

Delran United Methodist Church Plan for Reopening & Recovery from COVID-19 (INDOORS)

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I. Our Identity: We are a welcoming church who is loving God, serving others, touching lives with the love of Jesus Christ through fellowship and service.

II. Our Goal: Spread the good news of Jesus Christ as together we flatten COVID-19 and to the best of our ability avoid spreading infection by United Methodist activity. Our goal is to keep everyone in our congregation and greater community safe, protecting the wellbeing not just of ourselves but of our neighbors. To that end we abide by guidelines from the state of New Jersey, the CDC and the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

When making decisions about what ministries to do and how to do them, we choose to ask: will this help to spread the good news of Jesus Christ and help us to be a witness in the world WHILE ensuring that the COVID-19 curve flatten further and avoid the spread of COVID-19?

III. Core Values in Reopening & Recovery:

1. Guarding Safety & Wellbeing (both real & perceived)
2. Creating Life-Giving Faith Community
3. Serving the Vulnerable
4. Remaining Flexible & Resilient

IV. Eight Essential Health and Safety Areas to Address in Reopening (from annual conference + CDC)

1. **Gathering Size:** Setting and ensuring capacity limits based on state requirements
2. **Social Distance:** Maintaining 6 feet between each person: See CDC Guidelines
3. **Human Contact:** Preventing people from touching objects and people: See CDC Guidelines
4. **Cleaning:** Cleaning surfaces and all common areas: See CDC Guidelines.
5. **Vulnerable People:** Taking extra precautions with older people, people with asthma, liver disease, hypertension, health conditions and disabilities: See CDC Guidelines
6. **Protection:** Use of masks for all and hand sanitizers for all, and gloves for those who clean: See CDC Guidelines
7. **Signage and Teams:** Greeting and guiding people to ensure safety and social distancing
8. **Communication:** Communicating and providing continual updates for your plan

V. Governmental Guidance

As of December 7, 2020, the state of New Jersey ([link to state guidance](#)) allows for indoor worship gatherings that are limited to either 150 people or 25% of a room's capacity, whichever number is lower. There are no limits on outdoor worship gatherings. **Masks and distancing (six feet) are required at both. No contact is allowed.**

Indoors Reopening Plan

What to Consider Before Attending the Indoor Worship Service In-Person

1. In-person services are at 10:00 AM and are livestreamed on Facebook Live and on our website.
2. Those who have flu or COVID-19 symptoms, have been exposed to those who are ill, who are high risk or live with those who are high risk are expected to stay home.
3. All potential attendees are required to follow local and state guidelines.
4. Those who have traveled out of NJ, meet the conditions listed in the state's travel advisory, have hosted guests outside of your immediate household, or are otherwise under quarantine should not attend in-person services for two weeks.
5. Those planning to attend in-person services will be asked to register online each week by the Friday morning before Sunday service (like an advance check-in). This will help with contact tracing should it be needed.
 - a. Total capacity in the Sanctuary will be limited to 40 people, counting both children and adults.
 - b. The church will take photographs of each service to note attendees and seating arrangements.
6. Attendees will be expected to bring their own masks. Children under two years old will not be required to wear masks.

Attending the Indoor Worship Service In-Person

1. If you plan to attend the indoor worship service in person, please register online by Friday each week.
2. As an in-person attendee you commit to:
 - a. Wear masks the entire time you are in the church building.
 - b. Maintain social distancing (minimum six feet).
 - c. Refrain from human contact (hugs, handshakes).
 - d. Sit where specified by ushers or by markings. Those who live together may sit together, but no one should sit directly behind or in front of an individual who does not live with them.
 - e. Use hand sanitizer upon entering and exiting the building.
 - f. Follow all signs as posted in the church building and grounds.
3. Windows and doors will remain open as long as weather permits for increased ventilation.
4. Greeters/Ushers will
 - a. Wear facemasks,
 - b. Do temperature checks for each person upon entry,
 - c. Make sure door handles and surfaces are wiped down
 - d. Ensure that all expectations are followed by those attending in person services.
5. Use of microphones, the computer, livestreaming equipment will be restricted to assigned individuals.
6. Participation in congregational singing is optional, but please sing softly if you do sing. All are required to wear masks.
7. A children's message will be given, but children will remain seated with their parents.
8. Please place your offerings in the offering box, which will be located in the back of the sanctuary.
9. Pre-packaged communion cups/wafers will be placed in seats before the service starts to be used during Communion.

10. Everyone who uses the restrooms is expected to wash their hands upon entering and exiting the restroom.
11. At the end of the worship services, please maintain social distance as you leave and do not congregate indoors.
12. If you develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19, please notify the church office or tell Pastor Sam immediately so we can inform others.
13. The Trustees will make sure that the Sanctuary, restrooms, and all other appropriate spaces and equipment used by the congregation gathering for in-person worship service are clean/sanitized before (could be the day before) and right after the worship service.

Nursery, Children and Youth

1. The nursery is available during services.
2. There will be a Sunday children's message, but children will remain seated with their families.
3. Children's ministry time (Sunday School) is available during services.
4. Youth will continue to meet online for the time being.

