

**College Hill United Methodist Church  
Plan for Safely Reopening the Building**

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**Purpose of Plan**

1. Outline CHUM’s path forward to safely reopen our building in accordance with best practices that will allow us to establish a new normal as we co-exist with the reality of COVID-19 in the world.
2. Acknowledge that as more information about the virus emerges, this plan may evolve.

**A Theological Grounding for this Plan**

1. As Wesleyan Christians, we seek to live by the simple rule of “do no harm,” especially of doing no harm to the most vulnerable among us.
2. This plan seeks to balance appropriate precautions for physical safety and health with the critical nature of mental, emotional, and spiritual health to our well-being.

3. Our Great Plains Annual Conference (GPAC) leadership has requested that churches move forward slowly in reopening their buildings and follow the strictest guidelines for their county.
4. Let us remember that spiritual growth was never closed; church ministry was never closed. It is only our building that has been closed.
5. Our mission at CHUM compels us to share grace and include all people; this plan is written with an eye toward continuing that commitment, even while we practice appropriate safety precautions.

### **Pace of Implementation/Timeline**

1. The planned phases will intentionally progress slowly. There are no specific dates or timelines assigned to the different phases.
2. We acknowledge that this will be too slow for some and too fast for others. We encourage everyone to exercise personal responsibility and choice.
3. We aim to gain trust that CHUM is creating the safest environment possible for people to gather, while acknowledging that there is no situation in which there is zero risk right now.
4. The virus is likely to impact the use of our building for at least two years. This creates opportunities for creativity in CHUM's ministry. The reality and uncertainty of a global pandemic means that we may need to move back and forth between the phases. This will require patience and flexibility from all of us.
5. WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER.

### **Your Role as an Active Congregant**

Creating a safe place for all at CHUM depends on each of us. Establishing and practicing a new culture of norms will require patience, creativity, and graceful mutual accountability.

1. Please note that if you do not feel comfortable participating in in-person activities at CHUM, you are encouraged to continue sheltering in place. This is especially important for the most vulnerable among us. CHUM will continue to provide opportunities for fellowship and worship in online/remote formats.
2. Engage in rigorous self-screening for [symptoms of COVID-19](#) prior to participating in any of CHUM's in-person activities.
3. Observe the safety precautions and personal protection equipment (PPE) that are required as a way to offer hospitality and welcome to others who attend events.
4. Notify the church office if you test positive for COVID-19 and you have participated in in-person church activities, or if you are staff and have a close contact exposure ([KDHE](#)).

### **Education of the Congregation**

1. In addition to this narrative document, the content of this plan will be communicated through color-coded charts so that the basics of each phase are easily understood at a glance.
2. These materials will be shared via multiple communication methods including but not limited to printed posters in the building, information on our website, social media

platforms, informational videos and the church newsletter. The full document will be available on the church website with any updates that are made.

3. A sign will be placed on the office door indicating which phase we are currently in.

### **Phase Change Requirements**

1. Assessment will occur 14 days into each phase and as necessary thereafter. Seven additional days should be allowed for transition to a new phase.
2. Based on the recommendations from [Kansas's Ad Astra Plan to Reopen Kansas](#), phase changes will be determined using county data from the [Sedgwick County COVID-19 Dashboard](#) and the [KDHE webpage](#):
  - a. Forward phase changes must be preceded by a two-week decrease in the 14-day rolling average of new cases in the county.
  - b. Forward phase changes can only be made when the [Area Hospital Status Assessment](#) indicates there are adequate hospital beds available in the county.
  - c. Sufficient sanitizing and personal protection equipment must be available to CHUM prior to a forward phase change.
  - d. Backward phase changes or building/activity shutdowns may be enacted if needed to comply with state or local requirements, if new cases in the county are increasing, or in the case of a significant congregational exposure or congregational cluster.
3. The Safe Reopening Task Force will convene to determine movement within and among phases, using the above considerations as well as additional available information. In addition, the Task Force is authorized to make adjustments to this plan as long as they fall within the scope and spirit of this plan.

