

Reopening! Excited? Anxious? Yup, we are all with you. Everyone is feeling a bit of both, some leaning more toward one way or another. Your Reopening Committee has been wrestling with how to reopen the physical church safely for months now. It's been tough as it seems like the guidelines change weekly, if not daily. We ask for your support, compassion and understanding. We also ask that you provide that same support, compassion and understanding to where each of us are along that "excited to anxious" spectrum. Let us be the loving and accepting community that we know we can be!

Reopening FAQ

Are there any guidelines about attending? Yes! You need to ask yourself: Are you feeling well today? If not, please stay home and Zoom into Worship.

- In addition, if you have not been fully vaccinated, has it been at least 14 days since you had any known exposure? If not, please stay home and Zoom to worship.
- If you had a positive test for COVID19, has it been at least 10 days since onset of symptoms AND 24 hours since any fever without medications AND other symptoms are improving? If not, please stay home and Zoom to worship.
- And in order to ensure everyone's safety, we ask that you notify our Faith Community Nurse, Marilyn Giss (marilyngiss@gmail.com), if you have a positive COVID-19 test within 14 days after being on site. We ask that you help keep everyone safe and healthy!

Will we continue to hold worship on Zoom? Yes, we will be doing hybrid services. We have invested in the technology with the plan to continue to ensure that those who wish to can attend worship on Zoom.

Will people on Zoom still be able to participate in worship rituals like Joys and Sorrows? Yes. Like during the pandemic, we got more and more creative with what we could do with Zoom. There may be some hiccups and fumbles along the way, but we will figure it out.

Will the church ask my vaccination status? No. Anyone who feels comfortable is welcome to attend our worship services in person. Everyone will be asked to wear a mask and maintain social distance, regardless of whether or not they have been vaccinated for as long as we are required to do so. Some may do so longer.

Will we wear masks? Yes. Masks are required both by church policies and by the state's safety standards for everyone aged 2 and up. Worship leaders standing in the pulpit, as well as certain musicians will stand behind a plexiglass shield, and therefore will not wear masks while leading worship or performing. Extra masks will be provided if you didn't remember yours.

Will we require advance sign-ups for Sunday Worship? Most likely, at least for the first few weeks. Once we have a firm reopening date, we will have people sign up. With the social distancing requirements, however, everyone who RSVPs may not fit into Daniels Hall, and some may need to sit in the Victoria Room or Suite 4 where the service will be live streamed. Signups will be on a first come, first served basis.

Can I sit wherever I want? No. We have figured out where households can sit in Daniels Hall, Victoria Room and Suite 4, in order to maintain 6 feet of distance. You must register to attend, at least for the first few weeks. An Usher will help direct you on Sunday morning to the seating for your party. It probably won't be "your" seat. You might have to sit in a different spot each week until we fully open.

Can I sit with my friends? Yes, but you must register together in order to be seated together. Because the ushers will have a lot to do and there will be certain distances between seats, we ask that you don't move your seats around.

How do I register? We are using an online site called "Save-a-Seat." Registration opens at 9am on Saturday morning to be fair to people who work. You will receive an email at 9am with the link. We ask that people register by 9am on Sunday so that we have time to set up the appropriate number of seats in each room. Please note that this will hopefully only be for a few weeks. If no seats are left, please enjoy the service on Zoom. We will not be able to accommodate you.

What about Religious Education for children and youth? Our RE classes will be meeting at Estancia Park just a few blocks west of the church at the corner of Adams and Mesa Verde West. Our RE Director has planned some wonderful curricula for all ages at the park. For more information, please contact DRE@ocuuc.org. Our youth group will also meet in person outdoors at Estancia Park.

Will there be childcare/nursery? No. The state safety standards are unclear on whether childcare is permitted during church services. All ages are welcome to attend the worship service.

Will we have coffee hour after the service? Not the first or second time we meet. We are focusing on getting the Worship Service up to speed. We will add other things like Coffee, Welcome Table, etc. as we get more comfortable Sunday morning.

Will we sing hymns? No. The choir will not perform live in Daniels Hall, and Roomers will be asked not to sing out loud for the foreseeable future. The choir will continue to perform in videos; The Music Leader and very small groups of musicians will play instrumental music (no wind instruments live, however); and Zoomers can sing to their heart's content. The Music Leader will be singing hymns, but behind plexiglas.

Will I appear on camera? Possibly. We hope to have a space where those who don't want to be on camera can be seated out of the camera view. Keep in mind that the purpose of these cameras is so that the Zoomers can see their friends and feel part of the communal worship experience. Anyone in Daniels Hall could be captured on camera in passing.

When will we go back to "normal (singing, no masks, no social distancing)"? When governmental regulations change, assuming they follow the scientific recommendations. Some people, however, may prefer to wear masks, remain on Zoom, or not hug for quite some time, so we all need to be patient and compassionate for everyone's comfort level. Please ask first if you want to hug someone or even shake their hand. If needed, we will also designate some areas as mask only and/or distanced only for

Worship. While we will follow governmental regulations, we also recognize that not everyone trusts them.

May I come to the parking lot or courtyard, Zoom into the service on my phone, and then see everyone in the courtyard for coffee hour? *Yes, sort of.* Our bandwidth will be overloaded at about ten Zoomers. We need most of these spots for the A/V system and the smaller rooms. For this reason, we are asking that if you are logging individually, please turn off your Wi-Fi connection on your phone. We are hoping to upgrade our service as soon as it is available, but it may be a few months. Of course you are welcome to be on site.

How will we do Joys and Sorrows? Each room will have a basket and slips for you to place a written joy and sorrow. The basket will be picked up by the usher. A Pastoral Care Associate will light a candle for each Joy and Sorrow. You do not have to write out your Joy or Sorrow, but can simply say “Please light a candle for me.”

How will we take the Offering? Each room will have a basket or box in which you can place your offering. You can also continue to use the apps and texting.

What if I get COVID19? Please let Marilyn Giss, our Faith Community Nurse, which will be held in confidence. She can then ensure that we watch for an outbreak at the church. And take care of yourself! If you need support, please let Rev. Sian know and she can make sure you get meals delivered and give you spiritual/emotional support.

Anything else I need to know? Yes: This is all very complicated and while we are trying to be as safe as possible, we can't guarantee that no one will get ill. Or that there won't be technical difficulties that may be frustrating. Your compassion, patience and understanding is greatly appreciated!

Other questions? Contact reopening@ocuuc.org

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