

**Guidelines for In-Person Gatherings at St. Paul's Church Crystal Lake (including In-Person Sunday Services) During Restore Illinois Phase 4**

*These guidelines were developed by the Church Council and the Emergency Management Committee in accordance with CDC and Illinois Conference UCC recommendations. They are designed with the overarching goal of promoting safety and health-conscious practices among our Church members, staff, and visitors during Phase 4 of this Covid-19 pandemic. We will be closely monitoring Illinois state and local requirements and metrics relating to Covid-19 on an ongoing basis and may find it necessary to modify these guidelines accordingly. It is our top priority to keep our Church members, staff, and visitors safe and healthy and we can all play a role in that by following these guidelines. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns.*

**General Guidelines:**

1. **Permitted Gatherings.** In-person Sunday worship services will initially resume with only one Sunday service at 10:30 am. You will be notified when these in-person services are scheduled to recommence as soon as a date has been set. No other group meetings will be permitted at the Church at this time until further notice. This includes Church Committee meetings, Bible Study, Youth Group gatherings, children's Sunday School, Preschool, or any other group gatherings, including meetings held by non-members who request to use our Church facilities. Baptisms, memorial services and weddings will be permitted if held in accordance with these guidelines after consultation with Pastor Greg.
2. **Accessible Areas.** Only the Narthex, Sanctuary, and bathrooms on the main floor will be open to the public during in-person services. Entry will be from the upper or lower level doors. The elevator will not be accessible nor will any of the rooms on the lower level, including Fellowship Hall and the downstairs bathrooms.
3. **Online Services.** In consideration of our more vulnerable members, those who may choose not to participate yet in Sunday worship in-person, and visitors whose first exposure to St. Paul's might be our online services, we will continue to offer our live online Sunday worship service at 10:30 am through YouTube (accessed from St. Paul's website) or St. Paul's Facebook page. Online Sunday School classes will also continue to be offered online as they are presently being conducted.
4. **Mandatory Requirements.** Face coverings will be required to be worn at all times while on the Church property, along with social distancing of at least 6 feet apart among non-family members. Anyone not abiding by these rules will be respectfully required to leave the premises.
5. **Non-Contact Greetings.** Participants are requested to refrain from handshakes, hugs and other close personal contact and to instead substitute them with greetings that minimize person-to-person contact, such as hands clasped together in prayer or crossed over one's heart, bowing, or waving.
6. **Maximum Attendance.** A maximum of 50 people will be permitted to attend any Sunday worship service. Priority to attend will be determined on a first come, first served basis to those

who have registered in advance using St. Paul's Reservation System. Specific instructions about how to use this System will be described on the Church's website, in the weekly Church Chatter, and in the monthly Beacon. People arriving after the maximum number of attendees has been reached will be unable to participate in the in-person service, so advance registration is **strongly encouraged** and **highly recommended**.

7. **Cleaning and Hygiene**. Prior to reopening for in-person services, the Church will undergo a thorough deep cleaning. Regular cleaning will continue on an ongoing basis at least weekly to promote a safe, hygienic environment. Congregants and visitors are reminded to maintain good personal hygiene, including hand washing, sanitizing and not touching one's face. Hand sanitizers will be placed at several locations in the Narthex for general use.

**During the Sunday In-Person Worship Service:**

1. **General**. All applicable general guidelines listed above will apply.

2. **Entrance and Seating**. Upon arriving at the Church, people will be greeted by an Usher at the entrance to the Church and asked to proceed directly to the Sanctuary where they will be seated in an unoccupied pew by another Usher. People in the same household or family will be seated together in the same pew. Non-family individuals may be seated with other non-family members in the same pew, provided they maintain a distance of 6 feet apart from one another. Every other pew will be roped off and remain unoccupied in order to observe social distancing requirements.

3. **Worship Materials**. Prayer books, hymnals, bibles, pens, information cards, etc. will be temporarily removed from pews during services. Congregants are encouraged to bring their own worship materials or follow along on the overhead screens. Hard copies of the worship bulletin will be available.

4. **Offerings/Donations**. Members wishing to drop off donations will be requested to do so in a designated plate located outside the Sanctuary as it will not be passed around during the service. Online giving is encouraged as a substitute for those who wish to make a donation.

5. **No Congregant Singing**. Given the heightened risk of infection caused by singing, for the health and safety of all members inside the Sanctuary there will be no singing by the Congregation, with the exception of our Musical Director, Kristin Lundine, who will be positioned facing away from any congregants.

6. **Ushers and Greeters**. To the extent available, there will be Ushers and a Greeter at every service. All Ushers and Greeters will be socially distanced and wear face coverings at all times before, during, and after the service.

7. **Communion**. Communion will be served on Communion Sunday to all those wishing to participate by means of prepackaged servings of wine/juice and wafers which may be picked up by participants upon their entry to the Sanctuary.

8. **Children and Nursery Care**. Children present at services should remain with their parents and guardians and avoid congregating or interacting with children of other families, including

during the Children's Message. We regret that nursery care will not be available during the service at the present time.

9. **Dismissal.** After the Benediction, people will be dismissed by the Ushers pew by pew. There will be no receiving line, but the Pastor may choose to greet congregates from a socially safe distance in the Narthex. Congregates are kindly asked not to remain in the Narthex and to instead save their socially distanced greetings for outside the Church.

10. **Sickness or Exposure to Virus.** Any staff or congregant feeling sick or displaying symptoms of COVID-19, as well as people who have had close contact with a person who has symptoms of or has tested positive for COVID-19, should refrain from participating in any aspect of in-person services. Any person who attends an in-person service and subsequently tests positive or experiences Covid-19 symptoms within a week thereafter should notify the Church office immediately (or have someone notify the office on their behalf) so that appropriate action can be taken. The identity of the person who is sick will be kept confidential unless otherwise permitted by that person.