

# Re-Entry Protocol 2020



This protocol is created in consultation with information from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Iowa Department of Health, the Dubuque County Health Department, and the Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. The below phases are fluid. If there is a spike of COVID-19 cases, church leadership may decide to move back to a more restrictive phase.

We will determine the change from one level to the next based on recommendations from the CDC and monitoring the trends in our region. A primary resource we will be using in our discernment monitors the 14-day average of COVID-19 hospitalizations in Iowa Region 6 to determine when to move between levels. The 14-day trend line means that the daily number of people hospitalized will need to be below 70 for quite a few days before the 14 rolling average gets to 70. For example, a week with 80 patients hospitalized would need to be followed by a week of 60 patients (or less) for the two-week average to be 70.

Region 6 includes the metro areas of Waterloo, Cedar Rapids, Dubuque, and Decorah. Also included are 14 counties lying north and east of these cities. Here is the website where that information is located:

<https://coronavirus.iowa.gov/pages/rmcc-data> (see sample data below from May 25)



**CURRENT STATUS: LEVEL 2-ORANGE**  
**ONLINE-ONLY WORSHIP THROUGH JUNE 28<sup>TH</sup>**  
*Trustees assess every two weeks.*

## **Level 3-Red: Restricted (Essential Gatherings Only)**

*We will stay at Level 3 (RED) until the 14-day average hospitalization rate in District 6 goes to 55 or less.*

### **Church Status**

- Church is Closed
- Essential staff/volunteer only
- Follow Physical Distancing Guidelines:
  - o Post reminders for social distancing, frequent hand washing and mask wearing.
  - o Mask required in building
- Staff working from home most of the time
- Post signage at the door indicating no one should enter the establishment (including employees) if they currently have symptoms or have been around anyone with a confirmed COVID-19 diagnosis in the last 14 days.

### **Church Protocol**

- Masks will be worn by when interacting with other people
- Online Worship Only (No in-person Worship)
- Food for the Soul:
  - o Take-out Only.
  - o Precautions (temp checks, handwashing, mask and gloves) required in kitchen and in serving meals.
- Worship Teams/essential staff only
- Small groups meet virtually
- Nursery services closed
- Life Rituals are permitted (Baptisms, funerals, weddings)
  - o 10 or less participants
  - o Must follow physical distancing guidelines
- If an employee or a member of the public becomes ill while at the church, ask them to share that information with management, leave the facility and then call their health care provider. **If it is an emergency, call 911 and let them know the emergency may be COVID-19 related.**
- Those who are considered high risk should shelter in place.
- No tours are allowed

### **Church Sanitation**

- Disinfect high traffic areas
- Regularly disinfect work areas
- Disinfect computers, keyboards, mouse, phone
- Deep cleaning entire church using EPA approved cleaning products that kill the virus
- Add Hand sanitizing stations (preferably touchless)
- HVAC will be on but ceiling fans will be off.
- Staff to follow physical distancing guidelines
- Staff to frequently wash hands
- Staff to use 70%+alcohol hand sanitizer

## Level 2- Orange: Cautionary Return

During the Orange Phase, the church will re-open to small groups with physical distancing protocol in place. This level will begin when average hospitalization rate in District 6 goes to 55 or less.

*If the hospitalization trend line shows a marked **increase** over the past 7 days, we will return to Level 3 (RED).*

### Church Status

- Continue to hold online worship services
  - o In-person Worship *may* begin at the discretion of church leadership.
    - That decision will be based on data and trends in our community.
  - o Introduce Possible Outdoor Worship opportunities.
- Small Groups meet in Sanctuary while honoring social distancing.
- Church Business:
  - o Conducted virtually, if possible
  - o Regular office functions may resume

### Church Protocols:

- Everyone is **required** to wear a mask.
- High risk Individuals continue to shelter in place
- Adults, Youth and Children Groups continue to meet virtually
- No tours are allowed
- Food for the Soul:
  - o Take-out Only.
  - o Precautions (temp checks, handwashing, mask and gloves) required in kitchen and in serving meals.

### Sanitation

- Disinfect high traffic areas
- Regularly disinfect work and high-touch areas
- Computers, keyboards, mouse, phone
- Deep cleaning entire church using EPA approved cleaning products that kill the virus
- Add Hand sanitizing stations (preferably touchless)
- HVAC will be on but ceiling fans will be off.
- If sanctuary is used for meetings between weekly services, remove communal items (offering plates, Bibles, hymnals, pencils, registration pads)
- Everyone is to follow physical distancing guidelines
- Everyone is encouraged to frequently wash hands

## **Level 1- Yellow: Intermediate return**

During the Yellow phase, the Church will open to Congregational Worship.

This level will begin when average hospitalization rate in District 6 goes to 25 or less.

If the hospitalization trend line shows a marked increase over the past 7 days, we will return to Level 2 (Orange).

### **Church Status**

- Church is open with regular business hours

### **Church Protocol**

- High risk individuals may choose to continue to shelter in place, or may choose to attend.
- The wearing of masks is encouraged but not required
- Nursery Care resumes (with temperature checks for staff and children).
- Choir *may* begin socially distant rehearsals in small groups at the discretion of directors and participants.
- Worship: When In person worship begins...
  - o Consider whether or not to remove Hymnals, Bibles and Registration Pads
  - o Do not pass offering plates
  - o No-Touch Passing the Peace
  - o No Registration Pads
  - o Children's Time will be adjusted to avoid gathering in close proximity.
  - o Communion may be offered with caution with very strict serving policies:
    - Perhaps even BYOC (Bring your own Communion Elements)
  - o No Congregational Singing or spoken responses
- No coffee-hour or snacks offered
- Life Rituals (Weddings, Funerals, Graduation, Confirmation) can resume and should follow physical distancing guidelines
- No Tours
- Vacation Bible School will be determined at the discretion of leadership.
- Food for the Soul:
  - o Take-out only.
  - o Precautions (temp checks, handwashing, mask, and gloves) required in kitchen and in serving meals.
  - o Possible re-entry of Give-away Table in Portico.

### **Sanitation**

- Disinfect high traffic areas
- Regularly disinfect work and high-touch areas
- Deep cleaning entire church using EPA approved cleaning products that kill the virus
- Add Hand sanitizing stations (preferably touchless)
- HVAC will be on but ceiling fans will be off.
- If sanctuary is used for meetings between weekly services, remove communal items (offering plates, Bibles, hymnals, pencils, registration pads)
- Everyone is to follow physical distancing guidelines
- Everyone is encouraged to frequently wash hands

## Level 0 - Green: Full Return

The COVID-19 outbreak effectively ends with 60% to 70% of the human population is immune to the virus or has the antibodies, or a vaccine is discovered and distributed widely.

### Church Status

- Church is open with regular business hours and functions
- Worship with singing and fanfare and communion and Hand shaking HALLELUIAH
- Nursery Care resumes
- All Sunday School classes resume
- Church Tour resume
- Choir Resumes

### Church Protocol

- Consider offering no-touch alternatives
- Resume all in-person worship and small group gatherings
- Food For the Soul offers in-house dining.
- Tours Resume

### Church Sanitation

- Periodic disinfecting in high traffic areas
- Hand sanitizing stations remain (preferably touchless)
- If removed, communal items are returned to the pews (offering plates, Bibles, hymnals, pencils, registration pads)

### Additional Note:

**If you are interested in following additional trends in Dubuque County, here is a link to our county data.**

<https://dubuquecounty.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=104>

**The Trustees selected the broader Region 6 data (linked on page 1 of this document) to account for those who come to Dubuque from nearby rural areas for shopping and medical care.**