

St. John's United Church of Christ – Phased Regathering Plan COVID-19

St. John's UCC has adopted the following guidelines to reopen church operations and activities relative to the COVID-19 outbreak. Movement between phases will be guided by mandates and directives from the Governor of Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Department of Health with additional guidance from the church insurance carrier. The regathering team will recommend to Consistory when to implement movement; Consistory will vote on that implementation before movement can take place.

Phase V

Worship Services (Indoors)

- Bulletins and handouts are created. Members are encouraged to bring their own bulletins from home. Bulletins should be taken home or recycled at the end of the service.
- Hymnals have been returned to the pews to facilitate congregational singing. Bibles have also been placed in the pews. Pew pads, offering envelopes, and pencils remain unavailable.
- The Order of Worship is modified to include some congregational singing.
- We support following CDC guidelines regarding masks and social distancing and we encourage you to respect the needs of our most vulnerable members and visitors.
- We support the option of fully vaccinated people to not wear a mask.
- Pews will be marked off to designate seating.
- Alternative methods of in-person communion will be implemented (bring your own elements and/or utilize pre-packaged cups).
- Offering will be collected at the end of the service with a basket provided for such giving. Other members of the congregation are encouraged to mail in their offering or utilize forms of electronic giving such as Vanco or electronic fund transfers (EFTs).
- Personal touch rituals will not be part of the worship service.
- In-person fellowship and Coffee hour will become available before and after services or events. It is preferable to serve pre-packaged (individualized serving/bagged) snacks. Virtual fellowship gatherings will be offered on Zoom for those attending worship via livestream.
- Staffed nursery and toddler care are not available. Children are welcome to use the "Nursery Nook in the Narthex" in the back of the sanctuary, with supervision by parents.
- Children's Time will be modified as needed by the Director of Children and Youth.
- Masks and hand sanitizer are available. Greeters will point these out to those attending services.
- Instead of ushers, we will utilize these people as greeters. Greeters will open doors for people to minimize common surfaces being touched. Greeters will pick up any items left in the pews after the service.
- Windows will be opened in the Sanctuary to increase air circulation and ventilation.
- Worship services will continue to be offered electronically via livestream broadcast on YouTube. A Livestream link is located on our church website.
- We encourage social distancing and masks are optional for outdoor worship.

Small Group Activities

- Choral opportunities such as Senior Choir, Praise Team, and Amistad are available. All fully vaccinated participants are permitted to remove their masks/shields during rehearsals and performances.
- Bell choirs are available to resume at the discretion of their respective directors.
- Church school classes will be offered in person at the discretion of the facilitator.
- Alternative virtual church school classes may also be offered.
- Youth activities will resume at the discretion of the Director of Children and Youth. The format of the activities/gatherings will be determined by health and safety.
- Food events are permitted, with care and social distancing.
- In-person ministry meetings and committees are allowed.
- Mission/Outreach events are permitted. Participation in these events should be determined based on the health and safety of those attending.
- Small worship, educational, and social gatherings are permitted.
- In-Person Guidelines must continue to be followed.

Building Access

- The Office is open to the public.
- Anyone using the building during office hours must sign in at the church office.
- Rooms are available for use. Anyone using the building must follow the In-Person Guidelines.

Church Rentals

- Church spaces are available for rental purposes following In-Person Guidelines.
- Organizations renting or using space inside the church building are permitted to meet.

Nursery School

- The Nursery School will follow the schedule and guidelines from the CASD.
- The Nursery School Ministry will make additional decisions about the operations of SJNS.

In-Person Guidelines

- Organizers of in-person meetings must coordinate building access through the church office.
- Rooms must be reserved through the church office.
- Event organizers are required to maintain an attendance list and share it with the church office.
- When in-person gatherings take place the following guidelines must be followed.
 - Sanitize hands before and after entering the room
 - Sanitize the tables and chairs after use
 - We support following CDC guidelines regarding masks and social distancing and we encourage you to respect the needs of our most vulnerable members and visitors.
 - We support the option of fully vaccinated people to not wear a mask.
 - Offer an alternative attendance option for any ministry member not comfortable attending in person (Zoom, phone, etc.)