



First Presbyterian Church

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Greetings members and friends of the First Presbyterian Church of Brockport,

We are excited to announce that our church will tentatively reopen for inside worship on Sunday, September 13, 2020.

We as the session of the First Presbyterian Church would like to inform you of our response and guidelines for reopening our worship space with regards to the Covid-19 pandemic. After consulting with multiple resources our session met on June 16 to discuss what procedures to follow during this peculiar situation. We have gathered information from NYS, the CDC, Monroe County Health Department, Presbytery of Genesee Valley, local congregations in our area, and other various sources to make the most informed decisions about reopening. While we are anxious to reopen our building, we would like to do so in the safest and most hospitable way that ensures as healthy of an environment for our members and guests as possible.

Please read over these guidelines and contact either Pastor Nick, the Office, or the Clerk of Session Diana, Kruger, if you have further concerns, questions, or suggestions. Also please let us know if you would be willing to attend in person worship if all of these guidelines were followed so that we can have an idea of how many people are comfortable returning to worship. Ultimately the decision is on each of us whether we feel comfortable enough to return to in person meetings. We will continue to have the option for online worship for those who are not comfortable even after we start in person gatherings of worship in our sanctuary.

Guidelines for Resuming in-person Worship:

-the **front and handicap entrances** are the only entrances available with each entrance having hand **sanitizing stations present immediately after entering the building**

-an usher will **greet** you at each entrance and record your name, take/record your temperature and ask if you have any symptoms. If your temperature registers 100 or higher or you answer yes, (CDC recommended guideline for safety) you will be asked not to enter the building. If anyone has symptoms following any service or meeting, Pastor Nick must be contacted. (This will ensure proper contact tracing should it be needed)

- there will be no **Lay Readers**.

- all **prayer requests, joys, concerns, etc.** will need to be submitted to the office by 12 noon on the Wednesday before the Sunday you would like them included. Please feel free to e mail or call the office. Requests received after will be included in the following week.

-all attendees are **required to wear a face mask** (Ushers will have face masks available if you need one) as they enter the building and until they find their seats at which point it may be removed until the end of service when the mask should be put back on. NOTE: we will have a limited number available for those who may forget or are visitors and might not know our guidelines. (If you need assistance in having a cloth mask made please contact the office.)

-all attendees must **sanitize their hands** after entering the building and limit contact with others as well as surfaces throughout the building. This will enable us to better disinfect and safeguard against spread of disease on surfaces.

-Single person **bathrooms** in the building will remain open for your use, you must wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before returning to the sanctuary. Handwashing has been proven to be more effective at preventing spread of viruses and diseases than simply using an alcohol-based sanitizer.

-ushers/greeters will still provide **hospitality and bulletins** but will maintain the 6-foot social distancing protocols. This means there will be gestures of welcome rather than handshaking at the entrances.

- all **pew cushions** have been removed, you are welcome to bring your own.

- **services** will continue to be no more than 45 minutes as we have become accustom to during YouTube services.

-**Nursery and Pray Ground** areas will be closed until further notice. An exception is made for parents who need to change diapers or quiet a child during service.

-as you **enter the sanctuary** you are encouraged to find a seat with your family unit. We will be roping off sections of the pews to ensure social distancing protocol of at least 6 ft separation between each family unit. Some areas will be designated for families and some will be designated for single people as well. We will do our best to try and accommodate everyone's preferences and ushers will assist you in finding a spot if your usual spot has been modified. Our main worshiping area (apart from the balcony) can accommodate 38 attendees. The balcony can accommodate an additional 6 family units of not more than 4 in each family.

-The **screen and projector** will display the bulletin, scripture, and hymns if you are uncomfortable with handling either a bulletin or bibles/hymnals. If you prefer to have materials in your hand: hymnals and bibles will be available for you to take at your own discretion from a cart before you enter the sanctuary. When service is over please take hymnals and bibles that you have used and return them to the carts as you exit the building. This way we can rotate out which books are used on a week to week basis and allow for adequate rest time between uses (with two carts of books this will mean 14 days rest between uses). Please feel free to bring your own bible.

-**communion** is still being discussed by Session about best practices moving forward. We will keep you updated on what those procedures will be.

-**Offering plates** will not be passed during service, and instead you are invited to place your offering in the collection plates located one in front and one in back of the Sanctuary (one near the piano closest to the door leading out by the office, and one near the center door closest to state street), greeting time and passing of the peace will be modified to gesture appropriately and without physical contact all while maintaining social distancing.

-for the time being **hymns** will not be sung inside of the sanctuary, unless you wear your face covering, except by the few individuals leading music. An exception is made for outdoor services where the spread of aerosols is less of a concern. You may hum along with a tune, or you may reflectively listen to the hymns as they are led by the musicians.

-When **service concludes** you are again required to don your mask. Please remain seated until an usher dismisses your pew. Please return any hymnals or bibles to the cart from which you took them. We ask you do not linger with other members inside the building. If you desire further conversation with others, please do so outside. You are welcome to use the facilities or hand sanitizing stations as you leave.

-there will be **no coffee hour** until further notice, and as such the Assembly room will be closed for usage. This will also ensure foot traffic does not cause unnecessary contact and possible transmission. (an exception is made for handicap individuals who need to use the elevator and cross through the Assembly room to the handicap bathroom)

-appropriate **signage and reminders** will be posted throughout the building, and disinfecting of our worship space will happen according to CDC procedures following each usage of the building.

-all **outside groups** have been notified of cleaning procedures and social distancing protocol and will abide by these guidelines as they use the building. Cleaning supplies will be made available for outside groups, and in addition our custodian will be cleaning surfaces after each meeting as well. (the same goes for any church related meetings)

As a session we have decided that two opportunities for **outdoor services** are planned. One service will be on the lawn of our church on July 19 at 10 am. You are encouraged to bring your own seating, and to sit at least 6 ft apart so that you may remove your masks and participate in worship. We will have everything provided for you, so you do not need to interact with books or other materials.

The second opportunity is our **Hymns and Hots** event which again this year will combine worship with fellowship. We will meet at Hamlin Beach State Park on Sunday, August 23, in Area 4 at shelter 5 as we did last year at 11 am. We will have a brief worship time followed by lunch. You are encouraged to bring a dish to pass but know that only a few individuals will be serving the meal to us. This is NOT a buffet style meal this year as we want to ensure safety and limited surface spread. Please bring your own table service, and at the time we start serving you will come forward receive the foods you ask for and return to your seats. Those serving the food will have gloves and masks on to ensure safety.

We look forward to your responses and at this point we don't foresee resuming in person gatherings in our sanctuary until September, but as the Phased reopening happens and as further protocols are made available we will look to adapt this accordingly. We are eager to worship with all of you and want to do so in the safest way possible. Please use your best judgment as you make decisions on these two outdoor opportunities and when we resume in person gatherings at the sanctuary and remember to let Pastor Nick or the office know if you are comfortable returning with the guideline outlined above.