

First Christian Church will launch Phase 1 of our ReGathering plan on Sunday, June 7.

The wording of the sentence above is very intentional. Phase 1 of several and a ReGathering, not a return or resumption of what was previously.

On June 7, a 9 am and 11 am worship service will be available to attend in the sanctuary. Also, at 11 am a livestream broadcast of that service will be available.

Let me say it differently: Beginning June 7, there will be three ways to worship with/at FCC: 9 am, 11 am and online at 11 am.

The two live services will continue to be abbreviated much like you have already experienced online, lasting about 35 minutes.

Only worship at this time. No Sunday School, small groups, choir, etc.

Social distancing rules will be in place. Masks are encouraged but not required. Seating has been spaced out to roughly half of our pew capacity. No offering will be passed but baskets will be available, and individual communion will be given to you as you enter the space to take either during the service or to take home with you. No paper bulletins.

Some actions will be altered. Children's moment will happen, but children will remain in their pews with parents. Nursery is open for the under 2 but temperature check is required upon entry. Your visiting with one another must happen outside after worship.

It is not a perfect solution, but neither is it the complete return. We will continue to open over several phases over the rest of the summer as the community continues to heal.

But it is a tremendous first step. We can worship together again!

I am indebted to the Executive Committee, Elder Body, and especially the staff for days and hours of work on two tracks of worship, digital and hopeful return, prepared simultaneously.

Ultimately, all of this must be approached with the corporate safety of our congregation as the priority. In every action, we will err on the side of public safety.

If you are in any of the risk groups, **please continue to worship from home.** I cannot say that too strongly.

You will be receiving a poll email where you can declare your worship intentions: 9am, 11 am, worship from home. Answering that poll will help us plan. Thank you for that.

Continue to pray for leadership during this pivot moment. It has been surreal to process safety in the small things of how we enter the building, where we sit, what we do and how we worship. Everything and everyone have been under a vital review of safety.

So, it means that some things will be different. For a short time, they must be different. Be patient with leadership and with each other.

Celebrate this moment, for what it is, a tremendous first step.

I hope to see you very soon, very safely.

Mike