



Heritage Presbyterian Church

Love Grows Here

Loving Through Christ, Becoming Disciples, Serving All

Covenant of Care

After washing their feet in an act of humble service, Jesus told his disciples “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:34-45). As those who seek to follow Christ’s example, we believe we are called to engage in relationships that are marked by love. Our church vision and mission statement even reads “Love Grows Here.”

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, church leaders have prayerfully considered what it looks like to live in love as a congregation. Since March 2020, this has taken form in the prioritization of service with a significant increase in our food pantry efforts, the development of virtual opportunities for worship, education, and fellowship, and increased precautions for lower risk in-person activities. We believe this is the best way we can live into Christ’s call to love one another. As we anticipate what community life will look like in the future, we believe the Spirit calls us to continue to live in love, adopting new rituals and routines that model the best care we can provide to each other with particular attention to those who are the most vulnerable in our midst (Jesus had a lot of things to say about that, too). We will continue to learn more about best practices and adjust our response accordingly in order to foster congregational vitality and our commitment to our mission statement: **Love Grows Here: Loving through Christ, Becoming Disciples, Serving All.**

In scripture, the promises that bind a community of faith together are wrapped in the relationship we have with God. Because of this, we refer to them as “covenant” relationships. In all things, we trust that God is guiding us to make wise decisions and is with us. It is God who said “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine” (Isaiah 43:1). We join together as those who have been claimed in love by a God of grace, committing to a covenant of care as we seek to best reflect that love to each other as we follow Christ together in community.

A Phased Approach

Decisions relating to how and when we gather in-person are a dynamic process, responsive to what is happening in our immediate communities, attentive to guidance from medical professionals and governmental agencies along with our own awareness of the needs of our community. A Worship Task Force led this effort beginning in April 2020 and presented a multi-phase approach that other committees have followed in turn to make a plan for deliberate and measured changes over time.

- **Phase I – Virtual Only.** All church activities will be online, with the exception of essential office functions, worship recording, and approved mission activity with increased precautions.
- **Phase II – Limited In-Person.** Most activities continue as in Phase I. Some small group activities permitted on a case-by-case basis with increased precautions. In addition to virtual worship, a small in-person live service will be offered in the Sanctuary by reservation.
- **Phase III – Expanded In-Person with Social Distancing.** Many activities continue as in Phase II. Additional small group activities permitted with increased precautions. Worship services will be livestreamed from the Sanctuary with some precautions continuing for in-person participants.
- **Phase IV – “New Normal” In-Person.** Most church activities permitted, following best practices for cleaning and safety. Virtual access to worship and Sunday School will continue alongside in-person gatherings.



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Covenant of Care Summary¹

	Phase I Virtual	Phase II Limited In-Person	Phase III Expanded In-Person	Phase IV “New Normal” In-Person
General	Primarily virtual, with in-person limited to essential business, worship recording, and mission activities with precautions.	Continued virtual with small number (<25) in-person activities with precautions.	Expanded in-person activities with precautions, group size based on social distancing capacity.	In-person activities with recommended precautions based on group or activity, with hybrid virtual options when possible.
Worship	Hosted Virtual Service on YouTube and Facebook, 10 am later viewing available Full transcripts of service mailed to those without access Communion via Zoom.	Hosted Virtual Service as in Phase I, later viewing available. Live service in the Sanctuary with spoken liturgy and sermon, and pre-recorded vocal music. (18 households)	Livestreamed via YouTube, with later viewing available In-person service in Sanctuary with precautions and social distancing.	Livestreamed via YouTube, with later viewing available In-person worship in the Sanctuary with suggested precautions guided by personal considerations.
Music²	Staff or home-recorded music, use of archived pre-recorded pieces.	Live non-wind instrumental music Pre-recorded vocals of small ensembles.	Continue pre-recorded and instrumental; begin introducing live vocals by small ensembles or worship leaders, then congregational singing with precautions.	Transition into full congregational singing and choirs following recommendations from national music associations.
Nurture	Virtual learning using Zoom and/or e-mailed at-home resources.	Virtual learning as in Phase I. Some small group gatherings of low-risk groups.	Hybrid virtual and in-person learning Some small group gatherings with precautions.	In-person group gatherings, continuing to offer hybrid virtual options whenever possible.
Mission <i>Food Pantry Santa's Caravan Blood Drive Clothing Closet Kevin's Garden</i>	Emergency services as approved by Session with < 10 volunteers and additional precautions	Limited services as approved with <25 volunteers following volunteer guidelines.	Limited services as approved with volunteer guidelines and precautions.	Increased services continue along with community needs, with discernment for longer-term strategies.
Facilities Use	Essential repairs and maintenance only.	Small group use considered on a case-by-case basis	Begin to allow return of groups with precautions.	Return of groups with “new normal” protocols.
Office	Essential business only; staff may work remotely as needed.	Visitors by appointment only; staff may work remotely as needed.	Visitors encouraged to call ahead; increased availability. Flexibility for staff.	Resume regular office hours.

