

February 22, 2021  
Revised Version

Dear Mentor UMC members and friends,

Thank you for your on-going prayers, and continued support of our church's ministry during the COVID-19 pandemic. It has been a difficult season for all of us.

As we begin to relaunch the ministries within our facility we have developed the following document to guide us. Our staff, and Administrative Council have engaged in conversation. We have been in consultation with others to develop strategy that will help us safely open our facility. I ask that you dedicate time to read all of the guidelines to avoid confusion. Please consider:

- This is a proposed roadmap. It is based on the best information available at this time. Since the COVID-19 pandemic is a fluid situation, there may need to be adjustments as we move forward. Please be prepared for those changes, up to and including the potential for *another* building closure if necessary.
- We will ask all persons to follow the guidelines when they enter our building. We recognize that people are at various levels of comfort. We will expect all persons to comply with the guidelines so that all will feel safe and welcomed. This will enable us to remain focused on our mission to help lead all onto a path of Christ-centered discipleship. Be assured, countless hours, conversations, research, and prayer have happened to develop a plan in the best interest of our Mentor UMC family.
- Returning to our facility will require sacrifice. Things will not be as they were. In order to reopen our doors, we will all be asked to embrace a new way of doing things. Thank you for your willingness to embrace the guidelines with grace and understanding. Your sacrifice, acceptance, and patience will impact all.
- We care about you, and encourage you to stay home if you are uncomfortable returning to our facility at this time. Although we are working hard to comply with all recommendations, we cannot eliminate every risk factor.

The COVID-19 crisis has pushed us into a new reality. Yet the ministry of our church has continued. We look forward to gathering together in the same space! However, it is vital that we balance our need to gather with our need to care for one another in a safe manner. Ultimately, the most important thing is that we continue to grow in Christ and offer Christ to our community and world.

Determining the best path forward for our building usage is constantly before me. I love you, and care deeply about your health. I believe as we seek Christ together, and sacrifice for one another, many will recognize God at work among us. May it be so.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Sondra Snode

**Mentor United Methodist Church**  
**Building Reopen Strategy**

- I. Those considered to be “at risk” are encouraged to continue to stay home and worship on-line. This includes the elderly, those with compromised health, anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms or a temperature  $\geq 100.4$ .  
IF YOU ARE ILL – STAY HOME AND WORSHIP ON-LINE  
IF YOU ARE AT RISK OF ILLNESS – PLEASE WORSHIP ON-LINE
- II. Initially, there will be 2 worship services offered in-house:  
Sunday: 9 a.m. Modern Worship in Fellowship Hall  
11 a.m. Traditional Worship in Sanctuary  
On-line worship will continue to be streamed at 9 and 11 on our church website, YouTube channel, and Facebook page. The service will then be posted on each venue for viewing at other times.
- III. Persons are asked to register for in-person services through “Sign-up Genius” on our website: [www.mentorumc.org](http://www.mentorumc.org); through our church app; or by calling the church office: 440-255-3496
- IV. Capacity in each worship space will be monitored. If capacity is reached, persons will be asked to move to a different space.
- V. While in the building, everyone ages 4 or older must wear a mask that covers the nose and mouth. Those who do not have a mask will be provided one. Those unable to wear a mask are considered “at risk” themselves and to other worshipers. “At risk” persons are asked to continue to worship on-line.
- VI. Congregants are asked to maintain a minimum of 6 feet from others at all times – when entering the building and worship space, as well as when exiting the building, and in the parking lot. Seating in our services will be configured with social distance in mind. (Family members are considered a group, and will sit together.)
- VII. Traffic flow in hallways, as well as for entering and exiting worship spaces will be clearly marked.

- VIII. Congregants will be asked to refrain from shaking hands, sharing the peace, and from interacting in ways that alter proper social distancing.
- IX. There will be no congregational singing until it is safe to do so.
- X. There will be no fellowship hour until further notice.
- XI. There will be no childcare or children or youth classes offered in-house until further notice. On-line connections will continue. Families are welcome to worship together in the services.
- XII. Offering Boxes will be available at each exit for envelopes and prayer cards.
- XIII. Dismissal after worship services will occur row by row, following the designated traffic patterns established within the building.
- XIV. Bathroom usage will be limited to one person at a time (children and a parent will be considered one unit and remain together)

#### Communion

The elements will be individually prepared and distributed  
On-line “blessing of the elements” will continue for a short time  
Drive-thru communion will periodically be offered

#### *Groups are allowed to schedule a gathering at the church facility*

- All gatherings must be approved by the church office
- Participants must practice social distancing of at least 6 feet
- Only the space reserved is to be used
- The meeting room cannot be rearranged
- All participants must wear a mask
- The group leader will wipe down used surfaces at end of gathering:  
tables, door handles, light switches, and flip the sign on the door to  
indicate the space has been used
- All areas will be disinfected by staff in between usages