

STERLING UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - HEALTHY CHURCH TEAM

Guidelines for Small Events During a Pandemic

Version 4 – August 12, 2020

Introduction

To provide a safe and healthy environment for all members, clergy, staff and guests during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to comply with the requirements of the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church, the SUMC has established a Healthy Church Team (HCT). The HCT's mission is to develop plans for the safe return to in-person events.

As this document is written, the HCT is not fully prepared to hold events inside the church (other than staff during business hours and small groups preparing on-line worship). We will announce when all the required preparations are complete for resuming indoor events. These Guidelines are written in expectation that when we do start indoor events, they will be held in Gallihugh Hall. This will be the easiest room to sanitize properly and ensures adequate space for social distancing. At this point, we are only planning to hold small events of fewer than 20 people. This document provides guidance and plans only for such small events. Planning events during the pandemic is complicated. Please read this entire document before you begin planning. We have tried not to repeat information, so if a question arises, it's probably included farther down. When the situation improves and it becomes safe to hold larger worship services, we will adapt the rules.

Every proposed event is required to have a plan that details how the organizers plan to comply with the Conference's requirements. This includes all small group gatherings and any activity that occurs on church property. These guidelines have been developed to assist individuals and groups in making such event plans. They are all based on the document titled The Technical Assistance Manual (TAM) produced by Virginia Annual Conference Bishop Sharma Lewis. It is available on-line at <http://doc.vaumc.org/News2020/TAM.pdf>.

An individual or group desiring to hold an event should start by contacting the church office at 703-430-6455. They will be asked to provide their phone number and email address. A member of the church staff will contact the HCT. The HCT will provide an Event Planning Package and assist with developing their plan. The form can be completed manually or as an on-line, fillable form. The HCT will review the form and contact the organizer if more work is needed to approve the event. Upon HCT approval, it will be forwarded to the District Superintendent (DS) for final approval. To gain approval, event organizers are required to enforce the current General Rules and participants will be required to comply.

Step by Step Instructions for Event Organizers

1. Obtain an Event Planning Package from the HCT and follow the included guidance. The package includes this document, Health Acknowledgement posters in English and Spanish, an Event Planning Form, and Health Acknowledgement & Attendance Record forms. This package will be made available on-line.
2. Adherence to the General Rules is of the utmost importance to everyone's safety and health. As you begin planning the event, review the rules below. Consider how similar events were conducted before the pandemic and all the possible conflicts with the new rules. Consider what changes to the event will be required to meet the new rules. Describe in detail how you will conduct the event and comply with the rules on the Event Planning Form.
3. Since our highest priority is to protect the health and safety of all who enter our church, procedures have been established to verify that all participants are in good health prior to attending an event. This is known as the Health Acknowledgement Procedure. The TAM provides a variety of methods for this. At this point, the HCT will *only use one* of these procedures; the one known as the Entryway Health Acknowledgement Procedure. It is fully described below.
4. Designate a Health Monitor. Rules are meaningless without enforcement. The Health Monitor's duties are to enforce the General Rules, administer the Health Acknowledgement procedure, and document attendance with the Health Acknowledgement and Attendance Record. This may be either the event organizer or a participant in the event, but this person should be focused on enforcing the rules throughout the duration of the event. Before the event, the HCT can meet with the designated Health Monitor to familiarize them with the position requirements.
5. Submit the plan to the HCT 14 days before the event. The HCT is required to submit the plan to the District Superintendent ten (10) days before the event. The DS has final approval authority. Once a plan for a specific type of event has received final approval by the DS, future events of the same type will only need approval by the HCT.
6. To provide clear and consistent communication to the congregation, the organizer shall prepare an event announcement to brief participants. See announcement requirements below.
7. Publish the event announcement only after final approval. The HCT will notify you when approval has been granted.
8. Manage the event according to the plan.
9. Submit the Health Acknowledgement & Attendance Record forms to the Director of Operations, Curt Christiansen in Room 108 immediately following the event. If he is not in his office, they may be passed under the door. For privacy and security reasons, the forms should be placed in a sealed envelope addressed to Curt.

General Rules for All Events

- Rule 1.** You must register before the event by notifying the event organizer.
- Rule 2.** Everyone must take their temperature and assess their health using the Health Acknowledgment Form before coming to church. The Health Acknowledgment Form is provided in the event announcement. If you are sick or have a fever, do not go to church. Everyone must also use the Entryway Health Acknowledgment Procedure upon arrival at the church.
- Rule 3.** Do not park next to other vehicles. Leave at least one open space on all sides of your vehicle. The General Rules for face coverings and social distance also apply while in the parking lot.
- Rule 4.** Wear face coverings, which cover the nose and mouth, at all times.
- Rule 5.** Social distancing. You must maintain six feet between all people except among household members. This includes:
- a. No handshakes
 - b. No hugging
 - c. No person to person touching.
 - d. No sharing of papers, books, tools or other materials.
- Rule 6.** No congregational singing.
- Rule 7.** No eating, regardless of the source of the food.
- Rule 8.** There may be *limited* or *no* access to church facilities. Traffic flow plans may be in place for the parking lots and inside buildings. If you are allowed to enter church buildings, you may be restricted to certain areas and restrooms. If restroom use is allowed, you must follow the posted cleaning instructions.
- Rule 9.** There will be no childcare at this point.
- Rule 10.** Comply with all directions from event organizers, Health Monitors and staff.