All Volunteers must follow the HPC COVID-19 Volunteer Guidelines (updated 1/24/2022) and any additional guidelines established by leaders of activities.

All activities will follow the best practices for precautions as appropriate following CDC guidance.

¹ Additional supporting resources include: <https://www.wichurches.org/2021/04/16/bearing-with-one-another-in-love/>, <https://www.pcusa.org/covid19/>

² Guidance from the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, including additional resources related to music, can be found at https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/covid-19/pam-covid-052120.pdf



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Frequently Asked Questions

What sources were used to determine these guidelines?

- Center for Disease Control - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>
- Georgia Department of Public Health - <https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-daily-status-report>
- PCUSA denominational resources - <https://www.pcusa.org/covid19/>
- Wisconsin Council of Churches <https://www.wichurches.org/2021/04/16/bearing-with-one-another-in-love/>
<https://www.wichurches.org/2021/05/13/love-builds-up-a-response-to-mays-cdc-masking-update/>

Who is responsible for making decisions about these phases?

As the governing body of the church, the Session is responsible for making the final decisions regarding church activities and outside events held on our campus. As a part of this work, the Session may equip and give permission for committees or small groups to make decisions related to a particular ministry area.

How will we know which phase we are in?

We will communicate regularly through the church website and Facebook, monthly e-newsletters (mailed via USPS to those without e-mail). Church Staff will provide guidance for groups based on this Covenant of Care and Session decision. Activity leaders will communicate additional details with volunteers and participants.

What happens if someone who attends an event on our campus tests positive for COVID-19?

All campus visitors are asked to notify the church office or activity leaders if they have tested positive for COVID-19. Leaders will respond following the COVID-19 Exposure Response Plan, updated 6/28/2021. Our staff will follow the Staff Exposure Response Plan (updated 1/24/2022) for work activities and coverage.

What about singing?

Studies referenced by professional music and choral associations have shown that activities like congregational singing produce aerosols which travel a greater distance and remain airborne for longer, posing a higher risk of transmission. Our plan includes lower risk singing activities, in Phases II and III, such as congregational singing during outdoor services, continued use of pre-recorded music, and additional distancing indoors for live singing by worship leaders, soloists, and small ensembles as we expand music opportunities as safely as possible for all who attend. (Some resources we are following include: <https://acda.org/resources-for-choral-professionals-during-a-pandemic/>, Presbyterian Association of Musicians - <https://www.presbymusic.org/>, Center for Congregational Song - <https://congregationsong.org/>, The Hymn Society - <https://thehymnsociety.org/covid-19/>)

What about vaccinations?

HPC is committed to providing a safe and welcoming space for all who wish to join us. We encourage all members of our community to consult with their healthcare providers and when appropriate and available, receive their choice of approved COVID-19 vaccine to protect themselves and reduce potential spread. Because this is a personal and private decision, and we know not all members of our community can or will receive a vaccine, our plan does not require anyone to disclose vaccination status, trusting that our community members will adhere to the **recommendations** that best fit their situation. All activities will be planned to welcome both vaccinated and unvaccinated persons, so that all may fully participate in the life of the church.

How are changes made to this plan?

