



ST. JOHN'S
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
321 S. Oakland Ave. | Rock Hill, SC 29730

Plan for Safely Worshiping and Reopening the Church Building

Rationale:

To develop a careful and safe multi-phased plan to return to an in-person Worship Service, Bible Studies, Weekday ministries, Sunday night activities for children, youth, and other church activities based on scientific data and advice, best practice for faith communities and John Wesley's rule of "Do no harm." Recommendations of Governor McMaster, and Bishop Holston and the South Carolina United Methodist Conference will be taken into consideration. Moving back and forth between phases may be necessary if local numbers increase. Adjustments to the guidelines may be necessary as new information becomes available. This guideline was prayerfully considered and developed by a team made up of St. John's staff, church leaders, physicians, and a public health expert who has a Masters of Science in Emerging Infectious Diseases and Biohazardous Threats Agents and experience using open-source intelligence to track infectious diseases with an eye towards preventing pandemics.

Please note that faith-based organizations have been well documented to spread the COVID-19 virus widely throughout congregations. The church is an area in which we sit together for a long time and spread viral particles in the air for a longer period of time. This increases the risk of spread more than many other activities, as the risk of infection = time + viral dose.

In order to protect our most vulnerable and to minimize asymptomatic spread as we seek to love our neighbors in tangible ways, members and visitors will be asked to wear a mask while in the church building. Exceptions are only for children under the age of two and for those for whom wearing a mask makes breathing too difficult or who cannot remove them on their own.

All members and visitors are asked to stay home if they are feeling unwell in any way. Even mild discomfort that we might normally ignore is cause to stay home. Additionally, anyone who has experienced high risk exposures is asked to refrain from attending any church events for 14 days. These exposures include large crowds, airline travel, and contact with a sick person.

Please note that moving back and forth between phases may become necessary as local virus metrics change. Spikes in local data may necessitate a move back to an earlier phase. Information in each of the phases may change as new science and data become available.

Cleaning Protocol:

At this time we will continue to clean all, “in use areas” as staff and visitors begin to return to the Church. Areas such as handrails, doorknobs, door handles, counter surfaces, elevator panels, light switches, door code boxes, pews, and all touch surfaces will be regularly cleaned with Re-Juv-nal as well as bleach and Lysol depending on the surface.

Re-juv-nal: This product has been authorized by the US EPA as a registered disinfectant that may be used to combat the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) when used in accordance with directions. This is a disinfectant detergent that is also a virucide and fungicide. It is a phosphate-free, pH neutral formulation designed to provide effective cleaning, deodorizing, and disinfection where housekeeping is of prime importance in controlling cross-contamination from treated surfaces.

Bathrooms will continue to be cleaned with a combination of bleach, Lysol, and Re-juv-nal. Hand soap dispensers contain a Green seal certified antibacterial foaming soap with no fragrances, dyes, or toxic materials.

The cleanliness of children's areas has always been a priority and will continue to be thoroughly cleaned according to room usage.

Hand sanitizer will be available at the new welcome desk and new sanitizer stations will be provided at the White street and Elizabeth Avenue entrances as well. HVAC and mechanical systems will continue to be cleaned and monitored as needed.

Meeting areas and common spaces will be cleaned and sanitized after each use. All meetings and gatherings, when permitted, will need to be scheduled through the Facilities Manager, David Powell, to ensure space availability and that proper cleaning protocol will be done before and after each use. No exceptions will be made.

Phase 1

Phase 1 will begin May 26, providing the numbers of positive COVID19 cases reported in York County and South Carolina have not spiked.

Facilities

- Offices will be open for staff only beginning May 26. Hours of in-person operation may be adjusted for the amount of business required. If hours of in-person operation are reduced, staff will fulfill the remaining hours from remote locations.
- Access to the Church will be limited to Elizabeth Ave. entrance only and will be limited to staff and deliveries only.
- Hand Sanitizer will be placed at both entrances (White and Elizabeth) as well as the new Welcome Desk.
- Cleaning of the offices and areas of use to continue. (see above cleaning prep)
- Bathrooms will continue to be limited to the 1st-floor SJC and Huddleston Hall/Office restrooms and must be used one person at a time.
- Drinking fountains will be closed.
- Elevators must be used by one family at a time.

Worship

- No “in-person” worship in Phase 1 per recommendations of the CDC.

Pastoral Care

- During Phase 1, Pastoral Care will be limited to Phone Calls/ No Physical Visitation
- Maintain Phone tree calls among elderly parishioners.

Meetings and Gatherings

- No In-Person Gatherings during Phase 1. All Church committees and Bible Studies will continue to utilize the Zoom Meeting platform.
- Outside groups or Non-Church related events are prohibited at this time.

