

UMC of Red Bank

Safety Policy Regarding Indoor Special Event Experiences During COVID-19

1 Introduction

As the COVID-19 pandemic is brought under control through introduction of safety protocols and population immunity, the United Methodist Church of Red Bank (UMCRB) is developing a Post-COVID-19 Property Reopening Plan. As part of this plan every effort is being made to conform to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention requirements, the State of New Jersey requirements, and to keep as a goal the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference goal to, “Spread the Good News of Jesus Christ as together we flatten COVID-19 and ensure zero infections are spread by United Methodist Activity.”

1.1 Purpose

This document establishes the UMCRB safety policy regarding indoor special event experiences during COVID-19. This policy is intended to cover special, non-repeating events like weddings and funerals.

1.2 Team Members Responsible for this Policy

The Building Use Safety Committee is responsible for the development and maintenance of this policy.

1.3 Team Members Responsible for Adherence to this Policy

The UMCRB Senior Pastor, Director of Music, and Worship Committee Members are responsible for ensuring these policies are followed during indoor special event services.

1.4 Definitions

Masks are a simple barrier to help prevent respiratory droplets from traveling into the air and onto other people when the person wearing the mask over the nose and mouth coughs, sneezes, talks, or raises their voice. The CDC recommends all people 2 years of age and older wear a mask in public settings and when around people who do not live in your household.

1.5 Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to all church staff, church members, or visitors who attend indoor special event services at UMCRB.

1.6 For More Information

For more information regarding this policy contact the UMCRB Senior Pastor.

1.7 Sources of Information

The following sources were referenced when developing this policy:

New Jersey COVID Information Hub: Are People Allowed to Gather in Person
<https://covid19.nj.gov/faqs/nj-information/reopening-guidance-and-restrictions/are-people-allowed-to-gather-in-person>

UMCRB Safety Policy Regarding Indoor Small Group Worship Issue 1
(posted on website at <https://www.umcredbank.org/>)

2 Safety Policy

The following specifies indoor special event service requirements.

- a) Gathering size shall be in accordance with New Jersey State Guidelines as outlined at the New Jersey COVID Information Hub.
 - a. At the time this document was written, the guidelines were as follows: Indoor gatherings for special events, such as wedding ceremonies, funerals, or memorial services, must be limited to 150 people or 25% of a room's capacity -- whichever number is lower.
 - b. While the event size shall not exceed the state guidelines, the Building Use Room Capacity document will be consulted and adhered to in order to.
- b) Special event services will be held in the Sanctuary. Service times will be planned in accordance with a building use schedule to ensure appropriate cleaning, staffing and other scheduling concerns are considered.
- c) Ushers shall be available at each service to direct participant flow during entry/exit and to take attendance.
- d) Face masks must be worn at all times by all attendees over the age of two and service leaders while in the church parking lot and while in the church building. * Any type of Communion observance that requires the removal of face masks shall require special approval by Church Council. (*Note: If an attendee is struggling to breathe through their mask, they should remove it and immediately move to an exit and seek medical assistance, if needed.)
- e) All attendees shall stay six feet apart from individuals from other households.
- f) Upon arrival all attendees will:
 - a. Enter through the brown door on the right side of the back porch
 - b. Perform a Health Assessment
 - c. Sign in indicating their successful completion of the health assessment

Note: An Usher or Greeter shall arrive early in order to meet each attendee at the door to ensure they perform the health assessment, sign in, and proceed directly to the Sanctuary.
- g) Attendees will sit within the designated areas in the Sanctuary, at appropriate distance from individuals from other households. Seating designations will not be modified by attendees.
- h) Designated Sanctuary pews shall be sanitized before attendees arrive and again after use.
- i) Hand sanitizer stations shall be placed at the church building entry area and attendees shall be encouraged to use it upon arrival.
- j) Attendance must be taken by an usher or greeter at each special event service in the event contact tracing is needed. Appendix B contains a template that can be used for this purpose.
- k) Printed materials shall not be handed out or passed around during the service.
- l) No food or beverages* may be consumed during the service. (*Note: Water is permitted but attendees must bring their own. Communion is a separate issue. See section d.)
- m) The kitchen shall remain closed at all times.
- n) When possible, worship attendees should use restroom facilities at home and limit restroom use at the church. If restroom use is required while at the church, attendees should limit their use to one of the three restrooms immediately across from the first-floor lounge. Other restrooms throughout the building shall not be used by attendees.
- o) Restrooms shall be sanitized after each scheduled special event.
- p) Special event services will be limited to 1 hour.

- q) When the service ends, all attendees shall leave the Sanctuary at the direction of the ushers, maintaining appropriate social distancing. Attendees shall proceed immediately to the brown door at the rear of the church, exit the building and proceed directly to their cars.
- r) There shall be no congregational singing. One musician is permitted to sing at a time, must be situated 15 feet from any other person in attendance, and wear a face mask at all times.
- s) Microphones shall not be shared by anyone in attendance, and shall be disinfected after use.
- t) In instances when physical distancing is made impossible for liturgical purposes, such as baptism or the giving and receiving of wedding rings, every effort will be taken to minimize the length of close contact.

