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# UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AT SHRUB OAK

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Church Re-opening  
Guidelines

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July 2020

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# **CLEANING PROTOCOL**

## **Inventory of essential supplies:**

- Cleaning supplies
- Masks
- Hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol)
- Soap
- Toilet Paper
- Tissues
- No-touch trash cans
- Gloves
- Spray Disinfectant

**Cleaning Team:** Our Sexton will be the point person for cleaning church and sanctuary. Tony will wear appropriate PPE as needed.

- After the March 15<sup>th</sup> lockdown, our church carpeting and rugs have been deep cleaned with professional equipment. All floors have also been stripped and waxed. Rooms have been painted and nursery room toys have been wiped down/cleaned.

## **Sanctuary Cleaning:**

- Church will be cleaned between services with special emphasis on pews/chairs, doorknobs, railings, bathrooms and other high-touch areas.
- Tony will use vinegar with water and soap to minimize damage to pew wood.
- We will encourage minimal use of the restroom.
- However, in the event restroom is used, the user will be asked to clean/sanitize restroom with the items provided following the visibly posted checklist. (SEE ATTACHMENT AT THE END OF DOCUMENT)
- If a young child needs to use the restroom, a parent/guardian must go to aid in the cleaning/sanitizing.
- Non-essential areas of the church will be closed off to reduce traffic and contamination.
- In June, we have had our ventilation systems professionally checked to make sure they are operating properly.

## **WORSHIP**

We will continue to maintain an online worship service presence and connection through livestreaming, ZOOM meetings, video services, etc. Persons in the vulnerable category of 65 and older or those who live with persons who fit into that category, will be encouraged to remain home and take advantage of online worship experiences.

We will communicate the protocol and guidelines with church members via newsletter & email prior to church reopening.

With the preliminary feedback we received from congregation, we have decided to offer two worship services; Sunday (Sanctuary), 10:30am and Saturday (Outdoors), 6:30pm.

Minimal restroom use will be encouraged. However, in the event restroom is used, parishioners will be asked to clean/sanitize restroom with the items provided following visibly posted checklist. Doors/windows will be left opened as feasible.

In case of sanctuary overflow on Sunday, people will be directed to GP Room, where they can watch the service on-line (via youtube). Seating will be marked 6 feet apart to maintain social distancing. Masks will be required at all times.

In case of inclement weather on Saturday, the outdoor service will be cancelled and people will be notified via church wide "Mailchimp" email. This will also be noted on our answering machine. Again, we will communicate these procedures prior to reopening.

In the event that anyone develops covid-19 through our gatherings/facility, all will be notified via email using the attendance list. Building will be closed for 14 days while deep cleaning takes place.

### **INDOOR WORSHIP:**

All entrances/exit doors as well as pathway entrance will have signage that explain the following: (SEE ATTACHMENT AT THE END OF DOCUMENT)

- ✓ Checklist prior to entering building: If anyone is sick, has fever or has been in contact with someone who is positive for the virus, please do not enter.
- ✓ How to stop the spread of Covid-19: List everyday protective measures such as hand washing, covering coughs and sneezing, properly wearing a face covering, and social distancing.
- There will be one entrance and one exit clearly marked. The breezeway door will be main entrance and will be propped open. Pathway to breezeway (and inside the breezeway) will be marked every 6 feet to help maintain distance.
- The handicapped door located on the south side of Church by ramp (thereafter will be referred to as the *South Door*) will be the exit.
- The South Door may be used as entrance/exit for those with accessibility needs.

