



McClellandtown Presbyterian Church

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June 4, 2020

To the McClellandtown Congregation,

"Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul." (3 John 1:2, NRSV)

Over the past several weeks, our perspectives of health, safety, and caring for one another has been tested and turned upside down. We have had to deal with the difficulty of being separated during weekly Sunday worship. We had to adapt to hearing the Word of God through online videos and the new experience of celebrating the Lord's Supper in our homes by video. We all look forward to seeing this end and allowing us once again to return to what is familiar to us.

Regardless of our hopes for the future, the experiences of the past several weeks are not behind us, this pandemic is not close to being over. The ongoing presence of this pandemic most likely will require us to respond differently in our spiritual practices for worship for several months to come.

The Session has been meeting and engaged in discussions about establishing procedures to guide us as we once again gather for worship and other activities. These discussions have focused on conducting worship safely and exhibiting respect for each other's health. Attached is a document called "*Procedures for Moving Forward*" which has been approved by the Session. Worship will be a different experience from the past while proceeding forward safely for all those attending. You need to carefully read and comply with these new guidelines for worship for the health and safety of all of us.

Our current situation is a rapidly changing and shifting set of new norms for our life together. This experience is new to the leadership of the church's ruling elders in the Session. As we progress into the coming weeks, we may need to make necessary adjustments and discover new and innovative ways to respond to sharing the good news, studying the Word of God and providing outreach to our community. We will need to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and pay close attention to the path set before us, trusting that we are being led to the right place for the glory of God.

The Session has decided that we will gather again for Sunday worship using the attached procedures on **Sunday, June 14, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.**

To God Alone Be the Glory,

Rev. F. Lee McDermott, Pastor

Procedures for Moving Forward

The following procedures are for maintaining the health and safety of the congregation during worship and other activities approved by the Session during their May, 2020 meeting. These procedures will remain in effect until the Session meets in Sept. 2020 when they will be reviewed and modified, if necessary.

General Recommendations

Strongly advise people to stay home if they have had any virus, fever, feeling sick, have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or are in a high-risk category for any events or activities which may be held at the church, particularly worship.

Anyone attending worship or any other events in the church building **must wear a mask** and must use the **front door** to enter the church for Sunday worship. For any other events which may occur, **a single door will be designated** for entry and exit. **Extra Face Masks** will be available for anyone who forget their mask.

Seating **must use social distance** except individuals from the same household may sit together.

Hand sanitizer will be available on a table at back of sanctuary or other locations, if needed.

Weddings during this period, must consult with the pastor and comply with state guidelines for gatherings and these procedures.

Funerals – the pastor will consult with the funeral director and family about the safe methods for conducting memorial and committal services according to state guidelines for public gatherings.

Following each event or activity held at the church during this time, the church will be **sanitized after each event and on a weekly basis, including** doorknobs, railings, bathrooms, and, etc.

Sunday Morning Worship

Every other pew will be closed off with tape. Individuals from the same household can sit together in the same pew, but others must maintain social distance from each other in pews using alternating pews.

Anyone unwilling to respect physical distance and/or wear a mask will be required to leave.

Prior to worship, the front door will be opened, so the congregation does not need to touch doors upon entering or exiting. The door will be locked and unlocked as normal once church starts and concludes.

During this time, we will not light the candles in the sanctuary.

No Printed Worship Bulletins, No Hymnals, or Pew Bibles available –

We will temporarily stop using printed bulletins, all announcements, congregational responses, scriptures, hymns, etc, will be projected on a screen using PowerPoint. We will temporarily install a large projection screen in the sanctuary.

We will limit congregational singing to only two hymns using only a single verse of each hymn with words on the projection screen.

Passing of the Peace will remain in the order of worship, but the congregation will only be asked to stand up and wave.

Children's Message would be conducted without the children coming forward.

Communion – the Session has postponed any scheduled Communion services until October, when scheduling future Communion services will be reviewed at the September Session meeting.

Baptisms - any potential baptisms can be delayed until at least the Fall when methods and approaches for better safety and health are available.

Offering – Offerings will be collected without passing the offering plates during worship. Offering collection box has been placed in the back of the sanctuary. We ask you to place your offering in the box as you arrive for worship.

Adult Choir – since choir typically takes the summer off from singing, we can decide in September, if the way is clear for them to continue to sing.

At the end of worship, the pastor will instruct the congregation on how to exit the sanctuary, we do not want everyone exiting at once. The plan for exiting will help to maintain social distancing. If people wish to talk to one another following worship, we ask you to wait until you have exited the church and maintain social distance outside, while engaging in your discussions.

Online Video Message – We will continue for the moment with weekly video messages on Facebook for those unable to attend for health reasons.

Fellowship Hall

The Fellowship Hall will not be open to anyone other than the custodial staff during Sunday worship and will be roped off.

No coffee or refreshments will available before or after worship during the summer.

Adult Sunday School will not meet for the present time, but alternatives are currently under discussion and we will let you know later.

Children's Sunday School does not normally meet during the summer so we will need to decide about whether to start up in the fall.