

Policy for In-Person gatherings during COVID-19

As Amended April 25, 2022

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2022 requires a flexible response. At this time, daily case counts are increasing, and those who have been vaccinated and received booster shots tend to have mild cases of COVID when they are infected. However, others continue to be at higher risk, including the immune-compromised, and those who are not able to be vaccinated for medical reasons or age. We can expect surges and lulls in case counts, and the accompanying stress on health care institutions, for the foreseeable future.

Our new policy on in-person gatherings strives to be responsive to future changes with three levels of precautions, based on the COVID-19 Community Level posted on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC COVID Data Tracker Website](https://www.cdc.gov/data/covid19-community-levels/).

COVID-19 Community Levels are a tool to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. The CDC looks at the combination of three metrics; new COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population in the past 7 days, the percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients, and total new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 population in the past 7 days, to determine the COVID-19 community level. New COVID-19 admissions and the percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied represent the current potential for strain on the health system. Data on new cases acts as an early warning indicator of potential increases in health system strain in the event of a COVID-19 surge.

Using these data, the COVID-19 community level is classified as low, medium, or high.

COVID-19 Community Levels – Use the Highest Level that Applies to Your Community				
New COVID-19 Cases Per 100,000 people in the past 7 days	Indicators	Low	Medium	High
Fewer than 200	New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total)	<10.0	10.0-19.9	≥20.0
	Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	<10.0%	10.0-14.9%	≥15.0%
200 or more	New COVID-19 admissions per 100,000 population (7-day total)	NA	<10.0	≥10.0
	Percent of staffed inpatient beds occupied by COVID-19 patients (7-day average)	NA	<10.0%	≥10.0%

Policy as Approved by UUCB Board on April 28, 2022

No in-person events or gatherings can be held if the County has declared prohibitions on such gatherings.

Additionally, the Board reserves the right to limit or deny any event or gathering if it determines that doing so may endanger the congregation's members and the greater community.

In-person events and gatherings will follow precautions based on the COVID-19 Community Level posted on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID Data Tracker COVID website:

Level: LOW

In-person events or gatherings can be held without restrictions. Individuals should continue to be respectful of others' expressed wishes for physical distancing, decisions to wear masks, etc. Worship will continue to be offered in-person and online. Other committees and groups are encouraged to offer online meeting options where feasible.

Level: MEDIUM

In-person events or gatherings can be held inside the church or outside on the church grounds with the following restrictions;

- The proper and continuous wearing of masks is required indoors and encouraged outdoors, except for children under age 2. A mask may only be removed if an individual is speaking from the pulpit (maintaining recommended distance from other people) as part of leading the Sunday Service (or similar event) or singing a solo as part of special music for the Sunday Service (or similar event). Afterward, that person will put their mask back on. Event organizers must make sure that extra masks are available.
- Every gathering must have people serving as COVID Monitor(s) to ensure that proper safety protocols are being followed at all times. They must make clear those protocols and expectations for the gathering at the beginning of the event.
- Participants must maintain at least a 3- foot distance from each other at all times unless a part of the same household.
- Singing will be allowed while remaining masked.
- Eating and drinking are permitted inside under these conditions:
 - Space must be reserved for those who wish to gather only with other masked individuals.
 - The Fireside Lobby will serve as the space for no eating or drinking.
 - Unmasking in order to eat or drink must occur only in spaces large enough to accommodate a 3-foot distance between all individuals who are not part of a single household. Thus, a small group of 5-10 people may be able to use the Cafe to eat and drink, but a larger group would need to use a larger room with better ventilation, such as the Social Hall.
 - Maintaining a 3-foot distance from others not in your household - especially while unmasked indoors - is required.

Level: HIGH

In addition to the restrictions for the Medium Level, the following restrictions will apply;

- Every participant of an in-person event must sign in with a phone number for contact tracing and affirm that they are in good health. Dated contact tracing sign-in sheets must be turned in at the office and will be kept on file for a month.
- Eating and drinking are prohibited inside.
- No group singing is permitted inside.
- A choir can sing while wearing professional grade masks.
- The Music Director and Worship Leader (or event planner) must plan the timing of performances and size of the choir to minimize risks of transmission.
- Event organizers (including Worship, Small Groups or Committees) must submit an [Application for In-Person Gathering](#).

Application for In-Person Gatherings

- Include the time, place, and estimated number of participants.
- The event chair or leader will serve as COVID Monitor.
- We strongly recommend that In-Person Gathering Applications be submitted 1 week (7 days) prior to the gathering. In the case of recurring events (monthly committee meetings, weekly worship services), one (1) application may be submitted for the church year. If the level changes, the Pandemic Response Team will notify the group leader, who must ensure that appropriate procedures are followed.
- Applications can be submitted through the online form shown below. The application will be reviewed by the Office Manager. Applications that do not ask for any exceptions to the policy as stated will be automatically approved. If a group would like to alter an aspect that is defined in this policy, that application will be considered by the board. The communication with the organizer of the event will be prompt.
- The Board reserves the right to limit or deny any event or gathering.
- Outdoor gatherings must follow all guidelines.
- Attendance at indoor gatherings is limited by space sufficient to ensure proper social distancing. The following are estimated numbers for maximum seating capacity for specific rooms. The first number is assuming the 3-foot distance for every individual. The second number is actual seating, thus allowing for family units sitting together to increase the allowable capacity.

<i>Sanctuary 74/112</i>	<i>Chapel 22/40</i>	<i>Social Hall 60/100</i>	<i>Meeting Rm 12/20</i>
<i>Fireside Lobby 8/15</i>	<i>Library 4/8</i>	<i>Youth Room 8</i>	<i>Finance Room 5</i>
<i>Nursery 8 (+ 2-4 adults)</i>	<i>Main Office 4</i>	<i>Minister's Office 5/7</i>	<i>DFM Office 3 /4</i>
<i>RE Classrooms TBD</i>	<i>Basement rooms TBD</i>	<i>Café TBD</i>	<i>Kitchen TBD</i>
<i>Total for building 230/350</i>			