- An offering basket will be placed at the South door as well as at the breezeway entrance.
- Touchless hand sanitizer will be placed at entrance and exit points.
- Two ushers will stand at table by the entrance. There will be visitor cards, pens, basket with masks & offering basket on the table.
- Communion – One usher (with gloves) will hand out the individual pre-made communion cups (with wafer inside the flap) upon entrance.
- One usher will take attendance. Records will be kept in office for every gathering.
- Second usher will make sure everyone has a mask. If anyone does not have a mask, one will be given to them.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> usher will also make sure to give a visitor card and pen for those visiting. The visitor will keep pen and card will be placed in a basket so that name and info can be added to attendance list.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> usher will also note down prayer requests to be shared with Pastor after everyone is seated.
- If anyone refuses to wear a mask or follow the social distancing rules, everyone will be dismissed to maintain safety for all parishioners.
- There will be two more ushers in sanctuary to guide people to their seats to ensure that appropriate social distancing is being followed.
- Pews will be designated prior to service with sections staggered to seat individuals, families and handicapped & special needs to make sure that proper social distancing is maintained.
- Congregants will be seated from front to back.
- Those with special needs will be seated where appropriate.
- Congregants will sit in units (single or groups) six feet apart from one another.
- There will be no bulletins, hymnals or items in the pew holders.
- No sharing of microphones. Announcements will be given to Pastor in advance should any need to be made by parishioners.
- Liturgist will sit six-feet apart from Pastor and will use separate microphone.
- Soloist may sing provided a 12 feet distance from the congregation.
- There will be no choir and congregational singing.
- There will be no receiving lines after worship.
- There will be no coffee hour or gathering in building after worship.
- There will be no Sunday School, Youth Group or Nursery Care during this time.
- There will be no baptism or “laying on of hands” to maintain social distance.
- Pastor and liturgist will enter/exit via side door behind sanctuary (choir entrance).
- Acolyte will enter through side door and exit via side door after lighting candles.
- Ushers will dismiss people via rows as appropriate maintaining distance.

### **OUTDOOR WORSHIP:**

- People will be invited to bring their own lawn chairs for service and will be seated 6 feet apart.
- Touchless hand sanitizers will be placed at entrance/exit point.
- All cars will park in the South parking lot.

- The entrance to breezeway parking lot will be closed as this parking lot will be used for worship.
- Pastor and/or liturgist will maintain 12 feet distance from parishioners and use separate microphones connected to audio system.

### ***USHERS: (SAME PROTOCOL AS INDOOR SERVICE)***

- Two ushers will be at table by the entrance/exit. There will be visitor cards, pens, basket with masks & offering basket on the table.
- Communion – One usher (with gloves) will hand out the individual pre-made communion cups (with wafer inside the flap) upon entrance.
- One usher will take attendance. Records will be kept in office for every gathering.
- Second usher will make sure everyone has a mask. If anyone does not have a mask, one will be given to them.
- If anyone refuses to wear a mask or follow the social distancing rules, everyone will be dismissed to maintain safety for all parishioners
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> usher will also make sure to give a visitor card and pen for those visiting. The visitor will keep pen and card will be placed in a basket so that name and info can be added to attendance list.
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> usher will also note down prayer requests to be shared with Pastor.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> usher will guide people with seating.
- Ushers will dismiss people via rows as appropriate maintaining distance.

## **CHURCH OFFICE PROTOCOL**

- Church office staff will maintain social distancing and safety measures by wearing masks. Work space will be cleaned prior to and after usage.
- Church female office staff will use restroom on 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Education Building so that social distance is maintained with the Kiddie Kottage nursery, who will use the women's bathroom on 1<sup>st</sup> floor.

## **BUILDING USE/OUTSIDE GROUPS**

- Trustees have added a Rider (see attachment) to our facilities usage agreement listing Covid-19 protocol. A letter has been sent to all building users asking them to submit protocol/guidelines for their groups observing the protocols outlined in nyac covid-19 guidelines document.
- Once we receive their protocols, Trustees will review and attach to building use agreement for filing.
- We have contacted our local insurance carrier in order gain guidance on how to remain in compliance with their expectations, cautions, and potential restrictions.

# **FINANCIAL PROCEDURES**

## **Collection of and Processing of Offering and Related Financial Activities**

### **General Principles**

- It is mandatory that all participants in collecting and counting the offering wear masks at all times and be cognizant of the need to never touch their faces.
- Since wearing or not wearing gloves has no effect on the needed precautions one must take, and since the CDC does not recommend wearing gloves, we will not require that those handling contaminated materials be gloved. We will allow anyone who feels safer wearing gloves to do so.
- Throughout all activities we will attempt to contain potential contamination to those items which are contaminated to begin with, both to limit the exposure to the contamination and to avoid cross-contaminating items and areas that aren't already contaminated
- In spite of the above action, we will proceed on the assumption that things are contaminated and handle and sanitize accordingly except where we can be certain we have not introduced contamination.
- Note: Wherever this document talks about a person "*decontaminating*" themselves, the meaning is that they will either wash their hands or use sanitizer in accordance with CDC recommended procedures.

