



A CHRIST-CENTERED CHURCH IN THE CENTER OF ABERDEEN

RE-ENTRY TASK FORCE REPORT

July – August 2020

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The Re-enter Safely Task Force has made great progress in putting a plan in place in preparation for in-person worship services at Grace. Please keep in mind that worship will not look or feel the same way as before March 2020. This plan is for the safety of everyone at Grace and needs to be considered faithfully and seriously.

Our Biblical Base:

“What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord”. *Romans 8: 31-32, 38-39 NRSV*

Things that we have accomplished:

- Created a plan to safely re-open.
- Developed a visual aid of how we will enter and exit the church.
- Identified staffing requirements to carry out the plan and asked for volunteers.
- Developed new signage to help navigate new entrance/exit doors.
- Bought large quantities of masks and hand sanitizers, including an automatic dispenser that will be by the front door.
- Secured a large quantity of self-contained, disposable communion elements.
- Bought/made physical distance reminders for the floor.
- Secured three boxes into which giving envelopes can be placed or you can continue to use online giving.
- Cleaned and sanitized carpeting in worship space.
- Bought sanitizer suitable for cleaning wood pews, as well as gallons of regular sanitizers.
- Installed new screens for hymn and prayer text in the sanctuary.
- Developed a contingency plan in case a worship attendee either becomes ill during the service or tests positive for Covid.
- Decided that the Church Office staff will be responsible for monitoring and replenishing the supplies listed above as needed.

Re-enter Safely Plan Explained:

- In order not to exceed the allowable limit of people attending any one given service, it will be necessary for you to RSVP before attending a service. You will do this by emailing the Church office (gracemethodistchurch@yahoo.com) or phoning (410-272-0909) the week before the Sunday you plan to attend an in-person service.
- Bibles, hymnals, envelopes, pencils and paper will be removed from pews.

- Every other pew will be blocked off.
- Cushions will be put away.
- All first-floor restrooms will be thoroughly clean and sanitized.
 - People will use the three bathrooms that are down the mail hall way, past the coffee bar.
- All surfaces in the worship space will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized.
- Everyone will be required to wear a mask at all times while in the church building; there will be masks provided if you forget yours.
- Hand sanitizer will be right inside the entry door and placed strategically around the worship space.
- Most everyone will enter through the double doors by the coffee bar.
 - A separate entrance for those who can't manage stairs will be through the nursery classroom immediately off the parking lot.
- Once you come in, you will be directed to one of two stations where you will be greeted, attendance will be noted and there will be a box into which you can drop giving envelopes.
- Ushers will direct you to your pew;
 - There will be physical distancing in pews except for households who may sit together.
 - 6 feet is the minimum expected physical distance at all times.
- You may bring your own bible and cushion if you wish.
- There will be no passing the peace, elbow bumps, hugs, food shared, snacks or refreshments.
- There will be no child care, no Sunday school and no "Busy Boxes". Children will need to stay with their parents.
- Cares and concerns will be done via email or telephone to the coordinator listed in our various church bulletins.
- Music will be provided and coordinated by the Music Staff
 - There will be no congregational singing but we can hum. (Note: Singing is like sports or workout experience. One's breath spreads/sprays particles of moisture as we run, sing, yell, or shout).
- After worship, everyone will exit from the main/center doors of the church except for those with mobility issues who will exit through the nursery classroom.
- Persons who are feeling ill or uneasy should stay home.
- If someone in your household is feeling sick it is best for you to stay home too.

We are continuing to monitor Maryland State and Conference guidance and notifications, and if necessary, this plan will be adjusted to meet any new requirements. Do not worry or compare Grace's plan with other churches. Every church is different based on their cultural and geographical area. In conjunction with staff and representatives of the church council, our Pastor will make the decision when to begin in-person worship.

Faithfully, the Members of the Task Force:

Leslie McGlothlin, Bruce Appell, Glenn Gillis, Pat Hagerman, Jon Krass, Deborah Lake, Ann Laughton, Rose Lyman and Dennis Stewart