

## **Crooks Memorial United Methodist Church COVID Related Guidelines**

### **Introduction**

The Discipleship Team acts as the Conference-prescribed Post-COVID Re-entry Group (PRG) at Crooks Memorial and is focused on the reemergence of ministry and mission to include revisions to our COVID related guidelines. As we continue to resume in-person activities we seek to foster an environment that is conducive for community building, fellowship, ministry, and mission while maintaining safety for all. The following guidelines have been simplified from previous versions and are based on our context, CDC/health guidance, experience, prayerful thought, and congregational engagement. If you feel your ministry group or activity is not covered by any of the below guidelines, please contact Laura Whitefleet-Smith (Discipleship Team, chair) or Pastor Lisa.

### **The following guidelines are effective October 17, 2021**

**All individuals** on church property, all church related groups (on premise or off premise) and all outside groups using the church facility must follow these guidelines. For ease, we have summed up the guidelines to Three Simple Practices, which are further explained within this document.

#### **Three Simple Practices**

- 1) **Masks are required for unvaccinated individuals** indoors at all times. Unvaccinated individuals can remove their masks outdoors if they can maintain social distancing.
- 2) **Social Distancing is encouraged** for all, as well as refraining from sharing objects and physical touch.
- 3) **Health Monitoring & Notification:** All are required to stay home when sick, experiencing COVID related symptoms, and/or have been exposed to someone with COVID. All must notify the Pastor if after attending an in-person gathering you develop 2 or more symptoms of COVID-19, test positive for COVID-19, or discover you were exposed to COVID-19 prior to attending

**Mask Requirement for Unvaccinated Individuals:** All unvaccinated individuals (exception for 2 years and younger) are required to wear a mask at all times for all indoor church-related activities, events, worship, etc... on or off premise. *An exception will be made during worship for the moment of partaking of communion elements.* For all outdoor activities, unvaccinated individuals may remove their mask IF they are able to maintain social distancing, otherwise masks for unvaccinated individuals are still required.

**Mask Wearing for \*Fully Vaccinated Individuals:** Wearing a mask is optional for fully vaccinated individuals (2 weeks after last dose of vaccine).

**Social Distancing:** We encourage people to maintain a social distance as well as refrain from sharing objects and physical touch (handshake, hug, embracing). If individuals who are unvaccinated choose to unmask outdoors, they must maintain social distancing.

**Children (infant through 11 years) Classes and Gatherings and Adults Working with Children:** All children ages 3 through 11 are to follow the “Mask Requirement for Unvaccinated Individuals” guideline previously stated and maintain social distance to the best of their ability. Exception to this is in the Church Nursery (infant through 3 years) where 3-year-olds may remove their mask while in the nursery during worship. Social distancing will be maintained as best as possible. All staff and leaders working with children will wear a mask, regardless of their vaccination status.

**Food associated with church activities:** Food consumption may occur with any indoor or outdoor group, event, or activity. However, since unvaccinated individuals must keep their masks on at all times indoors they will not be able to partake of food while inside. Participation is still encouraged and whenever possible, “take-out” options should be made available. If outdoors, unvaccinated individuals may partake of food but must maintain social distancing.

Prepackaged or pre-plated food is strongly encouraged. If food is pot-luck, buffet, or similar, it is strongly encouraged to use individuals to serve food onto the plate in order to limit touch. If a self-serve item is necessary (i.e. drink dispenser), a sanitizing aid (i.e. hand sanitizer) should be made available.

**Food or Drink Preparation in Church Kitchen:** All food prepared (cooked or using catered trays) in the kitchen for distribution should be done with the best hygiene practices to include hand washing and the wearing of gloves. Any towels used should be taken home, laundered and then returned to the church. Any utensils used should be washed in the sink or dishwasher using appropriate cleaner. Towel dry and return to the appropriate drawers. After the event, the team will clean/disinfect counters, sinks, etc... All trash will be placed in the dumpster outside the church building.

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**\*Definition of fully vaccinated:** *Per the CDC, one is considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a 2-shot series, such as the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines, or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as the J&J/Janssen vaccine. Persons are still considered to be “fully vaccinated” even if they have not received a vaccine booster shot.*