

## **PROTOCOLS FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP AT WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH DURING COVID-19**

Westminster endorses all CDC, state and local government recommendations for individuals at high risk for COVID-19. Church members are strongly encouraged to take these guidelines into consideration and to exercise caution when deciding to attend in-person worship at Westminster. While Westminster cannot guarantee that all will be perfectly safe from a medical standpoint, all reasonable efforts will be made to provide a safe worship environment.

### **Timeline**

Westminster will offer an in-person worship service on Sunday, September 20, 2020, beginning at 8:30 a.m. Attendance will be limited to sixty-three (63) individuals, based upon spacing that is unique to the Sanctuary.

### **Registration for attending the worship service**

The church will post online or send by email a notification to the congregation that members may sign up to attend the service and how to do that. Attendance will be determined on a first-come, first-served basis. Also, each person registering to attend the service will be asked to answer a list of CDC questions pertaining to their current COVID-19 status. Each member will be asked to verify on entering the church the day of the service that the answers to these COVID questions remain the same, that is, "No" as the answer to all the questions.

### **Arriving for Worship**

Members may park in the lot of their choice or use on-street parking. Do not use the parking lot on the north end of the building, unless the other parking spaces are taken. Put your mask on as soon as you leave your car. Ushers will be available to direct them to the appropriate entrances to the church. Everyone entering the church building must have a mask on! If you are unable to wear a mask, the church asks that you not attend in-person services.

Members will only enter the church building through the east and west side doors into the Narthex. The center double front doors opening to the Narthex will be locked, as will the doors leading into the Parlor from the Columbarium. All other doors on the Wilson or North sides of the building will also be locked. Both Narthex doors allow ADA access. However, if necessary, those requiring ADA assistance may enter the church through the Mayfair doors and use the elevator. Please let the church office know if this accommodation is required, so that a volunteer will be present at the Mayfair doors to help. Ushers will ensure that social distancing is maintained for those waiting to enter the building.

### **On-site registration**

Each member will find a check-in table, immediately inside the door to the Narthex. They will be checked in (for attendance and contact tracing purposes) by the volunteer at the table and asked to confirm that their answers to the CDC COVID questions continue to remain "No" in all cases. A touchless temperature check will be taken. Hand sanitizer, gloves and extra masks will be available at the table.

An offering plate will be placed near or on the registration table for members to leave their tithes and offerings before entering the Sanctuary.

No child care will be available for this service.

## **Entering the Sanctuary**

In accordance with COVID-19 recommendations, all hymnals, Bibles and other printed materials have been removed from the Sanctuary. The pew cushions have also been moved out. If a member has any difficulty sitting on a hard surface for a period of time, that individual should bring a cushion or pillow to be used in the pew. Do not offer to share the cushion with anyone else.

**All members attending the worship service should be seated in the Sanctuary no later than ten (10) minutes prior to the start of the service!**

Members, escorted by an usher, will enter the Sanctuary using the side aisles. The Sanctuary will be filled from the front to the rear of the space. Pews that are not available for seating will be roped off. Members will be asked to move to the seating that is closest to the center aisle. If others are later seated on the same pew, they will not have to move past those already seated. The ushers will remind the members to wear their masks throughout the service.

Once seated, members must remain in their assigned pews and not move around the Sanctuary in order to speak to other worshippers.

## **During the worship service**

Bulletins for the service will be available in the pews.

Handshakes, hugs or other means of touching/greeting are now replaced with waves, nods of the head or "smiling with your eyes." This is particularly applicable to "Passing the peace."

All Bibles, hymnals and other literature have been removed from the pews. However, a member may bring their own personal Bible to use during the service.

When Communion is served during a worship service, a pre-packaged set, which includes the bread and the cup, will be given to each individual as they are seated by the usher. When finished, please place the empty cups in the wooden holder on the back of the pew in front of you.

The water fountains at the church are closed. If members think that drinking water will be needed during the service, they should bring bottled water with them.

Anyone needing to leave the Sanctuary in order to use the restroom must return to the Narthex, again using the side aisles. An usher will escort the member out the west door of the Narthex and into the Parlor. The usher will remain outside the restroom to ensure that a six-foot distance is maintained, should another member arrive, wishing to use the restroom. A sexton will be present also to disinfect the area, prior to use by another individual.

## **Leaving the Sanctuary after worship**

Members should leave their used bulletins in the pews.

Following the Benediction, the ushers will dismiss the congregation by rows, beginning at the back of the Sanctuary and progressing to the front. Members should not leave their pews or stop in the aisles to speak to anyone, as they are leaving the Sanctuary. When leaving, members must maintain the six-foot social distancing requirement, even after they are outside the building.

Members will exit through the same side door that was used on entrance and move toward their parked cars. Any interactions between/among members outside the church building should involve the wearing of masks and proper social distancing.