

Trinity Presbyterian Church
Guidelines and Procedures During Covid 19 Pandemic
June 2020 (revised April 20, 2021)

Introduction: The last time that Trinity Presbyterian Church (TPC) had an on-campus service was Sunday, March 8. Due to the spread of COVID-19 and the government social distancing restrictions that accompanied, TPC voluntarily suspended all on-campus services and activities beginning the week of March 15. As we look to the possibility of social distancing restrictions being lifted in a phased approach in the weeks and months ahead, this is a plan to consider how TPC may safely begin meeting together again in accordance with remaining social distancing restrictions. All ministries shall follow these same phasing and phase triggers for re-starting each ministry. Each ministry may add an appendix to this plan, which describes details consistent with church-wide plan.

Triggers to Move Into Next Phase

- **Move Forward Into Next Phase**
 - Downward trajectory of new documented cases in Pinellas County within a 14-day period. This is the percentage of positive tests from all tests given in a single day. Trajectory will be reevaluated every 14 days to see that the new cases continue to trend downward.
- **Move Backward to Previous Phase**
 - A spike of 50% new cases in a 24-hour period or a general upward trajectory over a 14-day period. A level trajectory over 14 days signals a remaining in the current phase.

Communicating to the Congregation

- TPC Website
- E-mail
- Mail for those with no e-mail
- Deacon, Elder and Pastor Calls

Phase 0: Extreme Physical Distancing/Stay At Home Order

- All on-campus services and activities remain suspended until Stay at Home Order is lifted and we enter Phase 1 of reopening.
- Worship on Facebook Live to be viewed via Facebook, and Website. Worship conducted by a team of no more than 7 people.
- Continue to host meetings via Zoom.
- Groups will be held via Zoom, such as, Wednesday Night Study, children and youth activities, Dead Theologians and other groups.
- Send communication via email and letter.
- Utilize online giving and mailed checks for tithes and offerings.
- The office will remain open normal hours during this phase with Pastor, Administrator and Sexton splitting the day; other programmatic staff will work remotely. Anyone entering the church must wear a mask and use hand sanitizer (which is inside the office door) masks are available if needed.
- The preschool will be closed

Phase 1: Strict Physical Distancing - Downward trajectory of new documented cases in Pinellas County within a 14-day period

- All in-person services and activities remain suspended, with the exception of essential mission projects as determined by the Session for the length of Phase 1.
- When Phase 1 begins, we will continue worshipping on Facebook Live. Choir will not be included at this point with the exception of occasional soloist or inclusion of paid section leaders (social distancing) as singing spreads the virus more efficiently than talking. We will have one song leader for service. A team of no more than 11 people will conduct worship.
- No in-person small groups will meet during Phase 1.
- Groups will be held via Zoom, such as Wednesday Night Study, children and youth programs, Dead Theologians and Wired Word Adult Sunday School.
- All meetings will continue using Zoom.
- Continue to use online and mail in giving.
- Office hours will remain open with only Pastor, Administrator, and Sexton working on site, other staff will work remotely. Anyone entering the office, must be masked and use hand sanitizer, which is available inside the office door. Masks are available if needed.
- Preschool reopens with reduced numbers and strict guidelines.

Phase 2: Moderate Physical Distancing – No evidence of a rebound while maintaining a 14 day downward trajectory, and the number of people fully vaccinated increases.

- We will ease back into gathering inside for worship during Phase 2, for guidance for small groups see below.
- All persons 65 or older and vulnerable persons (*the CDC defines this as people at higher risk for severe illness, people who are immunocompromised, people with asthma, people with HIV, and people with liver disease*) should be encouraged to stay home, unless they are fully vaccinated.
- Anyone inside the building will be required to wear a facemask. Those leading the service will wear a facemask when they are not speaking or singing. Masks will be available for those who may not have one.
- Participants will be encouraged to maintain adequate social distancing of at least 6 feet apart. This guidance does not apply to family members of the same household. Seats in the sanctuary will be clearly marked for seating, every other pew and Xs 6 feet apart. Please only sit in a marked location in a pew that does not have pictures mounted.
- Hand sanitizer stations will be available.
- Continue to use online and mail in giving. Also provide opportunity for folks to drop offering in donation station as they arrive for service. No passing of the plate. A guide will be developed for safety considerations.
- Greeters will open doors.
- Each person who enters will have his or her temperature taken by a greeter using a non-contact thermometer.
- No physical bulletins or use of hymnals. Responses and lyrics will be on screen.
- Congregation will be invited to meditate on the words of songs, rather than singing, as song leader sings.
- Neither social time nor refreshments will be offered following worship.

- Special precautions will be taken for observing the Lord's Supper.
- People should exit through designated doors to avoid congestion.
- Following worship a designated team will sanitize all areas used during worship.
- Adults may meet for in-person small groups either in homes or in the church building at a time when the building is not being occupied for worship services. Any group meeting within the church building will be required to utilize social distancing and facemasks and to sanitize areas they used. Any group planning to meet must be pre-approved by the church office and Session to make sure all procedures are being followed.
- There will be no in person children's activities through the end of Phase 2.

Phase 3: Limited Physical Distancing - No evidence of a rebound while continuing to maintain a 14 day downward trajectory, and the number of people fully vaccinated continues to increase.

- We will ease back into a more normal routine for gathering during Phase 3.
- Those 65 or older and vulnerable persons may return at their discretion, especially if they are vaccinated.
- This phase includes resuming children's activities (i.e. nursery, children's church).
- Hand sanitizer stations will still be available.
- Facemasks may still be required. This depends on the CDC rescinding the mask guideline.
- Social distancing should still be maintained.
- Giving will still need to follow the plan for Phase 2.
- Coffee, prepared in kitchen and served by volunteers, may resume. No refreshments yet.
- Special precautions will still be taken for observing the Lord's Supper.
- Specifics will be worked out as we move through the phases and get closer to this point.

Phase 4: Return to New Normal - No evidence of a rebound while continuing to maintain a 14-day downward trajectory.

- Masks will no longer be required.
- Safety precautions, such as hand sanitizer stations and donation stations, will remain for those wishing to use them.

Additional Considerations:

- There remains uncertainty regarding specific restrictions that will be in place from state and local government at each phase.
- This plan is to get us thinking and planning. The plan will undoubtedly require adjustments.
- There may be setbacks. Patience will be a necessity.
- While those most vulnerable to the virus may need to limit their interaction more than others, we will not forget them as we move through these phases. Online services will continue and pastor and deacons will continue to maintain contact with them.
- Ultimately the Session of the Congregation is responsible for the well being of the congregation and providing guidance in any areas not specifically covered in the guidance.