



**Faith  
Evangelical  
Free  
Church**

**Safety standards and practices**

**updated: 12/30/2020**

**Updated sections in red**

**\*NEW \***

## **POSITIVE COVID TEST RESPONSE**

- We have faced and likely will continue to face scenarios when someone who attended a worship service will experience possible COVID symptoms or test positive for COVID. It is imperative that anyone who has attended a service and then exhibits possible COVID symptoms or tests positive for COVID lets the office or an elder know as soon as possible. Based on our understanding of CDC guidelines and recommendations from the state, we have arrived at the following steps we will follow when such a positive COVID result happens:
  1. If an attendee who subsequently tests positive for COVID first experiences symptoms within three days (i.e. by Wednesday after a Sunday service), we will assume that they could have infected people near them at the service. If symptoms begin four or more days after attending, we will not continue with the process below.
  2. The individual showing symptoms or testing positive should not return to an in-person worship service until at least seven days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 test; and they have had no subsequent illness.
  3. To be considered a *close contact* of the attendee showing symptoms or testing positive, a person would have to be 6 feet or nearer for 15 or more minutes.
  4. To respect privacy, we will not publish the name of the person who tested positive. Unless we believe it is otherwise necessary, we will not notify everyone who was present at the activity, but only those who are deemed to have come into “close contact” with the infected person.
  5. We will notify those individuals or families seated near the attendee who exhibited symptoms or tested positive. Although we have established a seating system that allows reasonable distancing, those sitting two pews behind or in front of the individual are right at the 6 foot limit and may be closer during the course of the service. Also, any families one pew behind or in front who were, despite the stagger, at or within the 6 foot limit will be notified.
  6. We will also notify anyone who we believe had at least 15 minutes of close contact with the person before or after the service, or in any way other than seating.
  7. People who are notified will be counseled to self-quarantine and test. (Tests should be performed at least 5 days after the contact.) A negative test would clear that individual to return to in-person worship. Without a test, a person should self-quarantine for 10 days after the contact. During the self-quarantine period, any new symptoms that appear should be considered grounds for being tested for COVID. After the 10 days, or after a negative test, the person may return to in-person worship.
  8. If symptoms begin any time during the self-quarantine, that person should be tested.

9. As a religious organization, we can't require any responses other than not attending worship services or church events for 10 days. We will encourage self-quarantine and testing as a courtesy to those around you.

## ATTENDANCE LIMIT/SERVICE SCHEDULE

- On **Monday of each week at 9:00 a.m.**, the office will send out a Sign Up Genius so that the congregation can register to attend. Everyone planning to attend must register to ensure that we are in compliance with the attendance limit.
- From Dec. 27<sup>th</sup> to January 10<sup>th</sup>, worship services have been given a new limit of 25% of capacity, not including staff (which we have deemed to be pastors and ushers). For our sanctuary, we can have up to **56 people** attend in the sanctuary along with up to three families in the overflow room and tech team members in the balcony. We have made those adjustments to our weekly Sign Up.
- Otherwise, worship services will have an attendance limit of **85 people** or **26 family units** (whichever limit is reached first). These limits allow for proper social distancing and fall below 40% of the sanctuary's 225-person limit (90), which is the state guideline for Phase 1.
- On January 10<sup>th</sup>, FEFC will return to its normal two-service schedule (8:15 and 11:00), with both services being held in the sanctuary.
- The registration system is also in place so that attendees can be contacted in case anyone at a service was to test positive for COVID-19.
- Anyone not able to attend a service due to attendance limits should be given priority for the following week's service.
- Children's Church and CREW are now taking place during the 11 a.m. service. Childcare is not available at this time.

## ENTERING THE SERVICE

- Please check your temperature before coming to church. We would ask that anyone who has a fever or is feeling otherwise sick not attend that week. This would also apply to everyone in that person's household.
- Everyone attending a worship service will use the main entrance and should allow for at least 6 feet spacing between family groups. Ushers will greet (without contact) and tally attendance.
- Masks will be required of all (over the age of 5) attending the service.
- Upon entering the sanctuary, ushers will direct individuals/family groups to designated seats. Attendees will be seated from the front of the sanctuary to the back. The seating plan allows for appropriate spacing between individuals/family groups. Members of the same immediate household may sit next to each other.
- Offerings/envelopes can be placed in a box near the entrance to the sanctuary. The offering plate will not be passed during the service.
- Hand sanitizer will be available in the foyer as well as the sanctuary.
- Floor marking in the foyer will indicate proper spacing while waiting to be seated by ushers.
- Three family groups may register for seating in the overflow room. The balcony will be limited to members of the tech team.
- The upper restrooms will be available for our congregation during the service. Please limit the bathrooms to 2 people at a time to allow for social distancing. In general, it would be helpful if everyone used their bathroom at home just prior to leaving and use the church bathrooms only if needed. This would help with social distancing and cleaning.

## **DURING THE SERVICE**

- Everyone is asked to continue to wear his/her mask throughout the worship service. Exceptions to this are when a person is speaking or leading singing when on the platform or while taking communion.
- Greeting time can consist of waves and spoken greetings, but everyone is asked to remain in their pew with proper social distancing.
- On Communion Sundays, personal communion packets will be available to limit contact in distributing the elements.
- At the conclusion of the service, ushers will dismiss individuals/family groups from the back of the sanctuary to the front.

## **AFTER THE SERVICE**

- Please maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet while exiting the service.
- Individuals/family groups are asked to leave the building promptly after being dismissed. This will allow the sanitization team enough time to clean before the next service.
- Any interaction with others in attendance should happen outside and while maintaining social distancing of at least 6 feet.

## **SANITIZATION**

- In making preparations for a return to in-person worship, one of the first priorities is protecting the health of any people that are entering the church building. The Elders in partnership with the Trustees have developed a plan to maintain a sanitized church building to the best of our ability. This plan will call for a number of volunteers to give of their time over the coming weeks and months to meet the safety standards set by the state.
- After a service has ended and the congregation exits, a volunteer teams trained by a trustee will clean and sanitize all areas of the church that have been touched in the course of the service. This will include the sanctuary, foyer, bathrooms, and entrance.
- The Trustees have settled on a system called Stabilized Aqueous Ozone to provide a simple, safe and environmentally friendly way to quickly sanitize virtually anything. It is a wall mounted unit that uses basic domestic water that is run through a couple of filters to infuse ozone into the water. The resulting solution is totally non-toxic to humans, and it has been shown to be much more effective at killing the virus than bleach or other strong chemicals. It can be used anywhere including kitchens, countertop, doorknobs, bathrooms and floors.