



Re-launch Building Plan

September 2020

Overview

During this pandemic, First United Methodist Church has found that our church goes well beyond our building. Since mid-March, our building has been closed to the public and most of our ministry and worship is being done on-line. Although, there is desire to have personal touch again, Bishop Karen Oliveto has said, “We are to care for the spiritual, physical and emotional well-being of those whom Jesus loves. This takes on a responsibility of epic proportions in these COVI-19 days we are living. How do we gather as the Body of Christ and keep one another safe from infection?” This is what the Re-launch Task Force has been wrestling with.

Bishop Oliveto set up a Conference COVID-19 Crisis Team which has established some guidelines and set out three status levels. For health and safety guidelines. We now have a mandate to love our neighbor as we love God, but to also do no harm.

This document outlines the details for relaunching the opening of the church building and in-person worship. It is based on the Guidelines set forth by the Mountain Sky Conference COVID-19 Crisis Team and policies from the Centers for Disease Control and the State of Colorado.

All actions and recommendations will be overseen by the Re-launch Task Force, consisting of Keith Heinzmann, Chair – (Building Manager); Mike Mather (Pastor), Connie Takamine (Trustees), Ruth Irvin (Music and Worship), Eddie Miles (Ushers), Ginny Wells (Church Council), Fran Saxon (MOJO), and Heidi Lewis (Staff). Decisions made by the Task Force will be ratified by Church Council

Current Status

Red Phase

- Building Closed
- Online worship currently via Zoom
- Only staff and other designated persons allowed in the church to carry on the administration of the church (check mail, deposit checks, and administer payroll)
- Maintain custodial staff on a reduced basis to disinfect building and do deep cleaning and provide security (Staff includes Building Manager, Head Custodian, Night Custodian, and Weekend Custodian)
- Program staff to work remotely
- Meetings and small groups are encouraged to meet online.

NOTE: Will be involved with building renovation during this period and building will remain closed during renovation even if the trajectory of the virus improves.

EXCEPTION: Will continue service of Heartfelt Café to serve those in need with meals on the third Sunday of each month. Lunch will be bagged meals served from west doors. Limited access will be allowed for coffee and use of restrooms. No more than ten volunteers who must wear masks and try to maintain social distancing will be allowed.

-External Group Building Use

- No external building use at this time.

--Internal Church Building Use

- No public office hours. Program staff works remotely from home
 - Church Administrator comes to the office 1-2 times a week to check mail and phone messages
 - Bookkeeper and Treasurer come to the office weekly to pay bills and maintain the payroll
 - Building Manager and custodial staff maintain staffing on a daily basis to disinfect public areas and provide security.
- Pastor and appropriate staff record Sunday morning content on Thursdays
- Masks are required and hand sanitizers are placed around the building. Social distancing advised.
- All persons entering the building must sign-in and state purpose so the custodial staff know which areas of the building were used.

--Worship

- On-line worship only either via Zoom or pre-recorded (testing various services)

--Other Ministries

- Family Life has had virtual Kids Camp and various family services, book studies, and other outreach. Youth have bi-weekly virtual gatherings
- Adult Education has had several virtual offerings and will continue virtually until reach Green phase. The fall schedule has been set through Advent for Forum and moving meeting time from Sunday to Wednesday evening.
- Testing various ways of keeping in touch and introducing new minister such as digital dinners and off-site limited gatherings
- Monthly Heartfelt Café which is on the 3rd Sunday of each month and provides a noon meal for those in need.
- Several other Mission Outreach Justice Opportunities programs are continuing with information provided in the MOJO corner in our weekly eblast.
- Other groups are continuing to meet virtually or finding other ways to keep connected.

--Cleaning in Red Phase

- A cleaning protocol has been set up with all handles, handrails, public flattop hard surfaces disinfected first thing in the morning and before the end of the day.
- All rooms in the church have been deep cleaned – a second deep cleaning will happen when the renovation is complete.

Yellow Phase

This status begins when state and local officials have reported a 14-day downward trend of cases, hospitals are treating patients without crisis care, and there is a robust testing program in place, including antibody testing, and there is no evidence of a rebound in case numbers in local area.