Staff and Volunteers

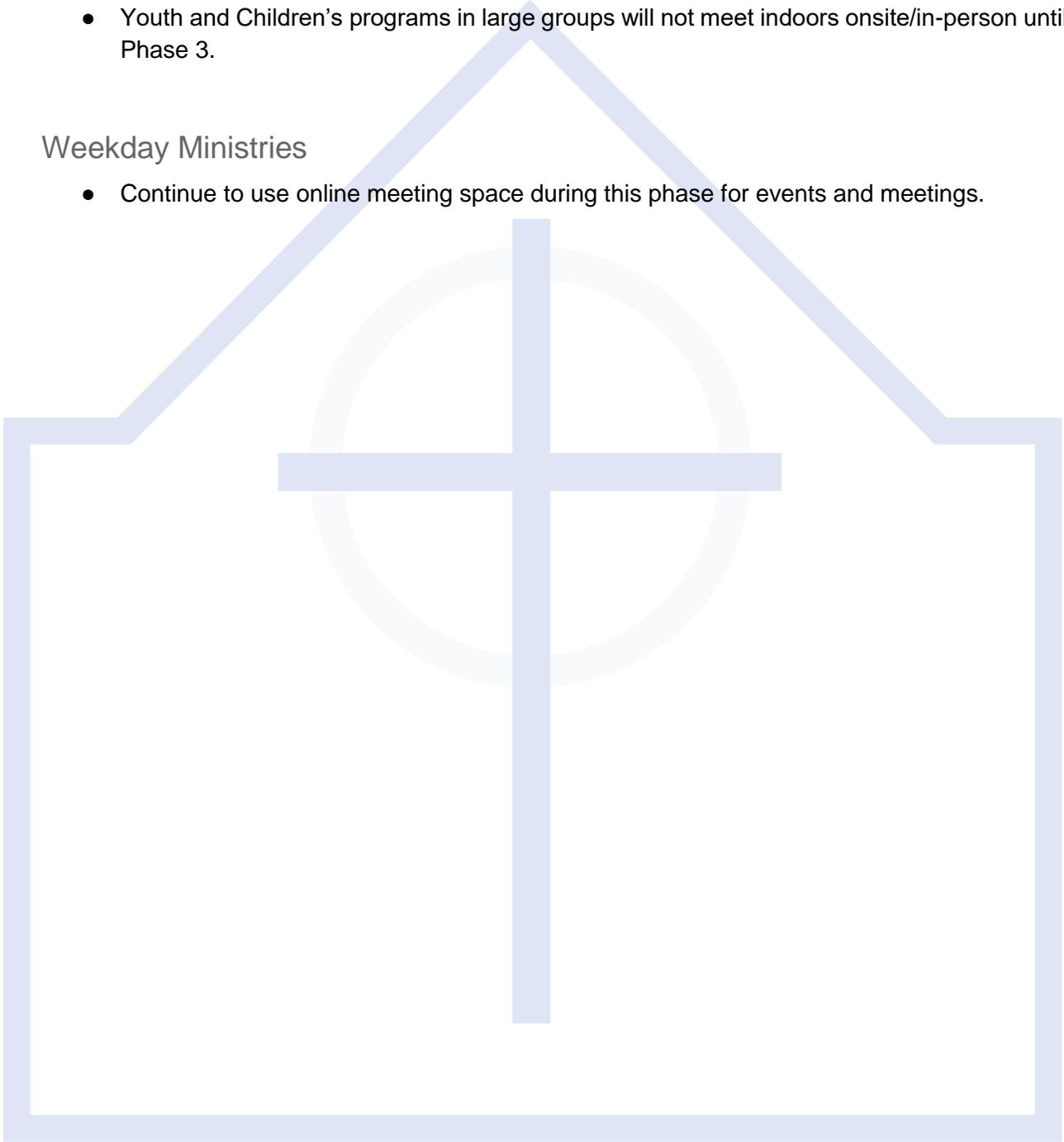
- Offices reopen for adjusted business hours starting Tuesday, May 26.
- The office will reopen on an abbreviated schedule: Monday through Thursday 10 AM - 3 PM and on Friday from 9 AM - 12 Noon.
- Staff meetings will continue to take place on zoom until at least June 10, per Bishop Holston’s recommendation.
- Staff will continue to work on campus and remotely at other times and will be able to be reached through their St. John’s emails.
- Volunteers will not be on campus in Phase 1.
- Staff will utilize masks when outside of their offices and interacting with other staff.

Children and Youth Activities

- Continue to use online meeting space during this phase for events and meetings.
- Youth and Children's programs in large groups will not meet indoors onsite/in-person until Phase 3.

Weekday Ministries

- Continue to use online meeting space during this phase for events and meetings.



Phase 2

Phase 2 will not begin before June 10, as directed by Bishop Holston, **and** once we see at least a 2-week consistent downward trend across multiple metrics in Rock Hill, York County, and South Carolina.