3 Communication Plan

The information specified in this policy shall be communicated in the following ways:

3.1 Communication to Church Staff and Worship Committee

The Senior Pastor, Director of Music and Worship Committee shall receive a copy of this policy.

3.2 Communication to Special Event Attendees

A user-friendly communication regarding this policy shall be prepared. Information regarding populations particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 shall be included in this communication. A sample of this communication can be found in Appendix A. This communication will be made available to special event attendees through our website.

Upon arrival at the church, a designated person shall greet attendees at the brown door at the rear of the church to ensure they perform the health assessment and sign in. Prior to starting the service, the worship leader will highlight the safety policies to attendees.

3.3 Communication to Church Members at Large

A user-friendly communication regarding this policy shall be prepared and made available to church members through our website.

Issue Number: 1.0

Approved By: Church Council

Approval Date: 1/25/2021

APPENDIX A
COMMUNICATION TEMPLATE
FOR
INDOOR SPECIAL EVENT SERVICE ATTENDEES

The following information may be used as a template for communicating to indoor special event service attendees and church members through the website.

During all indoor church events, the health of all attendees is of primary importance. For this reason, safety requirements have been established for our time together.

Things to Know Prior to Leaving Home:

Vulnerable People: *In keeping with guidance from the Greater New Jersey Conference, we remind everyone to be aware that some people are at increased risk for COVID-19. For more information on whether you may be at increased risk please review the information found here:*

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fneed-extra-precautions%2Fpeople-at-increased-risk.html

IF YOU ARE SICK STAY HOME: *When you arrive at church you will be asked to perform the following health assessment:*

<https://www.umcredbank.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/UMCRB-Sign-In-Process-Issue-5.0.pdf>

If you cannot successfully complete the assessment, please do not attend the special event service.

Follow Established Safety Requirements: *Taking care of ourselves and each other is an important part of being the church. To this end, it is imperative that all safety requirements are followed during our time together. Please follow all established safety requirements and proceed directly to and from the Sanctuary. Do not enter parts of the building that are not related to the special event.*

Food and Beverages: *No food or beverages* may be consumed during gatherings so please do not bring them. (*Note: Water is permitted but please minimize time without mask when drinking. If you plan to drink water, please bring your own.)*

Church Kitchen: *The Church kitchen is currently closed.*

Restrooms: In order to minimize restroom use, and thus reduce sanitation requirements, we ask that you use the restroom prior to leaving home and when possible avoid using restrooms while at church.

What to Expect Upon Arrival at the Church:

Mask Wearing: Masks must be worn by everyone over the age of two at all times* after arriving at church including while in the parking lot and in the church building. (Please bring your own.) (*Note: If an attendee is struggling to breathe through their mask, they should remove it and immediately move to an exit and seek medical assistance, if needed.)

Social Distancing: A Social Distance of 6 feet or more must be maintained at all times between yourself and anyone that is not a part of your household, even while in the parking lot.

What to Expect When Entering the Church Building:

Where to Enter the Church Building: All attendees must enter the church building through the brown door on the right side of the back porch.

Hand Sanitizing: A hand sanitizing station will be set up at the entry area. We strongly encourage its use upon entering the church building.

Health Assessment: Upon entering the building, each person will be required to perform a health assessment. If you cannot successfully complete the Health Assessment you cannot attend the special event service.

Signing In: After successfully completing the health assessment each attendee must sign in indicating a successful health assessment.

Proceeding to the Worship Space: After signing in, all worship attendees must proceed directly to the Sanctuary. Do not linger in the hallways or tour around the building for any reason.

What to Expect During the Special Event:

Seating: Sanitized pews will be marked appropriate distance from one another in the worship space. Please do not sit outside the designated pew areas.

Finding YOUR Seat: Ushers will establish a directional flow to and from the seating areas. Please follow their guidance and sit where designated.

A Reminder About our COVID Safety Policies: At the beginning of each service, the worship leader will provide a brief overview of our COVID safety policies.

Handouts etc.: There will be no bulletins or sharing of materials during the worship service.

Congregational Singing: To minimize the possible spread of aerosols, we will not have congregational singing during our worship time. One musician may sing at a time but will be situated a long distance away from attendees and will remain masked.

Special Event Length: The service will not be more than one hour.

What to Expect When Leaving the Worship Space:

Leaving YOUR Seat: Ushers will establish a directional flow to and from the seating areas. Please follow their guidance and exit as directed.

Exiting the Worship Space: Upon exiting the Sanctuary, all attendees should proceed directly to the brown doors at the rear of the church to exit. Social Distancing must be maintained at all times.

Proceeding to Your Car: Face masks must be worn while proceeding to your car and conversations in the parking lot should be kept to a minimum.

APPENDIX B

ATTENDANCE SHEET FOR SPECIAL EVENT SERVICE

In the event contract tracing at our church becomes necessary, ushers are required to take attendance at special events. The following information should be recorded for each attendee. The information may be left for Sheila Leavitt in the outdoor or indoor office drop box before leaving the service.

Special Event Date & Time:

Service Leaders:

	<i>Attendee First Name</i>	<i>Attendee Last Name</i>
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	<i>Attendee First Name</i>	<i>Attendee Last Name</i>
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