

Frequently Asked Questions about Resuming In-Person Worship at Narberth Presbyterian Church, Fall 2020

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to provide members and friends with practical information about what to expect when returning to in-person worship at NPC. While NPC is excited to offer the option of in-person worship, we also recognize that the decision to return is a personal and individual decision, and virtual worship will remain a vibrant alternative.

→ Four Pillars of Health & Safety

- ◆ What are the foundational principles that will be followed at Narberth Presbyterian Church to keep everyone safe?
 - We ask that all participants follow the following *Four Pillars of Health and Safety* to protect themselves and their fellow participants:
 - Mask-Wearing
 - Social-Distancing
 - Hand-Sanitizing
 - Staying Home when Sick
 - The church will implement protocols for increased cleaning and sanitizing of surfaces and will structure worship to be as safe as possible.

→ Mask-Wearing

- ◆ What is NPC's protocol for mask-wearing for in-person worship services, in-person small group meetings, or gatherings on our campus?
 - In keeping with the Governor's guidelines for universal masking, everyone ages two and older is required to wear a mask covering their mouth and nose. Medical or fabric masks may be worn. Anyone who arrives wearing a mask with a valve, a neck gaiter, or a bandana will be provided with an alternative mask upon entry. Pastors and worship leaders will wear masks except when speaking or singing in front of the church. If unmasked, pastors and worship leaders will be separated from the congregation by at least 25 feet of distance and/or a Plexiglas shield.
- ◆ What is NPC's rationale for requiring mask-wearing?
 - Multiple studies have now shown that masks of all types are effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19 when properly worn. As Christians, wearing a mask shows love for our neighbors. We do this to prevent anyone from unknowingly spreading the virus to someone else. It may be difficult for some individuals to wear a mask, but there is no greater love than doing something to benefit someone else when it is difficult for you to do so.
- ◆ How will NPC enforce that congregants wear masks during worship services?
 - If a member or friend removes their mask during a worship service, an usher will gently remind that individual to wear a mask out of love for their neighbor. Anyone who is unable or unwilling to comply will be asked to leave in-person worship and participate virtually.

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→ Social-Distancing

- ◆ What is NPC's protocol for social distancing for in-person activities at NPC?
 - A distance of 6' is required between all persons not of the same household/family. Ushers will assist with entry, seating and orderly dismissal to maintain circulation and avoid crowding. Family members living in different homes may sit together if already in close contact outside church. Ushers will seat attendees in every other row and will ensure at least 6' space between individuals or household/family units. All worshippers will be expected to leave the building immediately after worship.
- ◆ How will NPC ensure sufficient space for social distancing during worship?
 - Worship capacity for the sanctuary and balcony together will not exceed 90 participants. This is less than 25% of the normal Fire Code capacity. The attendance cap will be controlled through a combined online registration and on-site check-in process that is further described below. Various approaches and metrics to determine NPC worship capacity have been researched, discussed and considered. Calculation of the current capacity maximum is based on applying 6' physical distancing as measured across available floor area and available pew seating.

→ Registration & Health Screening

- ◆ What is Registration and how will it occur?
 - All members and friends will be asked to pre-register for in-person worship. Registration will be available online or by calling the church office. If the maximum number of registrants is met, additional worshippers will be directed to virtual participation. "Walk-ins" who have not registered will be welcomed if there is additional capacity after the online registration process.
- ◆ What is Health Screening and how will it occur?
 - Health Screening stations will be set up at entrances. Volunteer screeners will have tablets to quickly check in pre-registered participants and to collect contact information for any additional attendees. Screeners will ask participants a few brief questions about symptoms, exposure to COVID-19, and COVID-19 testing. Screeners will check for fever using a touchless thermometer. Lastly, screeners will remind participants about NPC's mask requirement and ask participants to use hand sanitizer upon entry to the church.

→ Staying Home When Sick

- ◆ Who should not join in-person worship?
 - Anyone who has the following symptoms should not attend:
 - Fever, new cough, shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, loss of taste or smell
 - Anyone who meets one of the following criteria should not attend:
 - Contact with a person with confirmed COVID-19 in the last 14 days
 - Pending COVID-19 results (pre-procedure testing excluded)
 - Recent travel to a state requiring 14-day quarantine upon return, in accordance with PA Department of Health Guidelines

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- In addition, any participant with high risk medical conditions should consult their physician prior to returning to in-person worship.

→ Singing During Worship Services

- ◆ What is NPC's position with regard toward singing during worship services?
 - Based on considerable documented evidence, the Safety and Security team has determined that congregational singing is safe with masks and adequate distancing. Further congregational input about comfort with singing will also be requested in an upcoming congregational survey. If singing occurs, the number and duration of songs will be limited, and the congregation will be masked at all times. Pastors and Singers will be separated from participants by a Plexiglas shield or 25 foot buffer.

→ Ongoing Monitoring for Changes in Local Cases and Conditions

- ◆ What metrics will be used to determine whether it is safe to continue in-person worship services? How will conditions be monitored?
 - The NPC Safety and Security Committee monitors local conditions each week using the PA Department of Health COVID-19 Early Warning Monitoring System Dashboard. Particular attention is paid to Montgomery and surrounding counties. While no single metric is sufficient to guide decisions, the following metrics are monitored: new cases, percent positivity of COVID-19 tests, COVID-related hospitalizations, and COVID-related ventilator use. Lastly, any confirmed cases within the NPC community will inform decisions about in-person worship.

→ Response to COVID-19 Cases

- ◆ What measures will NPC take if a member or friend tests positive for COVID-19 within 48 hours of attending worship?
 - All worship service attendees will receive prompt notification of the potential exposure. The identity of the affected individual will not be shared, consistent with contact tracing guidelines. The Montgomery County Health Department will also be notified to facilitate further contact tracing and communication.

→ Cleaning and Air Filtration

- ◆ What additional steps will NPC take to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission?
 - Hand Sanitizing dispensers will be readily available and conveniently located.
 - Paper bulletins, Bibles and hymnals will not be available in the pews. All announcements, song lyrics and Bible verses will be projected onto screens.
 - No offering collection plate will be passed; Collection boxes will be used instead.
 - When temperatures allow fresh air to be introduced, windows will be left open to promote air exchange. Air filters for heating/cooling will be exchanged regularly, and optimal filtration will be in place at all times. Restrooms will be cleaned frequently using products approved for disinfecting surfaces. In addition, the entire sanctuary will be cleaned after each worship service with special attention to pews and high-touch surfaces.