

PHASE FOUR RE-ENTRY GUIDELINES
BLOOMINGTON WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
DATED: JULY 5, 2020

As of July 1, 2020, the State of Illinois has formally entered “Phase Four” of Governor Pritzker’s “Restore Illinois” and Bishop Beard’s “Coming Back to the Heart of Worship.” Phase Four allows churches and businesses to move toward a re-opening of facilities and a resumption of activities, within limits, and with careful observance of precautions proven to slow or reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Therefore, Bloomington Wesley UMC will proceed with caution, as follows (understanding that a resurgence of the virus in our area will likely mean a reversion to Phase Three, or even Phase Two, restrictions), and that these guidelines are subject to change:

PART A: INDIVIDUALS

Any use of the Wesley UMC building (at 502 E. Front Street and 413 E. Washington) will require the following precautions of all persons:

- **Face-masks** worn over mouth and nose (exceptions are granted for children under 2 and persons with qualifying health conditions). If you don’t have a mask when you arrive, a disposable mask will be provided for you at the door.
- All persons will **sign-in** upon entering the building and sign-out when leaving, including time of entry/exit and areas of the building to be used
- All persons will conduct a **temp-check** (use hand-held digital surface thermometer), answer a short-list of **health screening questions**, and record results at sign-in
- All persons will employ **hand-washing** (20 sec.) and/or **hand-sanitizer** frequently during their visits in the building, especially when making contact with high-touch surfaces.
- All persons will maintain a minimum **6-ft distance** from other persons in the building.
- Persons with **symptoms of COVID-19** or other illnesses are asked not to use the building.
- Persons who have been **exposed to COVID-19** within the past 14 days are asked not to use the building.
- Persons with **compromising conditions** (due to age, immune-deficiency, exposure to others who are ill or who may have been exposed to COVID-19) are encouraged not to use the building.
- Persons **not complying** with any of the above guidelines will be asked to leave. If you are asked to leave the building, please cooperate graciously. Our desire is to minimize potential exposure to the virus, and we are only as safe as our least compliant member.
- Please use only the **parking lot entrance** to enter, and keep a 6-ft distance between those waiting to enter at the door.

Individuals wishing to use the building during Phase Four may contact the church office (309-827-8046) in advance and arrange for a custodian to open the door and facilitate their visit.

PART B: SMALL GROUPS

Small groups (up to 20) wishing to use the building during Phase Four may do so as follows:

- **Contact the church office** in advance to secure availability of time and space desired
- **Available meeting rooms** may include the Conference Room OR Lounge (not both at once) and Garden Room.
- **Please do not serve food/drink** or use the kitchenettes at this time.
- **Please use only the room assigned to your group**, and use the restrooms nearest your meeting room. This helps limit transmission of germs, and makes it easier for the custodians to know which areas need intensive cleaning.
- Designate a **COVID-Care Group Leader** who will inform the entire group of expectations and take responsibility for the group's compliance with guidelines in Part A:
 - Masks
 - Sign-in/out
 - Temp-check and health screening questions
 - Hand-washing/sanitizing
 - Self-check for symptoms, exposure, and vulnerabilities
 - Commitment to compliance
 - Restriction to assigned areas
- The COVID-Care leader for each group will ensure that there is a member stationed at the parking lot entrance to **sign members in/out** and to ensure proper mask usage.
- Groups may be asked to **exit by a different door**, in order to avoid face-to-face contact with others entering by the parking lot door (COVID-Care group leader will sign members out). If you need to exit by the parking lot door, please be sure to avoid close contact with those entering by that door.
- COVID-Care group leader will **call to reserve room in advance** (Reservations to begin July 13) and provide an estimated meeting attendance, not to exceed 20 persons, at least through August 1.
- Small groups will only use the building during daytime and evening hours **when custodial staff are present** to facilitate and to clean and disinfect after the group leaves. At least one hour between groups will be needed to disinfect meeting rooms.
- **No children** (up to age 11) are allowed in the building during this phase.
- **No child care** will be provided for groups wanting to meet in person in the building.
- **The Church office will not be open** for these group meetings early in Phase Four. The office will open at a later date for small group needs.
- Small groups/committees should **continue to offer online options** for attendance. The Conference Room (nearest the parking lot) will be equipped for this option.

