



# Hybrid Worship

## Information & FAQ

Our path to returning in person to our sanctuary and other spaces requires a plan and a roadmap. We also recognize, as with any journey, we must be flexible and willing to modify our decisions and route when circumstances change. This document specifically focuses on the return to limited in-person worship; look for more information in the coming weeks on moving into further planned phases for building reopening and in-person activities. Our plan will always remain flexible and responsive to public health information and will be guided by our shared values:

**Love for Neighbor** – We proceed cautiously and with social distancing measures to protect the safety and health of our community.

**Access and Equity** – We create opportunities to participate how you feel comfortable, online and/or in-person, and will work to ensure experiences in both spaces are in harmony.

**Social Justice** – We know COVID-19 disproportionately impacts people of color and other marginalized populations. We believe our plan helps protect our vulnerable neighbors.

**Service to Others** – We acknowledge that helping to keep our neighbors healthy is a part of our service to our community and how we can be a face of God's love.

**Extravagant Welcome** – We continue to welcome you no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey and we will welcome you literally *wherever* you are!

**Connection and Relationship** – We value being in community together. We commit to continuing and expanding opportunities to worship, learn, and fellowship together.

**Transparency** – We, as a team of First UCC members, consulted scientifically-based documents, trusted public health officials, and ecumenical leaders to develop our plan for reopening and will continue to do so.

We will regularly share information and updates to our members and friends and we place our trust in you to make the best decisions for you and your family as we move forward together.

First UCC COVID Task Force:

Anne Meyer Ruppel, chair; Erin Barnett; Linda Larson; John Menk; Ben Miller; Janet Muth; Pastors Wendy and Lauren

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The COVID-19 Task Force is grateful for the 106 responses received in the recent survey. All along the Task Force has been attentive to the science, to public health directives and made recommendations on the cautious end of a scale of actions. We are approaching hybrid worship in the same manner.

As we are working with a grid that measures COVID cases coupled with vaccinated rates, the survey information provided has convinced the Task Force to initiate a "soft opening" to hybrid worship on May 23.

For four Sundays, May 23 - June 13, we will test livestream/Zoom worship with limited in-person attendees in the Sanctuary. This hybrid model will change the experience of both settings. What we had been accustomed to pre-COVID in the Sanctuary will be different. What we have gotten used to in Zoom will change too. And we will learn and grow together.

Why a "soft opening?" We want to make the experience accessible and learn about effective and meaningful practices of a two-in-one worship framework. We also want to begin in a more conservative mode and grow into expanding our in-person reach.



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### What to Expect: In-Person

- Worship at 10:30 a.m.
- Pre-registration required
- Entry & exit through designated doors
- Arrive early for seating
- Masks required at all times
- Soft humming with masks allowed
- No in-person fellowship; physically distanced conversation outdoors permitted
- Please only sign up for one Sunday to allow others the opportunity to attend

### What to Expect: Online

- Worship at 10:30 a.m.; Zoom will continue through the soft opening of hybrid worship, but may change in the future
- Service on Zoom will be a live-stream from the sanctuary
- Online fellowship open to everyone after worship



#### stay home if sick

if you experience symptoms like cough or fever, we ask that you join us online



#### social distancing

maintain a 6-foot physical distance at all times



#### wear a mask

wear a mask at all times in the First UCC building



#### wash hands & sanitize

wash hands for at least 20 seconds and use hand sanitizer often



#### use designated entrances

you will be warmly greeted and provided guidance for your visit



#### designated seating

be prepared for a new view from the pews – you will be directed to a seat



#### giving & generosity

make gifts online at [firstucc.org](http://firstucc.org) or via mail



#### restrooms & water

restrooms and water are available, but we encourage you to use the restroom before leaving home



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### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Who can attend worship in-person?**

We are heartened that according to the survey, 82% of respondents were already vaccinated. We will not turn away anyone registered for worship!

#### **What will worship look like when I come?**

Worship will follow the basic pattern that you are accustomed to. Everyone will be seated by household with space between them. Everyone will be masked. Ushers will assist you. We ask that everyone remain in their pew once they are in the sanctuary. We ask that you save any socializing before or after the service for outside the building.

#### **Why are worship leaders not wearing masks while speaking?**

We have consulted on best practices with health experts and determined safe distances for these practices. We are committed to honor these boundaries for everyone's safety.

#### **Can I sing during worship?**

You may hum quietly under your mask.

#### **What is the seating capacity of the sanctuary with COVID safety measures?**

Up to 60 people will be allowed to attend in person at this time.

#### **How long will masks be required indoors?**

As long as the CDC recommends that they be worn.

#### **When will in-person fellowship/coffee hour be allowed again?**

We don't know.

#### **Can my group or committee meet at the church?**

Yes! In our current building reopening phase, groups of 15 or less are allowed to meet, socially distanced and masked, inside for up to an hour. You must schedule building use with the church office.

#### **How will Zoom worship be different?**

Your view on Zoom will be of the sanctuary! We will be using our newly installed camera system to feed in video and sound directly from the live service.

The COVID Task Force will be evaluating our practices and learning from this soft opening. If you have further questions, please contact [church@firstucc.org](mailto:church@firstucc.org) or call 507-645-7532.