Note that as the overall situation changes, there may be additional rules, exceptions or changes to protect everyone's health and safety.

The Health Acknowledgement Procedure

To ensure the safety and health of all, every person should assess their own health before coming to church. This assessment will be done by reviewing the Health Acknowledgment Form, which will be included in the event announcement. It includes taking one's temperature *at home* to verify that it is below 100° F, and reviewing the statements in the Health Acknowledgement Form.

We will also be using the Entryway Health Acknowledgement Procedure. Upon arrival, you will be asked to verify your health by responding to the same four statements that are on the Health Acknowledgement Form. These statements will be posted at the door and a Health Monitor will ask you to verify your responses. The Health Monitor will also record your attendance at this point on the Health Acknowledgement and Attendance Record. This will facilitate contact tracing should the need arise.

You may attend only if you acknowledge that all 4 of the following statements are true for you.

Statement 1. I have not had 2 or more of the following symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days:

- Fever (Over 100 degrees Fahrenheit)
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Persistent cough
- Flu-like symptoms
- Diarrhea or intestinal upset
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Recent loss of taste or smell

Statement 2. I have not been in contact with anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (identified above) in the past 14 days.

Statement 3. I have not tested positive for COVID-19, nor am I awaiting test results, nor have I tested positive and have not subsequently had complete resolution of COVID-19 symptoms.

Statement 4. I understand that I am required to immediately notify the church if, after attending any church event, I develop 2 or more symptoms of COVID-19 or test positive for COVID-19. If I am symptomatic or may have been exposed, I will avoid contact with others and seek medical attention. I understand that the Health Acknowledgement and Attendance Record, which includes my name and contact information, will be reviewed by the SUMC Director of Operations and pastor, maintained in a secure location, and that it may be made available to the District Superintendent, the Cabinet, the Office of the Bishop, or the Chancellor. I also understand that if I have developed symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19, or if I attended an event where another attendee developed symptoms or tested positive for COVID-19, the information I provided on the Health Acknowledgement and Attendance Record may be shared with the local Health Department and other government agencies.

The Health Acknowledgement Posters

Health Acknowledgement

Welcome! We're glad you're here.

In order to keep you and other congregants safe and healthy, read and respond to the health questions below. Please affirm to the greeter that you acknowledge the following items are true for you and provide your name and contact number. All persons are required to keep physical distancing of 6 feet or more (from persons outside your household group) and to wear a face covering.



I have not had 2 or more of the following symptoms of COVID-19 in the past 14 days:

- Fever
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Persistent cough
- Flu-like symptoms
- Diarrhea or intestinal upset
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Recent loss of taste or smell

1.

I have not been in contact with anyone experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 (identified in #1) in the past 14 days.

2.

I have not tested positive for COVID-19, nor am I awaiting test results, nor have I tested positive and have not subsequently had complete resolution of COVID-19 symptoms.

3.

4. I will immediately notify the pastor if, after attending this event, I develop 2 or more symptoms of COVID-19, will avoid contact with others, and will seek medical attention.

Cuestionario de Salud

¡Bienvenido! Nos alegra que esté aquí.

Para ayudar a que usted y otros congregantes estén seguros y saludables, lea y conteste las preguntas de salud de este cuestionario. Por favor, confirme al entrar que sus respuestas son verdaderas y provea su nombre y su número de teléfono. Se requiere que todas las personas mantengan una distancia física de 2 metros o más de personas afuera de su grupo de casa. Y que todas usen un cubreboca.



No he tenido dos o más de los síntomas siguientes de COVID-19 durante los últimos 14 días:

- Fiebre
- Dificultad para respirar
- Escalofríos
- Tos persistente
- Síntomas similares a la gripe
- Diarrea o problemas gastrointestinales
- Fatiga
- Dolor de garganta
- Dolor de cabeza
- Dolores de músculos
- Repentina pérdida del sentido del sabor o de olor

1.

No he estado en contacto con alguien que experimente síntomas de COVID-19 (identificado en el #1) en los últimos 14 días.

2.

No he dado positivo por COVID-19 ni estoy esperando los resultados de una prueba ni he dado positivo y después no he tenido resolución completa de síntomas de COVID-19.

3.

4. Si desarrollo 2 ó más síntomas de COVID-19 después de asistir a este evento, notificaré al pastor inmediatamente, evitaré contacto con otros y buscaré atención médica.

