

## In-Person Worship Preparation and a Call for Volunteers

Friends, this is a lengthy note, but I urge all of you who are interested in reopening the church to read it completely. The reopening will require the help of many to make it successful, so I hope you will respond to the call for volunteers below.

The recent survey highlighted that many of you are anxious for in-person service to begin once again. At the same time, there were many respondents who voiced the opposite view. Your leadership team has been very busy at planning and preparing for the time when we do open, such that it is safe and provides a quality of worship that at least matches the online experience. The letter from Pastor Alice above indicates that we will be preparing the worship services in the church and posting them online during the last three weeks of June. This is a valuable exercise for the worship team to get the technology in place and the kinks worked out to prepare for an outdoor worship experience while at the same time providing live-streaming of the worship service for those that aren't comfortable attending due to the virus. We will not provide a worship service that cannot be experienced by all.

The safety of ALL of you is at the forefront of the decisions we have been making for reopening and our Conference is very clear on the protections we must provide. Sixty-one percent of the 74 people who responded to the survey stated that they were in the high-risk category, and the vast majority of respondents felt it was vitally important to follow the safety guidelines recommended by our local government. To that end, any in-person worship, whether indoors or outdoors, will require masks, social distancing, and no choir or congregational singing, based on current guidelines. Our Conference also requires that we record all attendees to each service to support contact tracing, which means we will implement a check-in process.

To pull this off requires your help. We need many volunteers to make this all happen, including the following:

- Check-in booth attendants
- First-aid station attendants
- Sanitizer and pre-packaged communion element table attendants
- Parking guides
- Set-up and tear-down assistants
- Worship Helpers (similar to ushers but with expanded safety monitoring duties)

If you are willing to help in one or more of these positions, please contact myself ([craig\\_and\\_jan@verizon.net](mailto:craig_and_jan@verizon.net)), or Jean Riley ([jeanriley63@gmail.com](mailto:jeanriley63@gmail.com)), or sign up online using Sign-Up Genius, which will be available in the near future. We will need at least 8-10 volunteers for each worship service, and we won't be able to re-open until we have a sufficient list of volunteers and have training opportunities for the critical positions.

The new, yet to be assigned pastor, will most certainly have an opinion on what he or she feels comfortable with regarding in-person worship. We are hopeful that a pastor is assigned soon, so we are doing everything possible to be ready to start in-person worship once that decision is made.

I, as much as any of you, yearn for an in-person worship experience. But it must be done with safety first, inclusive of all, and not potentially contradict with what the incoming pastor may desire. I beg for your patience as we navigate these uncharted waters. You may have heard of churches already re-opening and with minimal safety precautions. Our conference is very clear on the protections we must provide and we will do so to the best of our abilities.

Although our patience sometimes wears thin, the health and welfare of all of you is worth the caution that we move forward with.

Peace,  
Craig Lee  
Church Council Chair