feel free to call the church office (260-632-4615) if you have any questions or would like to reserve a spot in one of our services. God Bless!

Pastor Bert