

## Prairie Lakes Parish COVID-19 Response Plan

### Based on “Phased Re-Gathering Plan for Churches” MN Conference of United Methodist Church

Developed by Parish Leadership Team (06.11.20):  
Council Chairs and PPRC members of all 3 churches



*High-risk individuals (those over age 60 and/or with underlying health conditions) are highly encouraged to stay home, and will be given options to participate in the life of the church through virtual means.*

#### **Worship: online + drive-up or outdoor venues (includes weddings/funerals)**

Per the recommendation of the MN Conference of the UMC:

- We will continue to offer online worship as our primary venue (weekly services pre-recorded from Prairie Lakes Parish sanctuaries), as it allows the greatest accessibility for all people
- When we add in-person worship, we will gather outdoors only - taking advantage of the reduced risk of COVID-19 transmission in outdoor settings

During drive-up worship:

- Each household should be in a separate car
- People will gather in the gathering space (i.e. parking lot) without leaving their vehicles
- Each vehicle to be at least six feet away from others
- There is no admittance to buildings or restrooms
- Playground equipment is unavailable

During outdoor worship:

- There will be no more than 50 percent of the church building's capacity meeting outside (MN Conference recommends keeping our numbers smaller than that out of an over-abundance of caution)
- Observe strict social distancing (six feet on every side of each family group) during entire gathering
- Attendees will wear face-masks
- Attendees will provide their own seating
- There is no admittance to the building or restrooms
- Playground equipment is unavailable
- No food will be shared between family groups

#### **Indoor gatherings (includes weddings/funerals)**

Per the recommendation of the MN Conference of the UMC:

- We will limit indoor gatherings to unique circumstances only - special approval required

During indoor gatherings:

- There will be no more than 50 percent of the church building's capacity meeting inside (MN Conference recommends not more than 25 percent out of an over-abundance of caution)
- Observe strict social distancing (six feet on every side of each family group) during entire gathering
- Attendees will wear face-masks
- No food will be shared/prepared within the building

#### **Recording and live-streaming worship**

As appropriate, we will record or live-stream our worship experiences whenever possible for greater participation.

#### **MN Dept. of Health & MN Conference of UMC Protocols**

We will adhere strictly to all MN Department of Health and MN Conference of UMC protocols regarding the following:

Drive-up/outdoor worship and indoor gatherings

- Record attendance for contact tracing purposes
- Use no-touch alternatives for greetings
- Collect offerings without person-to-person contact
- Suspend use of hymnals and Bibles
- Use screens, one-use bulletins, or online bulletins
- Ask children to remain with their family groups during “Children’s Moments”
- Celebrate Holy Communion via virtual worship
- Modify Baptism celebrations to include no skin-to-skin contact with the pastor

Additional protocols for indoor gatherings

- Clean and sanitize the building between each event
- Provide personal sanitizing supplies for each event
- Direct the entrance, seating, and exit of all attendees
- Suspend congregational singing - music to be pre-recorded or provided by soloists
- Suspend fellowship time before and after the event

#### **Small groups, faith formation, pastoral care, staff**

- Small groups will continue to meet virtually or outdoors (following the outdoor worship guidelines)
- Pastoral care visits will be done by phone or online as much as possible
- We will not offer in-person children’s ministries, Vacation Bible School (VBS), mission trips, lock-ins
- Church staff (and volunteers) will continue to work from home as much as possible, but if in the building together, will maintain physical distancing, wear face-masks, and follow safety/sanitizing protocols

#### **For more information, visit the following resources**

[MN Conference of the United Methodist Church](#), [CDC](#), [Governor Walz Phased Plan](#), and the [MN Department of Health](#) guidelines regarding COVID-19.