

Dear Beloved Congregants,

This message contains important information about our return to in-person worship on Sunday, July 4. Over the past several weeks, I have shared this plan with the Worship Ministry, the Board of Trustees, and the church staff and invited their feedback. This plan is informed by science from the CDC, by our UU values, by the practices and experiences of several UU peer institutions with between 350 and 500 members, and by an awareness of our congregation's capacities and resources.

I hope this will answer as many of your questions as possible. Religious Education families will receive a separate communication with information about Sunday morning Religious Education offerings.

- **Q: *What date do we return to in-person worship? What time will the service be?***
- **A:** Beginning Sunday, July 4, we will hold a single worship service at 10AM. We anticipate returning to our two-service format later in the summer.

- **Q: *Will masks be worn inside the sanctuary?***
- **A:** Yes, masks will be worn for all large indoor gatherings, including worship. During worship, speakers and vocalists will unmask while speaking/singing.

- **Q: *Will there be congregational singing?***
- **A:** Hymns will be included as a part of worship services. Congregants will remain masked during hymns, but are invited to sing or hum as they feel comfortable.

- **Q: *What about social distancing?***
- **A:** A portion of the Sanctuary will be marked off for socially-distanced seating. This part of the Sanctuary will be clearly marked with signs.

- **Q: *Will anything else be different?***
- **A:** A few things. We plan to set up offertory stations at the rear of the Sanctuary, rather than pass the basket. The set-up on the stage may look a little different, in order to better film the service. Open Joys & Sorrows may not return immediately, however, that is only a very temporary change. There will be a new alternative to hand-holding during *Shalom*. Please be patient with us as we figure it all out.

- **Q: *Will I be able to participate in worship, virtually?***

- **A:** Yes, but we're still working out the details. At minimum, there will be a recording of the full service, which will be made available on the church YouTube channel by 12 Noon each Sunday. We are also exploring whether it is feasible for us to livestream the service.

- **Q: *Will there be Coffee Hour?***
- **A:** There will be a time to visit outside and congregate in the Courtyard and behind the building, in the patio and playground area following the service. Coffee Hour will return eventually. The church kitchen is still under construction.

- **Q: *Will masks be worn outside?***
- **A:** There will be two "zones." Masks will be required behind the building in the patio, playground and Memorial Rock area. Masks will be optional in the Courtyard.

- **Q: *What about Religious Education?***
- **A:** Religious Education is returning in a hybrid format. There will be Zoom Family Worship at 9AM and in-person Religious Education for Nursery - Middle School at 10AM. In-person programming will be outdoors when possible. Masks will be required for staff, volunteers and participants older than two years old.

- **Q: *What about hugs and handshakes?***
- **A:** As we return to gathering in person, let's strive to be welcoming by being aware of our different personal boundaries. It is important to obtain consent before hugging or touching. (This was true before the pandemic, and it is still true.)

- **Q: *What about small groups? Are there any updates to the Building Policy?***
- **A:** Yes, there are updates to the Building Policy for small groups. [See the updates here.](#)

We look forward to the return to in-person worship on Sunday, July 4!

With Excitement,

Rev. Thom