### **Plan for when a Staff Member, Congregant, or Church Visitor becomes Sick**

1. Separate anyone who exhibits [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 during hours of operation, and ensure that children are not left without adult supervision. Advise the person who is ill to return home or to their healthcare facility.
2. Contact the Sedgwick County Health Department in case of a COVID-19 exposure (GPAC, CDC).
3. Contact CHUM's insurance company (Church Mutual) to open a claim if appropriate.
4. Contact CHUM's district superintendent (Wichita East).
5. Communicate with staff and congregants about potential exposure while maintaining confidentiality as required by the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) or other applicable laws.
6. Pray for the infected person (without their name due to privacy laws) and respond with grace and love, not blame.
7. Advise those with [exposure](#) to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to [stay home and self-monitor](#) for symptoms, and to follow [CDC guidance](#) if symptoms develop. Additionally, advise those with exposure to dial [211 to learn more about Sedgwick County Coronavirus Screenings](#). According to the Great Plains Annual Conference

(GPAC), known COVID exposure is when someone who tests positive for COVID is in a room with others. All those in the room are then considered exposed.

8. Close off areas used by the person who is [sick](#) and do not use the area until after cleaning and disinfection.
9. Advise staff and congregants with [symptoms](#) of COVID-19, who have tested positive for COVID-19, or who have a known exposure to COVID-19, not to return to the facility until they have met the CDC's [criteria to discontinue home isolation](#) or the [criteria to discontinue self-quarantine after caring for a loved one with COVID-19](#).
10. Ministry may be adjusted depending on the staff exposed to the virus (e.g., if the Pastor is quarantining at home, worship will be delivered remotely from her home).
11. If it is determined that CHUM is the site of a [cluster](#) (two or more infections from different households occurring in roughly the same time and place), additional precautionary steps may be taken (e.g., remaining in the current phase longer, moving back to previous phases, closing the building).

### **Health Screening**

1. Self-screening:
  - a. People may not enter the building if they have had a known exposure to COVID-19 within the previous 14 days.
  - b. People may not enter the building if they currently have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), which include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.
  - c. People who have tested positive for COVID-19 should refrain from being at CHUM in person for at least 3 days after symptoms end (without the use of medication) or 10 days after symptoms first appeared--whichever is longer.
2. Screening at the Church: Our commitment to doing this is because we desire to build trust with our congregation and anyone who enters the building that it is the safest environment we can create.
  - a. Temperatures will be taken with a touchless thermometer outside the church building. If an elevated temperature (above 100.4° F) is identified, the individual will be directed to go to their health care provider immediately and will not be granted entry into the facility.
  - b. There will be a list of self-screening questions regarding symptoms posted outside the church doors. These questions will be verified/repeated with a volunteer screener.
  - c. If anyone is observed with COVID-19-like symptoms (coughing or shortness of breath), they will be asked to not enter the building.

### **Contact Tracing**

1. Through all phases, a log of each person who enters the building will be maintained.
  - a. This log will record: name; email address and/or phone number; the room(s) they accessed; and the date and time.

2. Persons who decline to give their contact information will not be permitted to enter the building.
3. The information will only be used for notification of individuals in the event they may have come into contact with a person who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 or surface touched by a person who has a confirmed case of COVID-19 and to inform our custodial staff which areas of the building have been accessed and need cleaning.
4. This information will be kept for 21 days, after which time it will be shredded.

### **Cleaning and Disinfecting**

1. Follow [recommendations by CDC](#) for disinfecting and cleaning.
2. Office spaces, restrooms, and other high-use common areas will be sanitized daily. For other areas (e.g., sanctuary), a longer waiting period may be necessary in between cleanings. Procedures will be established to communicate when rooms have been sanitized and/or when they have been recently used (e.g., a detailed centralized cleaning log in the office, laminated signs on doors with dates indicating most recent cleaning date and time).
3. Special attention must be given to wiping down all high-touch surfaces (i.e. phones, doors, light switches, etc.)
4. Microphones must be taken apart and sanitized between uses.
5. Once we have the Minuteman sprayer, every room used must be disinfected after each use with Sanibet™ sanitizer (or an equivalent product approved by CDC for COVID-19 disinfecting.)
6. Ensure [safe and correct application](#) of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.

