

## **Recommendation from COVID Response Committee 6/12/2020**

On June 4 the State of Colorado updated safer at home guidelines for a variety of organizations including houses of worship. Our committee met to review those guidelines, review the actions of other churches based on the revised guidelines and assess feedback from our congregation. Here is a summary of the revised guidelines:

- The first two sentences of the order state, "The safest option to protect the most people and to prevent the spread of the virus is to offer services online during this phase of the pandemic. We strongly recommend that those who are at higher risk continue to use online options."
- Required capacity limitation of 50 people or 50% of capacity whichever is smaller. Use pre-registration to ensure compliance.
- Social distancing requirement including entry, exit, and use of restrooms of 6 feet minimum per family group. Use floor markings to designate appropriate distancing.
- Requirement to disinfect all areas after each service.
- Requirement to use masks as much as possible.
- Create a touchless worship service including no Hymnals, individual packaged communion etc.
- Choirs and congregational singing should not be a part of worship.
- Requires speakers and performing singers distanced 25 feet from anyone else.
- Children's activities must follow guidelines for child care facilities.

Based on these guidelines, we recommend continuing only online services through at least July. Our committee plans to meet monthly to review any changes to state guidelines, experiences of other churches and feedback from our congregation. We will provide the Council with a monthly summary of that review.

We recognize that some churches are now offering in-building worship. Our recommendation is based on our belief that our congregation understands the risks and limitations of in-building worship under these guidelines, and the need to provide for the safety of those in our congregation who are at higher risk. Given that understanding as well as the success of our online worship, we believe our recommendation is appropriate.

We also recommend that the Council encourage the staff to develop and offer non-worship small group outdoor activities following the simpler state guidelines for outdoor gatherings. This could include existing programs such as book group or Theology on Tap or new programming focused on staying connected in relationship.

Submitted by,

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