Meetings (Small Groups, Ministry Teams, Committees, and Other Gatherings)

1. Small groups and Bible studies will continue to meet online for the time being.
2. Committees and ministry teams who need to meet in person for their activities are to use either Sonshine Hall or the Sanctuary for their meeting, following these guidelines:
 - a. Meeting times will be restricted to one hour.
 - b. If you have any symptoms of illness, are high risk or live with high risk individuals, please meet online.
 - c. Great care must be taken so that all participants wear masks and maintain social distancing, and remain vigilant to do so throughout the pandemic.
 - d. Leaders must also take great care to balance participation by those who wish to meet in person and those who need to or prefer to be online.
 - e. Eating and sharing food is strongly discouraged.
 - f. All other rooms in the church facility, including the Parlor, are not available for meeting use due to their smaller size.
3. Other general fellowship gatherings will be online until further notice.
4. Whenever possible, rooms must be ventilated while people are meeting.
5. All groups are expected to clean/sanitize areas and equipment they use both before and after their meeting.

Church Office / Other Space Use

1. Church office use is restricted to staff and predetermined individuals (Finance, Trustees, etc). The office computer is for staff only.
2. Masks are required for all staff working in church spaces. The church will make hand sanitizer available for all staff to use.
3. The counting room will be open for use by counters designated by the Finance committee.
4. Other space use in the building will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Pastor and Trustees.

Shalom Church's Use of the Church Facility and Grounds

1. Shalom Pentecostal Church will use Sonshine Hall (maximum of 35 people) for weekly Sunday evening worship services for the time being, beginning Sunday, October 4.
2. Shalom will abide by all expectations mentioned above for worship services as applicable to Sonshine Hall (with the exception of pre-registration).
3. Shalom will follow all state and Delran UMC guidelines, including cleaning guidelines.
4. Shalom will thoroughly clean the surfaces and spaces they have used after their evening services.

Use of Church Facility and Grounds by Other Outside Groups

1. Other groups will be considered on a case by case basis by the pastor and Trustees.
2. If an outside group is permitted to use the church building and/or grounds, the group will be expected to abide by church and state guidelines.

If You Show Symptoms or Test Positive for COVID-19

1. Any congregation member who contracts COVID-19 is asked to report it to the church office and pastor for care, prayer, and contact tracing for our church gatherings.
2. As soon as possible, the church office will notify, at a minimum, all individuals who have attended a particular gathering or gatherings where an infected individual was present. The church office will also notify all outside groups who have used the church facilities.
3. All who have attended said gathering(s) are strongly encouraged to get tested for coronavirus as soon as possible, and respond to a positive diagnosis by doing due diligence in notifying others with whom they have been in contact so that they too may get tested.
4. All individuals who are showing symptoms or have tested positive will be expected to quarantine and not be present in-person for services or church activities until cleared by a physician.
5. All outside groups who use church facilities will be expected to report infection in their group to Delran UMC.
6. Depending on the circumstances of the gathering where the infected individual was present, the trustees will respond with extra cleaning and disinfection as needed.
7. Depending on the circumstances of the gathering where the infected individual was present, the Virus Response Team will determine when and how church gatherings will continue to meet in person.
8. Attendance (and contact information for guests) will be taken at all gatherings to facilitate reporting and contact tracing in the case of someone contracting COVID-19.

Ongoing Evaluation

1. The Virus Response Team (moving forward to be renamed the Church Health & Safety Team) will meet as needed for ongoing evaluation of our reopening plan.

Next Steps

1. Communicate this indoor reopening plan to the congregation and to Shalom.
2. Hold a prayer meeting indoors on Saturday, October 10 at 10:00 AM for church council members and spouses to pray and prepare for indoor services.
3. Hold the last outdoor service on Sunday, October 11 (weather permitting), and the first indoor service on Sunday, October 18.
4. Sunday services before October 18 can move indoors in the case of inclement weather.
5. The virus response team will evaluate the first indoor service on the evening of Sunday, October 18.

*Please note: due to the nature of the coronavirus, the worship experience for now, especially the indoor services, may shift and change as the response team determines (e.g. services may or may not include congregational singing, prohibit handshakes/hugs during passing of the peace, have differences in the way Communion served, limit children coming forward, etc., to ensure proper distancing and lower chances of infection.)

6. Followup by ministry teams:
 - The Board of Trustees will:
 - a. Set capacity limits and mark distancing in accordance with CDC guidelines in the Sanctuary, Sonshine Hall, and relevant hallways.
 - b. Make sure cleaning can take place in between Delran UMC's Sunday Morning Service and Shalom's Sunday Evening Service.
 - c. Order supplies, signage and determine appropriate protocol needed to:
 - a. Disinfect surfaces and clean all common areas before every gathering,
 - b. Have sufficient extra masks, sanitizer and antibacterial wipes available,
 - c. Take temperature upon entry,
 - d. Provide protection for those who are cleaning,
 - e. Other physical safety measures as deemed necessary by the response team in accordance with CDC guidelines.
 - A livestreaming preparation team will plan, execute and train others in setting up and maintaining a quality livestreaming worship service.
 - A "tough love" team will lovingly address those who are not adhering to guidelines.
 - Other ministry teams as determined by the response team.
7. Given the continuously changing nature of the circumstances involving this virus, the church's Virus Response Team (Health & Safety Team) will make changes as needed to the reopening plan and to carry them out accordingly.