### **Personal Safety Precautions and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Requirements that apply to all phases**

1. Through reservation, or on entering the building, all persons should provide their name and phone number or email address for contact tracing purposes and participate in the health screening detailed on page 4.
2. Masks are required while in the building and at events outside on church grounds. Masks should be made available for any individual without their own. Exempted from wearing masks are:
  - a. Children under age 2
  - b. Anyone who has trouble breathing.
  - c. Anyone who can't remove a face mask without help.
  - d. Persons may temporarily remove their mask when they are:
    - i. Alone in a room or office, or alone outside.
    - ii. Eating (and socially distanced from others).
    - iii. Leading worship (includes worship vocalists, the pastor, or reader).
3. Social distance of at least 6 feet must be maintained between people who do not live in the same household, except for incidental passing (which every effort should be made to minimize).

4. Individuals should sanitize their hands upon entry to the building and frequently while in the building and avoid touching their face as much as possible.
5. Individuals should wipe down any surfaces they touch with disinfecting wipes.
6. Congregants over age 60, or who are health-compromised in some way (and therefore more vulnerable) are encouraged to shelter-in-place and participate remotely in church worship and activities. Staff who fall into those same categories of vulnerability are encouraged to work from home as their position allows.

### **Phase 1 - Remote Ministries**

#### Safety precautions and PPE requirements unique to Phase 1 and applied to all activities in this phase

1. Limit of 10 people in a room at any given time; funerals and weddings also limited to 10 people, even if they take place outside..

#### Building access

1. Building has limited access; the door to the church building will remain locked at all times, and only staff or essential volunteers will be allowed to access the building.
2. Staff primarily work from home.
3. Essential staff and volunteers working in the areas of ministry that are functioning may enter the building to do their work or get supplies, and spend the minimum time possible in the building.
4. Playground is roped off, per [CDC guidelines](#).

#### Worship

1. Small groups gather to “produce” online worship, unless there is a situation in which a known COVID-19 exposure restricts the worship staff from accessing the building, in which case worship is filmed at home by individual staff members and then made available to the congregation online.
2. Anyone who must be positioned in front of the vocalists must be as far away as possible to diminish the risk of aerosol transmission.
3. Wind instruments are not allowed.

#### Sunday School, Committees, Small Groups, Fellowship, and Community Groups

- Meet electronically only

#### Children’s Ministry

- Meet electronically only

#### Youth Ministry

- Meet electronically only

#### Food Pantry

- Food is pre-bagged and distributed outside.
- No hot breakfast is served or distributed.

#### Pastoral Care

- Pastoral care is offered by cards, emails, phone, and video platforms only.
- All premarital counseling and funeral preparation is conducted through emails, phone, and video platforms.

- If permitted by county and state guidelines, clergy may officiate at weddings or funerals in the church building, church grounds or an off-site location.
  - a. Live vocal music and wind instruments are not allowed at weddings or funerals, unless the service is held outdoors and the musicians are positioned as far away as possible from the gathered audience.
  - b. There will not be an in-person wedding rehearsal.
  - c. Alternatively, funerals may be provided in a secure format that is online-only and filmed at home by individual staff and congregation members.

**Phase 2 - Small Group Ministries Allowed Outside, Increase to Number Allowed Inside**  
Safety precautions and PPE requirements beginning in Phase 2 and applied to all activities in this phase

1. Limit of 15 people in a room at any given time, as long as physical distancing of at least 6 feet between each person is possible.
2. Limit outdoor gatherings to 30 people. The task force may incrementally increase the number of people who gather outdoors over the course of the phase.
3. Personal safety precautions and PPE for this phase must be followed even when event or gathering is outdoors
4. When meeting on church grounds, the outdoor event or activity must be scheduled through the church office in order to ensure there are not multiple groups planning to gather at the same time in the same space and to ensure there is adequate space for social distancing.
5. Church restrooms are not available for use during outdoor events.
6. In case of inclement weather (rain or heat), outdoor events will be cancelled.

Building access

- Same as Phase 1

Worship

1. Same as Phase 1, except for the addition of FM transmission worship.
2. During FM transmission worship, participants listen to an FM broadcast of the service while parked in the church parking lot (parking in every other parking spot to maintain distancing). Participants are to remain in their vehicles and will not be permitted to access the building to use the restrooms. The number of participants is not limited.

