

# **New Hope United Methodist Church**

3777 New Hope Road

Pomaria, SC 29126



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As God's church prepares to resume in-person worship, we are working to do so in a way that is authentic and safe. It is important to worship God in the style and tradition that is authentic to the individual church/people. By this, I mean that our worship should reflect the story, the people, the tradition, and the hope of our community. I know we are so excited to finally worship in the space of the sanctuary, and our Church Council has worked to create a plan that helps us do just that. This plan is intended to preserve the ongoing story of New Hope UMC while taking necessary precautions. The worship service might look different, but it is so important to our church that it still resembles an authentic expression of New Hope.

I try to refrain from using the word "normal" in reference to worship because there is nothing "normal" about worshipping our Lord and Savior. With that being said, God's Holy Spirit moves and calls us to be led in worship in a way that invites us to be open to what God might be up to in our midst. While the Council's intent was to resume worship in the most "normal" way possible, we are called to create inclusive spaces of worship. During this time of pandemic, our plan of resuming in-person worship has taken into consideration those among us who are most vulnerable as to remain faithful to our calling of sharing the good news with all people.

To just highlight a couple of things in the plan, it is important to note that online services will still be available as we resume in-person worship services. We are also working to continue using our radio transmitter to broadcast into the parking lot during the 11:00 a.m. service. This is for anyone who might want to "come to church" but does not want to enter the sanctuary. If you are not ready to rejoin the in-person worship service please know that you are loved and honored in your decision. We want to create spaces that honor the various levels of comfort pertaining to gathering. We are called to "meet people where they are," and if you feel it is best to stay home at this time, we want to honor that and create ways to be connected and worship together.

A final note, this plan will be revisited often and is subject to revision. We will make known any changes that are made to this plan as we seek a more excellent way of worshipping during these unprecedented times.

God's blessings unto you,

Rev. Cameron Levi  
ctlevi@umcsc.org