This plan is reviewed monthly and updated as needed by the Session, with input from committees and church leaders. If you have questions or additional ideas, please contact the Church Office, or the Elder or lead volunteer for the event or ministry area. Changes made from the previous revision are indicated by highlight.



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Covenant of Care – Detailed Plans for Worship

Worship (1 of 3)	Phase I Virtual	Phase II Limited In-Person	Phase III Expanded In-Person	Phase IV “New Normal” In-Person
Access				
Virtual (recorded or live stream)	Yes – Facebook and YouTube	Yes – Facebook and YouTube	Yes – Livestream via YouTube	Yes – Livestream via YouTube
Capacity	N/A	25 participants or 18 households not including worship leader households seated in chancel/balcony.	26 households, not including worship leader households seated in chancel/balcony. Increased as space allows.	Full Capacity
Reservations	N/A	Yes, advanced registration required via online form or through church office with priority given to those without internet or with pastoral needs. Walk-ins accepted up to capacity.	No. Ushers will facilitate sign-in process for contact tracing and attendance purposes.	No. Ushers will facilitate sign-in for attendance purposes.
Entrance	N/A	One entrance point at Narthex. Door opens 15 minutes before service.	One entrance point at Narthex. Door opens 15 minutes before service.	All entrances available.
Seating	N/A	By household, socially distanced. Refer to Sanctuary diagram – Phase 2	By household, socially distanced. Refer to Sanctuary diagram – Phase 3	Open seating, with potential section for families with children
Exit	N/A	All will exit through Narthex.	All will exit through Narthex.	No restrictions



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Worship (2 of 3)	Phase I Virtual	Phase II Limited In-Person	Phase III Expanded In-Person	Phase IV “New Normal” In-Person
In-Person Precautions				
Health of Attendees	Asymptomatic and no known exposure within last 2 weeks.	Asymptomatic and no known exposure within last 2 weeks.	Asymptomatic and if exposed, following CDC guidelines	Attendees are encouraged to worship online if they feel sick
Face Masks	Whenever possible as appropriate for recording.	Required following CDC guidance Worship leaders may remove masks while leading.	Required following CDC guidance Worship leaders may remove masks while leading.	As recommended by CDC
Wash or Sanitize hands upon arrival	Yes Sanitizer available	Yes, required at welcome station	Yes, at welcome station	Sanitizer available throughout campus
Social Distancing	Yes	Yes	Yes	At discretion of attendees.
Restrooms	Yes – individual use	Narthex only	Yes	Yes
Music				
Instrumental Music	Pre-recorded by staff, or taken from livestream archives	Live non-wind instruments, or pre-recorded	Live with added precautions and pre-recorded	Yes
Singing	Pre-recorded by staff, or taken from livestream archives	No live <i>indoor</i> singing by congregation. Pre-recorded in small ensembles with precautions.	Begin introducing congregational singing with precautions as guided by professional music associations	Full congregational singing
Choir	Pre-recorded by household or taken from livestream archives	No live singing. Pre-recorded in small ensembles with precautions.	Live small ensembles with precautions or pre-recorded.	Yes, following guidance of professional music organizations
Bells	Taken from livestream archives	Pre-recorded small ensembles.	Yes - with added precautions	Yes
Praise Kids	No	No	Possible outdoor, distanced gatherings with non-wind instruments	Yes, with precautions