Sunday School, Committees, Small Groups, Fellowship, and Community Groups

- Meet electronically or outdoors

Children's Ministry

1. Meet electronically
2. Children may participate in intergenerational outdoor events with their families.

Youth Ministry

- Meet electronically or outdoors

Food Pantry

- Same as Phase 1

Pastoral Care

1. Pastoral care by Congregational Care Ministers (CCM's) is offered by cards, emails, phone and video platforms only.
2. Pastoral care by clergy, premarital counseling and funeral preparation is offered by cards, emails, phone, and video platforms as well as in person, and must be scheduled by appointment.
  - a. The preferred location for pastoral care is outdoors, but in certain situations may be allowed in the church office.
  - b. In certain instances home visits or hospital visits may be allowed.
3. Restrictions for weddings and funerals are the same as in Phase 1.

### **Phase 3 Small Groups Ministries Allowed Inside**

#### Safety precautions and PPE requirements beginning in Phase 3 and applied to all activities in this phase

1. All rooms must be scheduled through the church office. The sanctuary may be scheduled at least 48 hours between uses. Other rooms must be scheduled at least 3 days apart to allow for cleaning.
2. Classrooms and meeting rooms will be measured and a new capacity limit will be listed on the door; chairs will be placed at least 6 feet apart and extra chairs or furniture will be removed. Users of the rooms are discouraged from moving the furniture.
3. Limit of 15 people in any one room at any given time or the new capacity limit determined by square footage, whichever is smaller. Over the course of this phase, increases in this limit may occur, if the room capacity allows for it.
  - a. Participants for indoor classes and small groups will complete advanced registration online or through the church staff; staff or volunteers at the building entrance will screen registrants and check them off as they arrive.
4. Limit outdoor gatherings to 50 or the number we ended with in Phase 2, whichever is higher, with the possibility of increasing incrementally, as appropriate.
5. Touchless hand sanitizer stations will be placed at strategic points for each day or event.
6. A cart with hand sanitizer pumps and disinfecting wipes will be placed by the office entrance; leaders of each group must take hand sanitizer and wipes to their meeting space for use in that room and return them to the cart after their meeting. Leaders will also document their use of the room on the cleaning log located in the office and flip the sign on the door to indicate the room has been used.
7. No shared or communal food or drink will be served indoors.
8. Church restrooms will be available for use during outdoor events, but only if a staff person is available to conduct the health screening and collect contact information.

#### Building access

1. Building has limited access; the door to the church building will remain locked at all times; entry will be granted to those whose groups are scheduled to meet or those who have an appointment.
2. Staff are primarily working from home; however, 1-2 staff persons will be scheduled for selected office hours based on the groups that are scheduled to meet inside the building



3. Essential staff and congregation members working in the areas of ministry that are functioning may enter the building to do their work or get supplies.
4. Playground will be roped off, per [CDC guidelines](#).

#### Worship

- Same as Phase 2

#### Sunday School, Committees, Small Groups, Fellowship, and Community Groups

- Meet electronically, outdoors or indoors

#### Children's Ministry

- Same as Phase 2

#### Youth Ministry

- Meet electronically, outdoors or indoors

#### Food Pantry

- Same as Phase 2

#### Pastoral Care

- Same as Phase 2

### **Phase 4 Indoor Worship with Limited Access**

#### Safety precautions and PPE requirements beginning in Phase 4 and applied to all activities in this phase

1. Limit number of people in any one room to the new capacity limit determined by square footage, with the exception of the sanctuary, which begins with a limit of 50 people in the gathered audience and increases incrementally (but not exceed the new socially-distanced room capacity)
2. Limit outdoor gatherings to 80 or the number we ended with in Phase 2, whichever is higher, with the possibility of increasing incrementally, as appropriate.

#### Building access

1. Building has limited access; the door to the church building will remain locked at all times; entry will be granted to those whose groups are scheduled to meet or those with an appointment and who are there on church business.
2. Office is staffed by normal hours. Staff will work primarily in the office according to their normal schedules. Staff can make arrangements to work from home, if needed. Please note that the office/building will not be open for people to simply drop in.

#### Worship

1. Worship will continue to be made available online and through FM transmission.
2. All worship services with a gathered congregation will take place in the sanctuary to allow for social distancing.
3. One service per week will have a gathered congregation (either 9 am or 10:15 am). The other service will be either live streamed from the fellowship hall or pre-recorded and premiered on our website and social media at the appropriate time. Both services will continue to be available online every week. The service that is live streamed or pre-recorded will have a team as described in the previous phase. With time, CHUM may add additional in-person service(s) each week with time adjustments to allow for sanitization between the services.

