



Central St. Matthew United Church of Christ



RESUMING IN-PERSON WORSHIP AT CENTRAL ST. MATTHEW UCC

PHASE ONE

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These pandemic protocols offer our Congregation guidelines for deciding about the return to in-person gatherings as the City of New Orleans comes from under Stay-at-home orders. This Three-Phase approach recognizes that reopening Central St. Matthew is a gradual process.

CENTRAL ST. MATTHEW UCC IS TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED TO RE-OPEN ON OCTOBER 25, 2020!!!

GOAL: TO PROVIDE A CLEAN, SAFE ENVIRONMENT WHILE BEING MINDFUL OF HEALTH NEEDS AND ISSUES IN PREPARATION FOR A NON-TOUCH EXPERIENCE

I. OPENING OF SERVICE

- A. The maximum capacity shall be limited to 50% of the normal established capacity. Everyone who wishes to participate will be guaranteed a seat during Phase One.
- B. All participants in attendance will be required to wear a mask at all times during Worship, even children. If you do not have a mask, one will be provided for you
- C. SOCIAL DISTANCING shall be in place at all times before, during and after service
- D. Temperatures will be taken of all attendees and those with temperatures 100.4 F and above will not be allowed to enter the Church
- E. All participants are required to use the Hand Sanitizer Stand before entering the Church
- F. All Church Volunteers will wear gloves and masks at all times during the Worship service
- G. There will only be one (1) entrance and exit used during service
- H. INDIVIDUALS 65 YEARS OR OLDER, PEOPLE AT ALL AGES WITH MEDICAL ISSUES LIKE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, AT-RISK INDIVIDUALS AND THOSE WITH SYMTOMS OF ILLNESS SUCH AS HEART DISEASE, OBESITY OR A WEAKENED IMMUNE SYSTEM ARE ENCOURAGED TO REMAIN HOME AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE
- I. Live On-line Streaming service will continue for those who wish to observe the service from home

II. DURING SERVICE

- A. WE WILL DEEP CLEAN AND SANITIZE THE ENTIRE CHURCH PRIOR TO EACH SERVICE
- B. Tithes and Offerings shall be placed in a special collection box inside the Sanctuary

- of the Church. Members are encouraged to continue on-line giving
- C. All Bibles and Hymnals shall be temporarily removed from the pews
- D. Church Bulletins and Announcements shall be placed in the pews. Please take them home with you upon your departure
- E. Seating configurations shall be adjusted for increased social distancing. Every other pew will be closed to seating. Family members will be seated together
- F. Congregational singing will not be allowed during service. The Choir will not sing during service. Piano/organ playing is allowed, as well as solo singing
- G. Passing of the Peace shall be discontinued during this Phase. Waving to others from our seats is encouraged
- H. When administering the Lord's Supper, the elements shall be provided in individual packages for each member and given out upon entering the Church
- I. Children's' Church will continue with the children remaining with their families during this portion of the worship service
- J. Children's Sunday School shall be discontinued during Phase One
- K. It is recommended that Bathrooms not be in use during Phase One, but will be available for emergency use
- L. If an individual begins to feel ill or uncomfortable during the worship service, they are encouraged to leave the Church

III. END OF SERVICE

- A. Dismissal shall be in an orderly way so as to observe social distancing after worship service. Dismissal shall begin with the rear of the Church first
- B. Sweets and Treats will be suspended during Phase One
- C. There will be no small group meetings or gatherings after worship service
- D. Members are advised to exit the Church and immediately leave at the end of the worship service

SUMMARY FOR RESUMING IN-PERSON GATHERINGS

- CSM will continue to maintain an on-line streaming option once we are back worshipping together.
- CSM will limit the number of in-person worship gatherings to 50% of our normally established capacity.
- Members are required to wear masks, gloves are recommended. Masks will be provided to those members that do not have one.
- Temperatures and hand sanitizing will be required upon entering the Church.
- Appropriate distancing of six (6) feet parameters will be maintained at all times, especially in the pews.
- Congregational singing will not be allowed.
- The Choir will not sing during service.
- Individually wrapped communion packages will be given out prior to the beginning of the worship services.
- Tithes and Offerings shall be placed in a special container in the rear of the Church. Members are encouraged to continue on-line giving.
- Funeral and weddings shall be conducted in accordance with the City of New Orleans Phased Reopening standards.
- Social gatherings and meetings before and immediately after worship services are suspended.

- The building will be thoroughly cleaned and sanitized before and after each worship service.
- Bulletins and Announcements will be placed on the pews. Bibles and hymnals shall be temporarily removed from the pews.

There will be three (3) phases to a complete re-opening of in-person worship service. Our phases are not the same as the phases outlined by the Governor and Mayor's Offices. Phase Two will be to allow more individuals to attend worship service, up to 75%, and also allow some small group meetings before and after worship. Streaming worship on-line will also continue. In Phase Three, there will be a return to full worship services at 100%. We will continue to meet and discuss other options for Phases Two and Three.