

Asbury UMC In-Person Worship Protocols amid COVID-19

These protocols are motivated by a love for neighbor and intended to protect everyone's health as we come together for worship. Thank you for helping us love and protect our neighbors by your cooperation.

Please do not attend worship if you are exhibiting ANY symptoms of COVID-19 (fever/chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste/smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea¹).

Please attend at your own risk. We have many new cleaning and social distancing protocols in place to protect everyone, but these do not guarantee that you will not be exposed to COVID-19. If you are in the high-risk categories defined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), we *strongly* request that you do not attend in-person services and instead worship online.

Worship Online: We will continue to stream our worship service on Facebook Live. Please feel free to continue worshipping with us virtually if that is best and safest for you and your household.

What we know: Who is considered **high risk**?² Older adults (age 65 and over) are considered high risk. But people of any age are considered high risk if they have underlying medical conditions. Examples include:

- Respiratory issues: Asthma, Cystic Fibrosis, Pulmonary Fibrosis, COPD, chronic lung disease
- Residents of nursing homes or long-term care facilities
- Serious heart conditions; Liver disease; Chronic Kidney disease (especially if undergoing dialysis); Diabetes (Type 1 & 2)
- Conditions which can cause immunocompromised systems: cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
- Neurologic conditions
- Pregnancy

Cleaning Protocols: We have assembled a team of volunteers to make sure touchable surfaces are wiped down appropriately before, during, and after our worship services. Some areas of the building(s) will not be accessible at this time.

Arrival Times, Parking, and Entering the Facility:

- **Church will open 20 minutes prior to the service**, please do not arrive earlier than that.
- **Entrance:** We will only use the front doors of the Education Building (near the elevators) to enter the building, and the doors will remain open to avoid people having to touch them.
- **Maintain Social Distance:** Please maintain six feet of social distance as you approach and enter the facility. Ushers will instruct you on where to sit in the Sanctuary.

What to Expect as You Enter:

- **Avoid Interpersonal Contact:** Please maintain six feet distancing between household units, and please do not extend hugs, handshakes, or physical greetings with others.
- **Face Masks: Face masks will be required to be worn.** Please bring and wear your own face mask: if you do not have one, there will be free disposable masks in our front lobby. Please do

not dispose of masks on the church property. Health officials recommend that children aged 2 and under do not wear masks.

- **Avoid Gathering in Common Areas.**
- **Hand Sanitizer:** Hand Sanitizer will be available at multiple locations throughout the Narthex.
- **Bulletins:** We will not have paper bulletins to hand out.
- **No Fellowship refreshments:** We will not be doing donut time.
- **Limited Facility Access:** Access to the building will be limited to the Sanctuary, lobby and the narthex. If overflow is needed, we will use the Fellowship Hall

What to Expect in the Sanctuary?

Seating:

- **Seating will be limited.** There will be a row of pews empty in between each row used. The maximum number of people per pew is four (4) [three (3) for short pews]. Maximum seating capacity in the Sanctuary is 50. Overflow will be available in Fellowship Hall. The balcony is reserved for those working the technology.
- **Ushers will show you where to sit when you enter;** we will maintain six feet of space on each side of all household units. Seating will be from the front rows first.
- **Please sit only with members of your immediate household unit.**

Worship Service:

- We will wear face masks as we enter, during the entire service, and as we exit the building.
- All pew Bibles, hymnals, connection cards, and ink pens have been temporarily removed from the pew racks.
- The Offering will not be collected during the service. We will have drop-off baskets in the sanctuary, or you can donate online at <https://www.asburyum.org/>
- Congregational singing will be *very* brief. Congregants are welcome to sing quietly, but we will not be putting words up on the screen to reduce singing volume. We will have special music as well in the service.
- At this time, there will NOT be any nursery, Children's Church or Sunday School classes.

Leaving the Service:

- We will exit starting at the rear of the Sanctuary. Please wait until your row is dismissed to exit. Please continue to maintain six feet distancing between household units.
- Please make your way immediately out of the facility without stopping to gather in the front lobby. Please maintain six feet of distancing as you exit the facility.
- We will have a team of volunteers to wipe down the facilities after worship.

Children and Babies:

- Children of all ages are invited to remain with their households in the Worship Service. There will be no nursery care. We do ask that children above the age of 2 to wear a mask.

References:

1. Symptoms of COVID-19 – CDC website
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fsymptoms.html
2. Who is at risk – CDC website
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>