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Worship (3 of 3)	Phase I Virtual	Phase II Limited In-Person	Phase III Expanded In-Person	Phase IV "New Normal" In-Person
Operational Precautions				
Number of Services	1- Virtual, 10 am	2 – Virtual, 10:00 am Sanctuary, 10:30 am	1 – 10:30 am Sanctuary, Livestreamed on YouTube	1 – 10:30 am Sanctuary, Livestreamed on YouTube
Nursery	N/A	Limited to worship leader households	Yes, with precautions	Yes
Shared items in pews (i.e. hymnals, bibles, attendance, prayer cards)	No	No	Bibles; Hymnals in pews when at full congregational singing	Bibles, Hymnals, and Prayer Cards
Bulletins	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
PrayGround	N/A	Single-use worship kits available	Materials to be taken to pews	Yes
Time for Young Disciples	Virtual	N/A	No	TBD
Children's Chapel	N/A	No	Yes. Begin to offer with precautions.	Yes, with precautions
Communion in Person	Virtually via Zoom	11:00 am hybrid: virtually via Zoom and in Sanctuary with household kits	Yes – in pews with household kits or modified intinction with precautions	Yes – with modifications for safe serving as appropriate
Communion at Home	Kits delivered upon request	Kits delivered upon request	Kits delivered upon request	Yes – with precautions
Offering	Virtual	Virtual & Offering box in Narthex	Virtual & Offering box in Narthex	Virtual & Offering box in Narthex
Receiving line	N/A	No	Outside	Outside or in Narthex
Volunteers (following HPC COVID-19 Volunteer Guidelines)				
Ushers	Virtual – Church Staff	2 Virtual, 2 in-person	1-2 Virtual, 2-4 in-person	Yes
Liturgist	Pre-Recorded	Church Staff	Church Staff or Volunteer	Yes - Volunteers
Acolyte	Pre-recorded	Pre-recorded and in-person as able	Yes, if present	Yes
Nursery	N/A	Church Staff	Church Staff; volunteers with added precautions	Church Staff and volunteers
A/V Team	Yes, onsite for streaming weekly	Yes, limited A/V Team in balcony	Yes, with additional volunteers	Resume volunteer rotation



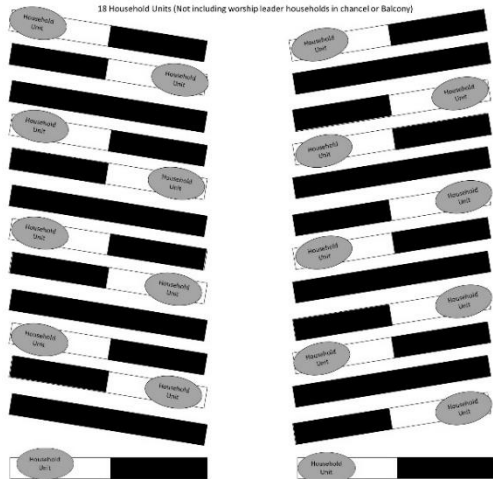
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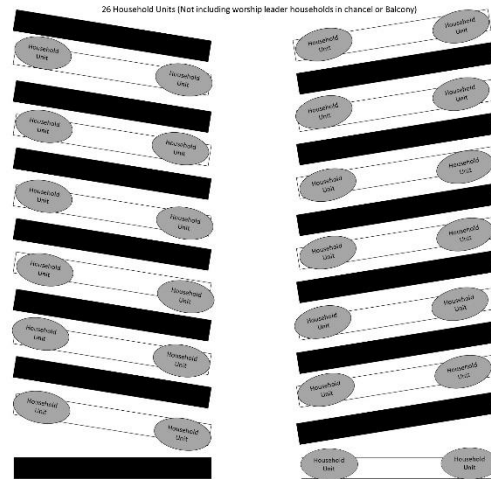
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Sanctuary Social Distancing Diagrams (updated 4.26.2021)

Phase 2 – Limited - 18 Households



Phase 3** – Expanded – 26 households



**Balcony will be available once A/V issues of wiring and camera shake are resolved.

What is meant by “household”?

This term is used to recognize a group of individuals who are regularly engaged in contact equivalent of that of living in the same household, which may extend by mutual agreement to extended family members and friends.

Covenant of Care – Detailed Plans for Nurture

Nurture	Phase I Virtual	Phase II Limited In-Person	Phase III Expanded In-Person	Phase IV “New Normal” In-Person
Children	E-mail Resources and Virtual Gatherings	E-mail Resources, Virtual, some small groups with precautions	Begin to introduce in-person with precautions	In-person with precautions
Youth	Virtual	Virtual and in-person with precautions	Virtual and in-person with precautions	In-person following recommended precautions based on group/activity.
Adults	Virtual (Zoom)	Virtual (Zoom)	Hybrid Models with some small groups in-person	In-person along with continued hybrid virtual access as able.
Praise Kids	No	No	Possible outdoor, distanced gatherings with non-wind instruments	Yes, with precautions