4. The service with a gathered audience will be limited to 40 minutes in length; the service that is live streamed only or pre-recorded and premiered on Sunday will be a normal length.
5. The gathered audience will be limited in size, starting with 50 and increasing incrementally by 20 no sooner than 21 days apart. The maximum size of the gathered audience is determined by the size of the sanctuary.
6. The only portion of the building that will be accessible during in-person worship is the sanctuary and the restrooms in that hallway.
7. Congregation members will RSVP on a rotating basis to attend the service with a gathered audience. At least 3 spaces each week will be reserved for guests.
8. The only entrance/exit that will be used is the sliding door by the sanctuary, which will be set to open for the duration of time that people are entering or exiting.
9. Procedures Prior to Worship:
  - a. Congregants need to arrive 20 minutes before the service begins so that seating can be done according to the procedures detailed here.
  - b. One or two people will be stationed outside to perform the health check before entry to the building. Those who do not meet the criteria are invited to worship in the parking lot through the FM system or streaming to their phone. Disposable masks will be provided to those who don't have one.
  - c. Touchless hand sanitizer will be at the entry and at strategic points.
  - d. A greeter will be stationed inside six feet away to mark people off the printed RSVP list and give them instructions for how to enter the sanctuary--those who can't walk far will be allowed to enter through the side door and sit in one of the front seat spots, those who can walk farther will be directed to walk to the narthex where another greeter will be stationed
  - e. Seats will be marked in the sanctuary. A path will be marked on the floor with tape to show people where to walk and how to get to each seat.
  - f. If we get to the point of having two services, with adequate time for sanitizing in between services, (or funeral services during the week), one group can sit in front of the paper seat markers, and the next group can sit behind the paper seat markers for sanitization purposes.
  - g. An usher will be stationed in the back narthex directing people to which seat they are to walk and which path they are to take.
  - h. Children and youth will be seated with their families. The children's play area at the back of the sanctuary will be removed.
10. Procedures During Worship:
  - a. Once the gathered audience is seated, leaving to use the restroom is discouraged.
  - b. Instrumental music (no wind instruments) may be provided live during the service. There will not be live vocal music or singing by the congregation. Songs that require vocal accompaniment will be recorded prior to the service and played during the service.
  - c. Hymnals and other items in the pews will be removed.

- d. Offering baskets will be available at stations near the door.
  - e. During greeting time, congregants will remain at their assigned spot and greet one another from their seats.
  - f. The worship order will be available on the screens and as a PDF download to a phone or computer rather than in print.
  - g. Communion will be offered during services that are online-only rather than when there is a gathered audience.
  - h. Baptism will be delayed until there is no need for social distancing.
  - i. Children will remain in their seats for the children's time.
  - j. New members or persons being recognized in some way will stand where they are rather than come to the front.
  - k. If there is a lay person leading part of worship, they must arrive early and sit in a designated spot near the front. Lay persons leading worship and pastor will wear masks until it is time for them to speak, and then they may remove the mask.
  - l. Speaking will take place from the upper level of the chancel.
11. Procedures for Dismissal from Worship:
- a. People will be dismissed seat by seat and exit the sanctuary from the front side door so the most vulnerable people leave first. Then the people who arrived first will be dismissed next; the people who arrived last will be dismissed last to reduce the total time that people are in the sanctuary.
  - b. People who attend the in-person 9:00 service and plan to attend Sunday School classes immediately afterward will move from the sanctuary to their classrooms based on the current procedure. Sunday School participants are encouraged to pre-register for class in advance.

Sunday School, Committees, Small Groups, Fellowship, and Community Groups

- Same as Phase 3

Children's Ministry

- If feasible, Children's Ministries will be expanded to include outdoor and indoor intergenerational events.

Youth Ministry

- Same as Phase 3.

Food Pantry

- Same as Phase 3.

Pastoral Care

- Same as Phase 3.

**Phase 5 Normal Operations**

1. All normal activities resume.
2. Precautionary measures may be continued, depending on CDC, state, and county guidelines, as well as community data and current research on COVID-19. These measures may include deep cleaning, disinfecting, mask use, social distancing, altering locations of activities, spacing out activities in a given location, and conducting worship without live singing or wind instruments.

Church Council approved the CHUM Plan for Safely Reopening the Building on June 15, 2020.