### **Collection of Offerings**

- Our church has been using both mail-in offerings and online offerings through PayPal since the beginning of this situation, and these will continue to be offered and publicized.
- Our plan for dealing with In-Person offerings follows:
  - We will encourage giving by check rather than cash, but we will accept cash offerings.
  - Collection boxes will be provided at each entrance/exit with appropriate signage calling attention to them.
  - In order to contain any contamination and minimize the need for cleaning and sanitizing, we will use open "boxes", most likely wicker baskets, which will be totally covered with removable cloth linings, essentially oversized cloth napkins, in which congregants can place their offering. No one should need to do more than simply drop their offering in the cloth-lined basket. A minimum of two sets of these liners will be provided so that the baskets will always be covered.

- At the end of the service the offerings will be transferred to a cardboard “shoebox” by one member of the collection team who has *decontaminated* themselves in advance. This box will be taken to the church office and stored in the locked file cabinet where we normally store financial materials such as checks that are mailed in during the week.
  - This offering, along with any other mail-in offerings received, will be stored until Wednesday to give time for the virus to die or be weakened. Current studies indicate that this will be sufficient time to disinfect cardboard and paper such as the box, the checks and offering envelopes, but may not be sufficient to be totally sure that paper money or coins are virus-free.
  - In keeping with the General Principles stated above, we will in any case treat both the box and its contents as contaminated when handling them.
- After the offering has been removed, we will collect the cloth liners, folding them in such a way as to minimize the possibility of contact with the contaminated surfaces, and place them in a clean “laundry bag” for transport to the home of a designated person to be washed and returned the following week.
- A second person, who has *decontaminated* in advance, will install a clean set of liners so the baskets are always covered.
  - Because the baskets never come in contact with contaminated material nor are they handled by someone who may be contaminated, they will only need normal cleaning.
- At this point all those who have had contact with potentially contaminated material will *decontaminate* themselves.

### **Processing of Offerings**

- The counting team will consist of 3 persons and will assemble on Wednesday for the processing of the offering.
- All processing of the offering will take place in the church finance office. Since this room is shared with the church Treasurers, special precautions will be taken as described in the following by both groups to minimize contaminating each other.
- Two of the people will be assigned to the opening, sorting, and counting of the offering. The third person will be responsible for computer entry. At no time will the person responsible for computer entry touch the offering materials, nor will either of the other two people touch the computer.
  - The use of two persons for counting is to maintain financial integrity in accordance with the principles we have been using prior to the virus situation.

- The strict separation of tasks is intended to minimize the possibility of unnecessarily cross-contaminating people or facilities.
- Those involved will verify that hand sanitizer and cleaning and sanitizing supplies are on hand before beginning.
- All persons involved will *decontaminate* before starting.
- All surfaces that will be used in the finance office will be cleaned and sanitized before beginning. This will include but not be limited to desktop surfaces and computer surfaces such as the keyboard and mouse. It will be the responsibility of the counting team to identify and maintain the sanitary condition of any surfaces they touch. The person or persons doing the cleaning will *decontaminate* after completing this operation.
- The two people responsible for counting will open the file cabinet, remove the cardboard box containing the offering and carry it into the finance office. The computer operator will remain outside the office, but can observe as necessary.
- Operations will begin by opening offering envelopes and mail-in envelopes to remove and separate the offerings from these materials. After opening, offering envelopes will be set aside for archiving consistent with how these have been treated in the past. Other mailing materials such as U.S. mail envelopes will be discarded, and then those involved will *decontaminate* themselves to minimize the transfer of any contamination they may have picked up in opening envelopes.
- Once the opening, sorting, and necessary counting (primarily cash) have been completed those who have handled the cash will *decontaminate* themselves. Then one of the counting team will leave the office and the computer operator will enter. This procedure ensures that only those who need to be present are in the office at the same time.
- The remaining person from the 2-person team will communicate the necessary information to the computer operator to enter offering information in the computer. It is desirable that this person sit at the desk which does not house the computer in order to maintain maximum separation between people.
- After these operations are complete and the necessary reports have been printed and distributed and necessary forms prepared for making the bank deposit, all persons will once again *decontaminate* themselves.



