

Church Reopening Team Report to Church Council – April 7, 2021

I. IN-PERSON/IN-BUILDING WORSHIP

- The Reopening Team recommends conducting the first in person, in sanctuary, worship experience on May 2, 2021 at 11am.
- The Team will continue to monitor percent positive rates – specifically the 7-day average. Should positivity rates in Richland and/or Lexington County exceed the 5-8% moderate level or if there is a named surge in the number of new cases, the team will recommend to Church Council that the date be pushed back.
- It was agreed upon by the Team that we should strongly encourage preregistration. Preregistrations have declined since the inception of the outside services for several reasons. We may need a strong communications component around that messaging. Patricia will work with Jane to begin crafting communication.
- The SC UMC Conference on March 29th released updated protocols for local churches - <https://www.umcsc.org/bestpractices/>. As we approach the May reopening dates, we will review the protocols published last summer and see where changes may be needed. For example, protocols for use of restrooms should be updated. Patterns for entry and exit should also be reviewed; the sanctuary doors have been returned, but the chapel doors have recently been removed.
- We recommend that the outdoor in-person worship experiences be continued, the live streaming of the indoor service be resumed, and that the virtual worship services are provided for those who cannot attend in-person worship services. As WSUMC transitions into indoor in-person worship, it will be important for ongoing communication amongst the Senior Pastor, the Faith Formation Coordinator, the Worship Coordination Team, the Lay Leader, and Church Council Chair to discuss what worship offerings are available post-pandemic.

II. IN-PERSON/IN-BUILDING SUNDAY SCHOOL

- The Reopening Team recommends hosting in-person Sunday School classes beginning on May 16, 2021, pending the success of the worship services on the 2nd and 9th, and based on positivity levels equal to or less than 5-8%.

- In talking with K-6th Sunday School teachers, we found that the teachers were excited about the mid-May Sunday school start and were more than willing to participate.
- Discussions with adult Sunday school class leaders revealed that there was a general interest ranging from definite interest in meeting in person (Joy) to interest in a hybrid offering – in person, but with remote capability (Open Door, Grace). The Team will continue to work with Robbie/Jerry to determine max occupancy for rooms. Larger rooms in the church (Threatt Hall, Chapel, etc.) could be used to host some classes if needed.
- Omnidirectional microphones (6) have been purchased and can be used by Sunday School classes in a hybrid offering.
- Basic needs for Sunday School classes that would meet in person but offer remote attendance capability include the following:
 - Need for a Zoom account (or other meeting account) per class.
 - Stable internet and bandwidth at the church to support this.
 - At least 1 laptop, tablet and/or smartphone per room with Zoom loaded.
 - A method/device to project the Zoom screen normally seen on your phone/tablet/laptop onto the TV in each classroom.

Report submitted,

Ricky Rowe