PART C: LARGER GROUPS

Provided the instance of COVID-19 remains low in McLean County and has not risen or passed the 1.0 Reinfection Rate guideline: Beginning August 1, groups up to 50 may meet in the Sanctuary or Wesley Hall, **maintaining all safety procedures listed above**, for funerals and other similar gatherings. Compliance with safety procedures will be a pre-requisite for scheduling group gatherings.

Note that larger gatherings during COVID-19 pandemic will not include the following:

- Greeting or social interactions that bring participants within 6 feet of one another
- Singing
- Wind-instrumental music
- Responsive readings
- Passing of offering plates, hymnals, booklets, etc., from hand-to-hand
- Communion

Larger groups gathering in the Sanctuary may be asked to enter and exit through the Washington Street doors, to limit transmission of germs and interactions in the hallways.

PART D: STAFF

As soon as is practical and safe, Staff members will transition back into a regular schedule. Some staff whose offices are in close proximity may begin with office hours on alternating days in order to phase in carefully. (Details will be worked out by Staff with support from SPRC). All staff will continue to be accessible personally by cell phone and email as we return (July 13) to staffing the office and answering the phone in person.

As staff return to holding regular office hours, we will observe the following safety measures:

- All safety precautions will be observed, as above
- Before returning to regular office hours all staff will test negative for COVID-19
- Staff may remove masks for work in their own office space (if private) but will need to wear masks in all common areas including bathrooms
- Staff are encouraged to wipe down surfaces with which they have come into contact using viricidal spray or wipes.
- Stress/anxiety counseling will be provided for any staff who request it (confidentiality secured)
- Staff who face immune-deficiency – their own, or a member of their immediate family – may request special accommodations

PART E: OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Outdoor activities are permitted for all Wesley groups, with the following precautions:

- Masks are required (over nose and mouth), especially when a consistent 6-ft distance cannot be guaranteed
- Shorter time periods (one hour or less) are a lower risk than longer time periods
- Persons exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, or who have been exposed to COVID-19 should refrain from participating.
- Persons at high risk are encouraged to refrain from participating.

Outdoor Worship – Worship staff is working now to consider offering outdoor worship services in July or August

PART F: SANCTUARY WORSHIP

Full-church sanctuary worship is not likely until PHASE FIVE, or until at least one of the following has been achieved:

- An effective vaccine becomes readily-available
- An effective and accessible treatment plan becomes readily-available
- The incidence of COVID-19 in McLean County drops to nearly zero and remains that way for an extended period of time.

Partial-church sanctuary worship (e.g., portions of the congregation gathering for worship) requires the following precautions (*Note: worship staff suspect these precautions will render the resulting experience unsatisfying: less satisfying, in fact, than online worship. Thus, we are not presently inclined to go through all the steps required to produce this comparatively sterile, socially-distant worship service that we imagine will disappoint.*)

- Reservations to ensure limited numbers. (Additional attenders will be turned away)
- All precautions listed above regarding entry procedures, masks, hand-washing, social distancing, etc.
- Staggered entrances to avoid crowding the entrance, sign-in table, hallways, doorways
- Traffic flow in one direction only to minimize face-to-face contact
- Pre-assigned seating to ensure social distancing
- Social interactions only from a distance (no shaking hands, hugs, etc.)
- No bulletins, hymnals, pew pads, etc.
- No Sanctuary Communion
- No singing; all music would be instrumental
- No responsive liturgies or spoken words from the pews
- No childcare provided
- No children's programming; all children to remain with their own families
- No fellowship time or lingering after the service
- Worshipers exit down the center aisle and leave by the Washington Street doors
- Offering deposited at exit (rather than being collected during the service)
- Additional services on the same day held in the Wesley Hall to avoid cross-contamination
- Thorough cleaning/disinfecting of worship spaces will be required after each use

REMINDER: This schedule can and WILL be revised, halted, or even reversed, based on COVID updates and/or non-compliance. The health and safety of Wesley's Staff and Congregation should not be compromised.