- At this point the processing of the physical offering is complete and the processing of the weekly PayPal offering can begin. This will involve the computer operator and one additional person to communicate and verify the online offering.
  - The computer operator will first access PayPal and print out records of all the individual offerings that have been received in the past week. The second person will retrieve and handle these printouts
  - The computer operator will then switch to the church management application used to record the offering, and the second person will communicate the information from the PayPal printouts.
  - Once these operations are complete and appropriate reports have been printed and all materials appropriately disposed of or prepared for filing, the finance office will be properly cleaned and sanitized, especially all desktop surfaces and computer-related surfaces such as the keyboard and mouse, along with anything else that has been handled or touched. This is an important step because others will be using the office, for example the treasurers, during the course of the week.
  - At this time the team will do a final *decontamination* of themselves and close the finance office.
- The person responsible for making the bank deposit will collect all necessary materials and proceed to the bank to make the deposit, recognizing that they are once again contaminating themselves in handling the materials.

### **Bill Paying by the Treasurers**

- Because the Treasurers share the finance office with the Financial Secretaries and engage in somewhat similar operations, their procedures are described here as well.
- The Treasurers' normal procedures have for some time involved the use of 3 people with separate duties: opening and logging of bills and writing of checks, entry of data into the computer, and filing of all materials. Since this naturally lends itself to the kind of separation of tasks that minimize the possibility of cross-contamination, and the finance office, while small, allows for natural separation of those involved, they will continue with their normal operation, modified as described below.
- Those involved will verify that hand sanitizer and cleaning and sanitizing supplies are on hand before beginning
- All persons involved will *decontaminate* before starting.

- All surfaces that will be used in the finance office will be cleaned and sanitized before beginning. This will include but not be limited to desktop surfaces and computer surfaces such as the keyboard and mouse. It will be the responsibility of the Treasurers to identify and maintain the sanitary condition of any surfaces they touch. The person or persons doing the cleaning will *decontaminate* after completing this operation.
- The person responsible for opening of bills will separate the bills from any mailing materials, discard all materials that don't need to be archived, and then *decontaminate* themselves.
- Checks will be written, data entered into the computer and material passed to the third person for filing as is normally done while taking care to maintain maximum separation and that the computer operator does not touch any of the bill materials nor do either of the other two touch the computer.
- Once these operations are complete and appropriate reports have been printed and all materials appropriately disposed of or filed, the finance office will be properly cleaned and sanitized, especially all desktop surfaces and computer-related surfaces such as the keyboard and mouse, along with anything else that has been handled or touched. This is an important step because others may use the office during the course of the week.
- At this time the team will do a final *decontamination* of themselves and close the finance office.

*Thank you for joining us today. If you answer “yes” to any of the questions below, please do not enter for everyone’s safety.*



- **Do you have a fever (100.40 F or greater), chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or loss of taste/smell?**
- **Do you have respiratory symptoms including: cough, shortness of breath or breathing difficulty?**
- **Have you had close contact within the past 14 days with a person who has been diagnosed or is at-risk with COVID-19?**

# STAY HEALTHY:



✓ **We have a NO TOUCH policy**



✓ **Wear face coverings at ALL times**

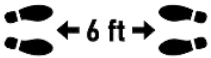
Avoid touching  
your eyes, nose  
and mouth.



✓ **Do not touch your eyes, nose and mouth**



✓ **Use hand sanitizer & wash hands thoroughly**



✓ **Maintain a social distance of 6 feet from others.**



✓ **Cough/sneeze into your elbow or use a tissue & place in your pocket.**

*Thank You for your support as we keep everyone healthy & safe!*

## **BATHROOM CHECKLIST**



Before leaving, please do the following:

- ✓ **Sink & water handles**— Wash hands & wipe down sink. (Use paper towel to hold disinfectant spray)
- ✓ **Toilet seat** – use disinfectant spray
- ✓ **Toilet handles** – use disinfectant spray
- ✓ **Door Handles/Knobs** – use disinfectant spray
- ✓ **Wash hands** - thoroughly wash hands for at least 20 seconds. Pull paper towel to dry hands and use towel to open door