The Event Planning Form

STERLING UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - HEALTHY CHURCH TEAM

Event Planning Form

Revised August 4, 2020

Name or Type of Event:		
Date of Event:	Date of Request:	Estimated Number of Participants: <i>Maximum is 20</i>
Space Requested: Gallihugh Hall <input type="checkbox"/> Jacobus Center <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoors <input type="checkbox"/> Parking Lot <input type="checkbox"/> Garden <input type="checkbox"/>		
Event Organizer(s):		Health Monitor:

Instructions

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<i>General Rules for All Events</i>	
1.	All must register before the event by notifying the event organizer.
2.	Everyone must take their temperature and assess their health using the Health Acknowledgment Form before coming to church. The Health Acknowledgment Form is provided in the event announcement. If you are sick or have a fever, do not go to church. Everyone must also use the Entryway Health Acknowledgment Procedure upon arrival at the church.
3.	Do not park next to other vehicles. Leave at least one open space on all sides of your vehicle. The General Rules for face coverings and social distance also apply while in the parking lot.
4.	Wear face coverings, which cover the nose and mouth, at all times.
5.	Social distancing. You must maintain six feet between all people except among household members. This includes: No handshakes, no hugging, no person to person touching. And No sharing of papers, books, tools or other materials.
6.	No congregational singing.
7.	No eating, regardless of the source of the food.
8.	There may be <i>limited</i> or <i>no</i> access to church facilities. Traffic flow plans may be in place for the parking lots and inside buildings. If you are allowed to enter church buildings, you may be restricted to certain areas and restrooms. If restroom use is allowed, you must follow the posted cleaning instructions.
9.	There will be no childcare at this point.
10.	Comply with all directions from event organizers, Health Monitors and staff.

Example of a Completed & Approved Event Plan

**STERLING UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - HEALTHY CHURCH TEAM
Event Planning Form**

Name or Type of Event: Missions Food Distribution		
Date of Event: 08/15/2020	Date of Request: 08/03/2020	Estimated Number of Participants: 15 <i>Maximum is 20</i>
Space Requested: Gallihugh Hall <input type="checkbox"/> Jacobus Center <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Outdoors <input type="checkbox"/> Parking Lot <input type="checkbox"/> Garden <input type="checkbox"/>		
Event Organizer(s): Jeff Bradley		Health Monitor: Jim Jochems

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9. There will be no childcare at this point.
10. Comply with all directions from event organizers, Health Monitors and staff.

Describe how you will conduct the event and be in full compliance with all the General Rules.

Specific Event Details

- We will use the Jacobus Center for food packing only, and with minimum people inside.
- Physical contact between event organizers, food packers and distributors shall be totally eliminated or reduced as much as possible.
- Event organizers and food packers (which may be the same individuals) will pack food bags inside the Jacobus Center. The absolute minimum number of food packers necessary shall be used. They shall be wearing face coverings and maintaining a six-foot social distance. Hands shall be washed before touching any bags and items intended for distribution, frequently during the process, and upon completion.
- Rules 3 & 4 Details. Food distributors shall drive into the church parking lot, around the rear lot, and drive up to the Jacobus Center facing south towards Church Road in a single file line, and park. They shall remain in their vehicles and never enter the Jacobus Center.
- Rule 6 Details. Bags of food shall never pass directly from one person to another. They shall pass from packer to sidewalk outside the Jacobus Center door, from sidewalk to distributor to vehicle, from vehicle to distributor to door step outside the recipient's home.
- As each vehicle gets to the front of the line, they shall park, open their trunks or vehicle storage space, pick-up the bags outside the door of the building, maintain social distance between all other persons, place the bags in their vehicles and drive to the designated delivery point. At the delivery point, they shall place the bags near the door, ring the doorbell or knock, move at least six feet away from the door, wait for the recipient to arrive, greet them and ensure they receive the food. Distributors shall never get within six feet and never enter the recipient's home. Upon completion, they shall sanitize or wash their hands as soon as possible.
- Rule 8 Details. There shall be no entry to any church building and no restroom use.

HCT Action on Requests

All requests approved. The HCT requires more information on the following:

This plan is approved under the following conditions:

All participants shall wear gloves when touching items intended for distribution.

HCT Approval: Yes No Date: 08/04/20

DS Approval: Yes No N/A Date: 08/04/20

HCT Signature: *Debbie Myers*

DS Signature: *Sarah Calvert*

Attention event organizer: This plan has been approved by the HCT and the DS. You may use this document to announce the event to the congregation.

Communication Plan - Event Announcement Instructions

The announcement must include the following information.

- Brief description of event.
- A list of all the General Rules and any approved modifications.
- The Health Acknowledgment Procedure.
- Building entry and exit instructions or area restrictions, if any.
- Restroom use instructions. Restroom use may not be permitted for some events. If restroom use is permitted for the event, the one next to the Parlor shall be used. Include a reminder that the user will be required to clean the room after each use according to the posted instructions.
- Special instructions for children if they are invited to the event.

The approved Event Planning Form may be used as part of the event announcement.