Facilities

- Normal business hours to resume: 8:00am - 5:00pm
- Additional cleaning will accommodate the expanded use of the SJC and Huddleston Hall.
- Access to the Church will be granted from White Street and Elizabeth Lane only.
- Hand Sanitizer area continues to be available at both entrances.

Worship

- “Vulnerable populations” are encouraged to continue sheltering in place.
- No “In-person” worship services will be held on campus, but members who are not considered vulnerable are encouraged to gather in groups of 10 or less OUTSIDE of the church in individual homes to watch online worship together in small groups. When gathering together outside of the Church Building, we ask that you please use the largest room in the house, or outside if possible, stay with the same group of people, and wear a mask to help prevent the spread of germs.
- Services may be held outdoors throughout this phase.
- Funerals and Weddings can be held provided they stay under 15 people total.
- Communion will be suspended until further notice.

Pastoral Care

- Pastoral Care will be generally limited to Phone Calls/ No Physical Visitation
- Maintain Phone tree calls for elderly parishioners.

Meetings and Gatherings

- Committee meetings allowed but limited to SJC, The Core and Huddleston Hall area only, and with no more than 15 people - No classroom use at this time. Meetings must be scheduled with David Powell. No exceptions. Vulnerable persons are encouraged to Zoom into any in-person meetings they are participating in.
- Hand Sanitizers will be available at each entrance, and all people entering the church will be asked to wear a mask.
- Bible studies to continue to use online meeting space.
- Outside groups or Non-Church related events are still prohibited at this time.

Staff and Volunteers

- Normal office hours to resume: Monday through Thursday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm and Friday 8:00 am - 12 noon

- Staff meetings will resume in person in Huddleston Hall or SJC to allow for appropriate social distancing.
- Volunteers utilized as needed and appropriate social distancing measures are to be honored.

Children and Youth Activities

- No in-person groups larger than 15 people may meet indoors. Indoor groups smaller than 15 must follow current social distancing guidelines.
- Hand Sanitizers will be available at each entrance, and all people entering the church will be asked to wear a mask.
- Outdoor events may be held throughout phase 2, as long as social distancing measures are followed.

Weekday Ministries

- Preschool and afterschool will follow state and local school district guidelines.
- Scouts would be allowed to meet, following their council guidelines, providing they schedule their meetings with David Powell and follow our guidelines for church youth activities (no indoor groups larger than 15, outdoor meetings permissible).

Phase 3

We will enter Phase Three when state and local officials and Bishop Holston allow groups of 100 or less to gather, AND we see a consistent downward trend in infection rates across multiple metrics for an additional two weeks in Rock Hill, York County, and South Carolina.

Facilities

- The church office will be open 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM, Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 AM - 12 Noon on Friday.
- All building usage will need to be scheduled through David Powell, to insure proper cleaning protocol and proper social distancing

Worship

- Worship services in the sanctuary will resume at the 11:00 service at a reduced capacity. We will add additional services and seating when deemed necessary. The Contemporary service will resume shortly after the 11:00 service in order to allow us to work out any unforeseen logistical issues.
- A signup form will be used for services, to ensure there is not overcrowding (online, and by calling the office). Additional details will be available closer to the start of Phase 3.
- We will look at adding additional services as the need arises.
- Streaming through Facebook Live will continue.
- No Sunday School at this time
- Nursery and Children's Church will not be provided during this phase, but we welcome your little ones into each service.
- Funerals and Weddings will follow the same guidelines as in-person worship.

Pastoral Care

- Pastoral Care will be generally limited to Phone Calls, visitations will adhere to hospital and care facilities protocol.
- Porch visits could happen throughout Phase 3

Meetings and Gatherings

- Outside groups or meetings must be approved by staff and trustees
- All meetings and gatherings will need to be scheduled through David Powell, to ensure proper cleaning protocol and proper social distancing, space will still be limited throughout Phase 3.
- Hand Sanitizers will be available at each entrance, and all people entering the church will be asked to wear a mask.
- Shared Food/meals should not be provided or served.

Staff and Volunteers

- Normal office hours will continue: Monday through Thursday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm and Friday 8:00 am - 12 noon
- Office volunteers will be utilized as needed.

Children and Youth Activities

- Activities can resume while following public school guidelines and social distancing.
- Ministries with our youngest children will likely still be restricted

Weekday Ministries

- Preschool and Afterschool will follow the guidelines and schedule of Rock Hill School District.
- Scouts will continue to follow local Scout Council guidelines and church guidelines for youth activities.

Phase 4

We will enter Phase Four when state and local officials and Bishop Holston allow groups of more than 100 to gather, and we see a consistent downward trend in infection rates across multiple metrics for an additional two weeks in Rock Hill, York County, and South Carolina. Phase 4 will be a reopening of all regularly scheduled activities, worship services, Sunday School and outside meetings, or gatherings, with the continued use of masks, social distancing, and reduced capacity.

The nursery and Children's Church will reopen with staff and additional safety requirements.