

## FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF FERNANDINA BEACH

### **OUR PURPOSE AS A FAMILY OF FAITH**

FPC FB is a faith community and our purpose is to provide for the spiritual needs of our members and help care for the needs of our larger community.

We feel the responsibility to provide members with a variety of options that will allow members to choose how they meet their spiritual needs at all times, including during the pandemic and other community health crises.

Because there is no “one-size-fits-all” worship service during the Covid-19 pandemic, we will offer two high-quality worship services:

- An excellent virtual worship service that many FPC members will continue to participate in from their homes.
- A reverent and joyful in-person worship service in which other FPC members will choose to participate in our sanctuary and Fellowship Hall. CDC guidelines for social distancing, wearing masks, and other precautions will be followed. This service will be briefer (45 minutes or less), reservations will be required, and seating will be limited to allow for social distancing.

The FPC Session is thankful FPC can offer the option to resume in-person Sunday morning worship. We also recognize our responsibility to love our members and neighbors by following CDC guidelines to help mitigate the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The Session thankful for your flexibility and support as FPC navigates this challenging time together.

### **INFORMED CONSENT FOR IN-PERSON SERVICES DURING COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS**

This document contains important information about our decision to resume limited in-person worship services in light of the COVID-19 public health crisis. Please read this carefully and let us know if you have any questions.

#### **Decision to Worship In-Person**

The Session has agreed to resume limited in-person worship. Each week reservations will be required by Thursday noon for the following Sunday 9:00am service. Socially distanced seating assignments will be made based on the order reservations are made and the available space for your “family” group size. Seating is limited to a maximum of 70 persons in the Sanctuary and 70 persons in Jim Thomas Hall (via live closed circuit streaming).

If there is a resurgence of the pandemic or if other health concerns arise, the Session may decide to return to virtual worship only. You understand that if the FPC Session believes it is necessary, or if the CDC recommends or government regulations require, the Session may determine that FPC returns to virtual worship for everyone’s well-being. FPC members(including members who in 2020 served on the Regathering Task Group) may choose to offer advice to the Session at any time. However, the decision to resume in-person worship or return to only virtual worship will always be at the sole discretion of the FPC Session.

### **Risks of Opting for In-Person Worship**

By making a reservation and participating in in-person worship on the FPC campus, you are assuming a risk of exposure to the coronavirus (or other public health risks).

Each FPC member and/or responsible party must make an individual decision about whether the personal benefit of attending in-person worship (or other church activities) leads her/him to assume the risk of participating in worship (or other church activities) during the Covid-19 pandemic (or other public health risk). The FPC session encourages all members who are not ready to return to in-person worship to choose to worship virtually. Before making the decision to attend in-person worship, please read the information provided by the CDC (a link to the CDC website is provided later in this document). If you decide at any time that the personal risk of attending in-person worship is greater than the reward of participating in in-person worship, and choose to return to virtual worship, the FPC Session will respect your decision to do so. -

### **Your Responsibility to Minimize Your Exposure**

In order to attend worship at FPC, you agree to take certain precautions recommended by the CDC in order to help mitigate the risks for all persons on the FPC campus (you, our families, the staff, the volunteers, and other worshipers). If you do not adhere to these safeguards, it may result in our requesting that you return to a virtual worship arrangement. You understand and agree to these actions:

- You will only keep your in-person reservation if you are symptom free.
- We will take your temperature before the service. If it is elevated (100 Fahrenheit or more), or if you have other symptoms of the coronavirus, you agree to leave the Church campus immediately.
- You will wait in your car or outside [or in a designated safe waiting area] until no earlier than 10 minutes before the worship time.
- You will use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when you enter the building.
- You will adhere to the safe distancing precautions we have set up. For example, you agree not to move chairs or sit where we have signs asking you not to sit.
- You will wear a mask over your nose and mouth in indoor and outdoor areas of the FPC campus. Allowable exceptions are detailed in the current CDC guidelines (see the CDC link below).
- You will keep a distance of 6 feet and there will be no physical contact (e.g. no shaking hands or hugs) with anyone outside your family group.
- You will try not to touch your face or eyes with your hands. If you do, you will immediately wash or sanitize your hands.
- If you are bringing your child, you will make sure that your child follows all of these sanitation and distancing protocols.
- When arriving for and also departing from the FPC worship service, you will follow the precautions listed above to help mitigate the risk your exposure to COVID.
- If a resident of your home tests positive for the infection, you will immediately notify the Church Office during business hours, or after hours email Rev. Julie Higbee, Associate Pastor.

February 22, 2021

You will return to virtual worshiping until you are permitted by your physician or the Department of Health to resume public activities.

The Session may change the above precautions if additional local, state or federal orders or guidelines are published. Changes in precautions will be announced in a public worship service and changes in the registration process will be updated on the FPC website.

### **CDC Considerations**

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have published updated “Considerations for Communities of Faith”. First Presbyterian Church is using this document as a guide to discern how best to care for the spiritual needs of our members while following CDC guidelines. The link to that document is;

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/faith-based.html>

### **Our Commitment to Mitigate Against Exposure to Covid-19**

First Presbyterian Church has taken steps to reduce the risk of spreading the coronavirus within the facility. Please let us know if you have questions about these efforts.

- Installed UV-C ultraviolet disinfecting lights in all twenty HVAC air handler units campus wide.
- Six hand sanitizer gel stations (that contains at least 60% alcohol) are located at the most frequently used entrances.
- Purchased touchless thermometers.
- Removed Bibles, hymnals, prayer/concern cards, pencils, etc. from the pews.
- Installed pew ropes to distinguish which areas should remain vacant.
- Pre-filled individual communion packages have been purchased.
- Offering plates will be stationed on stands at the exits.
- A supply of extra cloth masks have been obtained from Nassau County.
- Common areas are thoroughly disinfected. Our janitorial contractor has purchased a specialized disinfecting misting system.
- Trash bins are easily accessed. Trash is disposed of on a frequent basis.
- A training program has been developed for volunteer ushers.

### **If You May Have Symptoms**

You understand that First Presbyterian Church is committed to taking precautions to help mitigate the risk of the spread of Covid-19 for you, the staff and volunteers, and all of our families. FPC will follow the requirements and guidelines of the State Department of Health for “contact tracing” relating to exposure to Covid-19. This will include asking you to leave the campus if there is evidence that you may have the virus and notifying you if we have reason to believe that you may have been exposed to the virus while you were on the FPC campus.