

Worship plans

The Executive Committee met on June 16 and approved a plan to reopen for public worship on Sunday, July 19. In making our plans, we consulted information from the Centers for Disease Control, Governor Ralph Northam's office, the Church of the Brethren, and some medical professionals we know.

The plan described here is our plan for the foreseeable future. While we will likely make some minor adjustments along the way, there are currently no plans to reopen for worship indoors. Those conversations will happen at a later time.

Each member of the congregation needs to make the decision on how to participate that best reflects their spiritual and medical needs.

Worship plans

Beginning Sunday, July 19, we will offer a hybrid outdoor/online worship experience, with prelude music beginning at 9:45 a.m. and the welcome and announcements at 10:00 a.m. Our outdoor sanctuary is the green space between the prayer garden and the playground.

While this area is not completely handicapped accessible, we do have a sidewalk which extends almost to our outdoor worship space, and the space is accessible by car.

In case of rain, onsite worship will be cancelled and worship will be online only.

What can you expect/how should you prepare?

- Dress casually.
- Bring a lawn chair or blanket and bug spray.
- Maintain physical distancing of at least six feet. Family units may sit together.
- Face coverings are expected, unless you have a medical condition that makes wearing a mask impossible.
- The playground will be closed.
- The building will be open, but we encourage people to remain outside.
- We will provide a basket for offering; hand sanitizer; and bulletins (which you can also download those to your phone)
- On July 19 we will also have communion. This has been prepackaged with the juice in a plastic condiment cup and the bread in a plastic bag.

About masks

The church policy for onsite events is that masks are expected, unless you have a medical condition that makes that impossible. This includes worship and any Sunday School classes that want to meet.

In discussing the potentially controversial nature of masks, we feel that Scripture should guide our thinking. In 1 Corinthians 13:5 (part of the famous "love chapter") Paul reminds us that "love does not insist on its own way." In Philippians 2:4, Paul encourages us to model our lives after Jesus, saying, "Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others." Our understanding in these times is that wearing a mask is one way we honor Jesus—by putting the needs of others ahead of our own wishes and preferences.