There will be a phased re-opening of the building. All people entering the building must wear masks – disposable masks will be available - and must practice social distancing. There will be hand sanitizer stations at entryways and exits. For all scheduled events, there will be required on-line registration in order to limit number and for possible contact tracing, a special email address will be established to identify the on-line registration. NOTE: Since COVID-19 is transmitted airborne singing and group speaking are restricted until reach Green Phase.

- Meetings and other small groups of 10 or less will be allowed – number will increase as the state increases the allowance.

--External Group Building Use

- External groups may use FUMC facilities provided they follow the guidelines set of wearing masks at all times, social distancing, no personal contact.
- Groups will be placed in areas where can do social distancing and have adequate ventilation.
- The meeting space will be disinfected both prior to the group event and after the conclusion.
- FUMC will have an addendum to our current space usage agreement with outside groups acknowledging their adherence to our policies.

---Internal Church Building Use

- Regular office hours will be set which will be staffed by our Church Administrator.
 - All persons entering the building will follow social distancing guidelines (mask wearing, hand sanitizing, social distancing) Signs have been posted.
 - All visitors or members entering the building must sign a log to permit for possible contact tracing and also state purpose.

--Members over age 65 or with health conditions that make them susceptible to the virus would be encouraged to call or make contact digitally rather than come to the building in-person.

--Those with COVID-19 symptoms or similar health problems will refrain from coming into the building.

- The cleaning protocol set up for the custodial staff will continue.

--In-person Worship

- In-person worship will be limited to 50 persons per the current state limitation and increased as guidelines allow more attendance. All must do on-line registration.
- Pews will be cleared of all materials including hymnals, Bibles, offering envelopes, etc..

- Pews will be marked for social distancing and cushions removed.
- Entry will be through Narthex doors and exit through Bell Tower doors
- Worship bulletins will be placed for self-pick up
- Non-touch offering receptacles are being looked into
- Alternative ways of doing Communion are being looked into
- There will be NO singing or group speaking
- There will be NO choir until Green Status
- There will be NO fellowship Coffee Hour in person may continue via Zoom
- There will continue to be on-line worship

--Members age 65 or older or with health conditions that make them susceptible to the virus are discouraged from attending worship. Those who are sick or visibly showing COVID-19 symptoms will refrain from attending. While we cannot fully mandate that people in this risk group not attend worship, those groups are strongly encouraged/recommended/requested to discuss their attendance with their doctors and family before making a decision on attending.

- Education will be a mix of possible in-person, off-site, and on-line offerings.
- Families will be placed in family units, children will be provided with activity bags. Limited rotating Children's Church will occur if the status of the virus among children is stable and will be held either outside or where can be socially distanced
- The Labyrinth may be available for individual meditation and prayer on a reservation system.--Other Types of Services
- Outdoor worship was considered, but a test of using our yard found that the traffic noise was too distracting.
- All other special services such as funerals, weddings, baptisms have been suspended.

--Cleaning in the Yellow Phase

- The custodian will continue the cleaning protocol. A schedule of deep cleaning will be set up.

Green Status

Green Status will be when the pandemic is ruled essentially over and the church building can open to full capacity and there can be full community engagement.

Cleaning and Sanitizing Procedures:

First United Methodist is following the guidelines of the Colorado Department of Health and Environment's Cleaning Guidance. All surfaces and door handles are sprayed and wiped down with an EPA approved neutral disinfectant both in the morning and evening and restrooms are cleaned and disinfected.

When building re-opens, meeting spaces and worship spaces will be disinfected prior to use and after use. Restrooms will be periodically cleaned and disinfected during the day and in the evening.

Hand sanitizing stations and masks are available at designated entrances for personal use and protection.

Looking Ahead

- Continue to take seriously the ongoing health and safety concerns of our congregation
- Continue to monitor public health situations and guidelines. We are prepared to update and/or rollback and implement all or portions of the plan should conditions necessitate.
- Online worship will remain
- Continue to be adaptable and experimental
- Continue to communicate to reduce confusion and allow each aspect of church life to flow as smoothly and safely as possible.