

Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church

Worship Reopening Guidelines from Congregational Health Task Force

Effective August 19, 2020

The Congregational Health Task Force has met to discuss the reopening of the church as various restrictions put in place during the COVID 19 pandemic are gradually lifted. The task force agrees that the protection of the most vulnerable is of the utmost priority and that attempts to reopen too soon and without proper and strict protocols will endanger lives. As the virus continues to be mitigated, these guidelines are the recommendation for Woods Church as we move forward toward gathering again in person to worship. These guidelines and requirements are consistent with county, state, federal and expert advice. These guidelines are subject to change based on the needs of the church and COVID-19 conditions.

Stage 1

- Woods will hold virtual worship services recorded and/or livestreamed
- Indoor recording and/or livestream will be limited to no more than 10 worship leaders while maintaining at least six feet of social distance.
- Outdoor recording and/or livestream will be limited to 25 worship leaders with six feet of social distance.
- Small groups and special event services, such as weddings, funerals, and baptisms, are encouraged to take place outdoors; however, groups of 25 or fewer will follow the *COVID-19 Safety Guidelines for Small Group Gatherings*.

Stage 2

- When a sustained seven-day average COVID positivity rate for Anne Arundel County is less than 3%, with a one-week average of declining hospital rates as compared to the prior week, outdoor worship services at Woods may be held.
- Woods will continue to hold virtual Sunday worship services.
- Outdoor worship services may begin:
 - Seating will be in family groups with at least six feet of distance between groups.
 - Masks will be required. Masks will be available if needed.
 - Ushers will ensure distancing.
 - There will be no congregational singing.
 - No bulletins or handouts distributed.
 - No hymnals.
 - No passing of offering plates.
 - No handshaking, passing of the peace or other touching.
 - No up-close children's moment.

Version:

1 - Session approval July 15, 2020

2 - Session approval August 19, 2020

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- No passing of friendship pads.
- Ushers will direct the flow of traffic for exiting the service
- Worshippers will be asked to provide their own Communion elements
- Online giving will be encouraged for offerings
- Woods will encourage worshipers at high risk of complications for COVID-19 to continue to worship virtually.

Stage 3

- When the Session approves that it is safe to do so, indoor worship services may be held.
- Woods will offer a hybrid Sunday service (both live and streamed) from the sanctuary.
 - Indoor seating will be limited to 25% capacity. Ushers will direct seating. Overflow rooms will be made available if possible.
 - Masks will be required. Ushers will instruct worshipers on the use of hand sanitizer insure social distancing and supply masks if necessary.
 - No congregational singing
 - No bulletins or handouts.
 - No hymnals.
 - No passing of offering plates.
 - No handshaking, passing of the peace or other touching.
 - No passing of friendship pads.
 - No up-close children's moment.
 - Ushers will direct the flow of traffic for exiting the service
 - Worshippers will be asked to provide their own Communion elements
 - Offering boxes will be provided and online giving will be encouraged for Offerings
 - Woods will encourage worshipers at high risk of complications for COVID-19 to continue to worship virtually.

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