

Pathfinder UMC Reopening Guidelines

Guiding Principles:

1. Pathfinder UMC walks by faith, not by sight. We trust in the power of God to bring this pandemic to an end and to heal this land. That being said, out of an abundance of caution:

2. Pathfinder UMC will not open for regular worship and business as usual until State, Federal and medical authorities deem it safe to do so. We will also adhere to the guidelines put forth from the Office of the Bishop of the Michigan UMC.

3. Pathfinder UMC, while it is our strong desire to be reunited with one another, will continue to place the safety of our congregants, staff and those we serve as first priority. We are a congregation where a large number of our population fall under the “*most vulnerable*” category.

4. The decision to reopen the Pathfinder Kids pre-school, before and after school program, and the summer program will be made in consultation with the Church Council and Pathfinder Kids Team.

a. The need for such services for our community will play a large roll on how soon we open. Marcie is actively polling her parents and consumers for their needs.

b. Safety to the children and staff will play the most important roll.

c. Guidelines from the State of Michigan, Office of the Bishop and this document will be adhered to upon reopening the facilities.

d. A “tentative” date of 15 June has been set for opening the Summer Program. We stress that this is a tentative date and will depend upon all the factors contained herein. Marcie and Elise are currently planning towards this date.

e. Pre-school and Before /After School programs will not reopen unit the fall at the earliest.

5. There is a strong need to have in person worship, small groups, outreach ministries, and administrative work as in the past. The gathering of God’s people is imperative.

6. Online worship has been improved tremendously and deserves a consideration for continuation into the future. Likewise for small group ministries and administrative meetings.

Re-Opening Plan Phase 1:

1. Only implemented once the Governor lifts the “Stay at Home” orders and Bishop of Michigan allows implementation. The Governor and the Bishop will set the minimum standards for safety. Where these guidelines do not agree, their guidelines will be adhered to.

2. No more than 10 persons in the church facilities at a time.

3. Full/Part time Church Staff will resume normal hours and office hours. Staff meetings will be held at church, with the allowance for those who do not feel safe (or are ill) to attend via Zoom.

4. Pathfinder Kids part time staff will be dependent upon their opening date. (Additional guidelines for Pathfinder Kids are being developed by Marcie and Elise.)

5. Worship services will continue on line. Praise band will be able to meet at the church and record music for worship if desired as long as social distancing guidelines are followed.

6. Consideration to live online worship will be given and decided upon by the Worship Director in consultation with the Senior Pastor.

7. Drive thru church will be permitted if there are materials we desire to get out to families, church members, etc... If such occurs, responsible parties will be present on Sunday mornings to facilitate. Masks, gloves, social distancing will be required.

8. Scout leadership may meet in the Scout Office in the basement. However, no indoors meetings of scouts will be permitted.

9. No outside organizations will be given access to the facilities, except for #8 above.

10. Funerals, Celebrations of Life will be permitted for only the immediate family, 10 or so. Weddings will not be permitted.

11. Drop offs and pick ups for donation center will be permitted. Masks, gloves and social distancing will be required.

12. Administration meetings will continue to be online.

13. Small groups will continue to meet online. Small groups may decide to meet in homes at their discretion. Small groups will not meet in the church regardless of size.

14. There will be no children / youth ministry events in person. Children's and youth ministries will continue online.

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15. In person Pastoral care will be permitted taking appropriate precautions for those being visited.

16. PuzHub outreach ministry will continue until no longer needed/desired by the community.

Re-Opening Plan Phase 2:

1. Shifting to phase 2 will be contingent upon the Governor's relaxing of restrictions and the concurrence of the Bishop of Michigan UMC. The shift will occur by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Church Council.

2. *Most vulnerable, and persons with any symptoms* should stay home and continue to worship online.

3. Worship on site may resume. However, stringent precautions will be maintained. The Worship Director in consultation with the Senior Pastor will consider Drive-in church as an option.

a. Masks are highly recommended.

b. Every other pew will be closed with caution tape.

c. No coffee or snacks will be served. Congregants will be encouraged to **not** meet in the Gathering Area before or after worship.

d. Sunday morning small groups will not meet initially. No children's ministries will be offered at this point. At some point, determined by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Church Council, Sunday morning small groups will be allowed to recommence using only the classrooms on the lower level of the children's wing or the church offices / lounge.

e. Worship should be either recorded and / or live feed online as well as in sanctuary / drive in.

f. Entrance to the church will be via the main entrance (under drive thru) only. All other doors will remain locked. Main entrance doors will be propped open to minimize persons having to touch the doors.

g. Greeters will be stationed at the main entrance, but will not be permitted to shake hands or hug. Greet with a wave and a verbal welcome. Masks should be worn by the greeters and they should stay 6ft away from incoming parishioners.

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h. Ushers will not be used except for communion. Bulletins, hard copy, will be used but they will be placed on tables at the entrances to the sanctuary.

i. Communion will be served when appropriate. However, all servers and preparers must wear masks and gloves. Hands should be washed and/or hand sanitizer used just prior to serving / preparing. Small cups and pre-cut bread will be used. Each will be handed to the congregant as they come by so that only one person is touching the elements.

j. Congregational singing will be limited at the start of this phase. Solos, special music will be permitted. However, choir practice and choir will not be permitted during this phase. (Almost all of our choir members are in the *most vulnerable* category.)

k. Those of the same household may sit in the same pew together without social distancing. All others should sit apart with available distance between families.

l. If Drive-in church is used as an option, we will park cars in every other spot to allow for proper social distancing. Further guidelines might be necessary if we choose this as an option.

4. Access to the children's wing (upstairs) and lower levels (except classrooms when small groups recommence) will be secured. Gym, kitchen and fellowship hall will not be open for use on Sunday am. This is simply to minimize the areas that will need to be cleansed after Sunday worship.

5. All areas that are to be used will be cleansed thoroughly by custodial staff prior to Sunday am. All areas used that morning will be cleansed by custodial staff following worship. Special attention will be given to bathrooms, surfaces and door handles.

Re-Opening Plan Phase 3:

1. Shifting to phase 3 will be contingent upon the Governor's relaxing of restrictions and the concurrence of the Bishop of Michigan UMC. The shift will occur by the Senior Pastor in consultation with the Church Council.

2. Full worship will recommence in the sanctuary. Online worship videos will continue. Singing by all will be allowed.

3. Children's Ministries will be restarted at the discretion of the Children's Director in consultation with the Senior Pastor. Addendum A Considerations for Reopening Children's Ministry in Michigan will be followed.

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4. On site Youth Ministries will be restarted at the discretion of the Associate Pastor for Youth and Family Discipleship in consultation with the Senior Pastor.

5. Small group and administrative meetings may recommence on site at the discretion of the Small Group Ministry leader and the Church Council Chair respectively.

6. Outside Organization requests will be considered one at a time.

7. Scout Ministries will recommence at the discretion of the Scout Master and other leaders.

Approved this date: May 26, 2020

Linda Depta,
Church Council Chair

Bro Don Wolfgang,
Senior Pastor