

Hello Westside,

As you know, the board recently announced that planning and preparations for re-opening the building are underway. The target date for a "soft" reopening is October 17. Our Safe Congregations Committee has drafted documents to address the safety guidelines and procedures for gathering and use of the building. These guidelines can be found on the members page of the church's website.

Since the technology upgrade has been completed in the church, our WiFi capabilities are significantly improved inside and outside of the building. As a result, we are able to stream our Zoom services simultaneously throughout the building. This allows us to provide a space for members to gather safely to watch the service together.

Gathering inside will require all members to accommodate a number of changes in how we gather together. For starters, everyone will be required to do a few things:

1. Register online ahead of time in order to attend a gathering
2. Pass a health screening and temperature check before entry into the building
3. Wear a well-fitted mask at all times
4. Practice good hand hygiene
5. Maintain proper social distancing

You may have many questions about these new guidelines. Remember, you can find the procedures documents on the members page of the church's website for more information. If, after thoroughly reviewing these documents, you do not find the answer to your questions, please send those questions to nurse@westsideuu.org, and they will be addressed directly or in future videos as we approach our target opening date.

In the guidelines documents you will find a link to the New York Times Coronavirus Tracker. This is the primary data source the church board has decided to use. These guidelines will be in effect as long as Tarrant County is classified as "high risk" or above by the New York Times Coronavirus Tracker.

Please note that the goal of these guidelines is to maximize the spiritual and physical health of our congregation, recognizing that individual members may be at greater risk for COVID-19 infection but may also be experiencing social isolation.

You may be wondering "why would I want to go to the church to watch the service when I can watch it safely from the comfort of my own home?"

Great question! Let's ask founding member Myrtle McMahon to share her recent experience.

A few weeks ago, about six of us gathered on a Sunday morning here at the church to see the new link installed equipment that will allow us to gather again in the church on Sunday mornings. We viewed the Sunday morning Zoom worship program sitting 6 feet apart. We experienced that it was the same if we were in the Sanctuary, or in the Fellowship Hall, or in the Glass Classroom as the Zoom worship service was simultaneously being broadcast in each space. As we watched the Zoom service, it sounded like we were really in church. We felt safe being together as we were spread out, and everyone was wearing their masks. We can again gather together safely and be in fellowship if we follow the safety guidelines.

Thank you for your support as we continue to work towards gathering again in person with our Westside community. And, stay tuned for more information as we approach October 17.

Thanks!