



Williamsburg
United Methodist Church

March 10, 2021

Dear Faithful Friends in Christ,

We hope this letter finds you well, and enjoying the warmer days of late!

Our hearts are longing to return to in-person worship, and we, your Healthy Church Team (HCT), sense that deep need. It has been a long winter and an even longer year. The positivity rates for new COVID infections in Williamsburg/James City County after the holidays kept many of us away from group settings, but as conditions have improved, the HCT believes that we can responsibly and deliberately make plans for a return to in-person worship.

PALM SUNDAY

We plan to return to in-person worship on ***Passion/Palm Sunday, March 28 at 11:00 am***. Based on the requirements of the Virginia Conference of the UMC, we are limited to 118 people in our Sanctuary to ensure appropriate social distancing. We ask those planning to attend to ***register online*** via our website (www.williamsburgumc.org) or by calling the Church Office (757-229-1771). ***Registration for the March 28 service will open on the morning of Monday, March 22 and will close Thursday, March 25 at 11:59 pm.***

EASTER SUNDAY

Registration will likewise be asked for those planning to attend the 11:00 am Easter Sunday service. We will also have an in-person Easter Sunrise Service at 6:30 am and an in-person Parking-lot Communion Service at 4:00 pm. This will enable members and friends to choose the type of Easter worship which they feel most comfortable attending.

IN-PERSON GUIDELINES

All attendees must wear a mask (covering the nose and mouth) for the entire time while on the church campus; and we regret that no exceptions may be made. You will enter from the rear parking lot. You will be asked to verify your health and someone will take your name and contact data. You will then receive a bulletin and be ushered to the next available seat. In observance of CDC guidelines and the requirements of our Conference, there will be no live singing, but we will be blessed by our digital Choir as we have been for most of the past year. At the conclusion of the service, you will be given directions by our worship leaders as to how to exit the Sanctuary. Everyone must keep socially-distanced from others (six feet), excepting those living in the same household.

CLASSES, STUDIES, CIRCLES AND OTHER SMALL GROUPS

The life of our church has continued since summer; the building is *open* during the week! We welcome the return of classes, studies, circles and other small groups, and indeed a few have already begun meeting. At present, the Governor has limited non-worship, group-settings to no more than 10 persons. Sunday School is not yet able to resume in-person on Sunday mornings, but *can* take place at any other time during the week, within state-mandated attendance limits.

FUNERALS

Funerals, which are worship services, will now permit the gathering of up to 75 persons ***after March 28.***

WEDDINGS

We will permit services of Christian Marriage (weddings!) to take place ***after August 1.*** These events will take place in compliance with all safety requirements that may apply at the time of occurrence.

A WORD OF THANKS

We appreciate all those who have worked very hard to allow our church to continue during this difficult time. Keeping all persons safe has been the number one priority of the HCT since we began our work last April, and it continues to be. We recognize not all of us will choose to return to in-person worship as the pandemic season continues over the months to come. We will continue to offer our services via livestreaming to care for the needs of all our church family.

We appreciate your patience as we seek to make the best decisions possible to ensure your well-being, and that of our other brothers and sisters in Christ.

Peace Be with You,



Betsy Harrison
Chair, Healthy Church Team



Dave Rochford
Lead Pastor