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Covenant of Care – Detailed Plans for Mission³

Mission	Phase I Virtual	Phase II Limited In-Person	Phase III Expanded In-Person	Phase IV “New Normal” In-Person
General				
Volunteers	Yes, essential only; groups of <10 following volunteer guideline	Yes; groups of <25 following volunteer guidelines at set times.	Yes, following volunteer guidelines	Yes, following volunteer guidelines
Food Pantry and Kevin’s Garden				
ACFB Deliveries	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Target Pick-Up	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Donations	No	Kevin’s Garden during volunteer hours only	Kevin’s Garden during volunteer hours only	As requested and coordinated by FP volunteers
Distribution	Drive-Up, Contact-free distribution, with contact-free registration online	Drive-Up, Contact-free distribution, with contact-free registration online	Drive-Up, Contact-free distribution, with contact-free registration online	Contact-free registration online. Distribution based on need of community.
School Pantries	Yes, coordinated with each school	Yes, coordinated with each school	Yes, coordinated with each school	Yes, coordinated with each school
Kevin’s Garden	Yes – distanced	Yes – distanced	Yes	Yes
Clothing Closet				
Donations	No	No	only upon request	only upon request
Distribution	Emergency requests handled by church staff	Emergency requests handled by staff/volunteers	Possibility of “pop-up” outdoor events	Possible special projects; begin discernment
Santa’s Caravan				
Interviews	Virtually or phone; curbside pick-up for clothing/food	1 parent only; on-site distribution with precautions	Yes, with increased precautions	Yes, following volunteer guidelines
Donations (Gifts)	Designated times for drop-off	Designated times for drop-off	Designated times for drop-off	Designated times for drop-off
Distribution	drive-through pick-up; limited delivery; no Santas	drive-through pick-up; limited delivery; no Santas	drive-through pick-up; limited delivery; no Santas	Yes
American Red Cross				
Blood Drives	Possible, in gym with precautions	Possible, in gym with precautions	Yes, in gym with precautions	Yes

³ Detailed mission plans, particularly for Food Pantry and Santa’s Caravan, will continue to develop in line with recipient needs, mission partners, and local situation. Final plans will be approved by the Mission Committee.



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Covenant of Care – Detailed Plans for Facilities

Facilities	Phase I Virtual	Phase II Limited In-Person	Phase III Expanded In-Person	Phase IV “New Normal” In-Person
Church Activities	Essential office, worship, and mission activities	As approved by Session or related Committee	As approved by Session or related Committee	As scheduled with church office by leaders/committees
Personal use by church members	No	Considered on a case-by-case basis, with group size limited to social distancing space, no more than 25.	Considered on a case-by-case basis, with group size limited to social distancing space.	Yes, with “new normal” protocols in place
Marietta Presbyterian Church (Korean congregation)	At their discretion, following CDC and state guidelines from gathering; limited to Chapel building	At their discretion, following CDC and state guidelines from gathering; limited to Chapel building	Begin to consider use of HPC Ed Building for small group gatherings based on availability of space	Resume option to utilize other HPC facilities as available.
Outside Groups with whom we have a standing relationship (i.e. Scouts, 575 Volleyball, Al-Anon)	No inside use. Outside use considered on a case-by-case basis.	Considered on a case-by-case basis, with group size limited to social distancing space, no more than 25.	Begin to allow return of groups with increased precautions, limited to social distancing space	Yes, with “new normal” protocols in place
Use by outside Groups who are new to using our Facilities	No	No. Exception may be made for groups with a connection to HPC	Considered on a case-by-case basis	Considered on a case-by-case basis

**** All groups - church, sponsored, and outside – are expected to adhere to the appropriate CDC guidelines (see <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>) regarding precautions based on composition of group present. Sponsored and outside groups should also consult their governing bodies and professional organizations for additional guidance.**

An exception for face masks is granted to individuals actively participating in athletic activities on the court in the gym and to those actively leading live worship or recording for worship. Any other exceptions should be requested to the Session through the appropriate committee.