



## **GUIDELINES FOR IN-HOUSE WORSHIP**

We find ourselves in a challenging time caused by the COVID-19 pandemic: a congregation wanting to resume in-house worship but also concerned about the risk of spreading this illness.

The founder of the Methodist movement, John Wesley, encouraged us to consider three rules as we seek to follow Jesus in the world: 1) Do no harm, 2) Do good, and 3) Attend to the ordinances of God. The following protocol is offered in the spirit of these three rules, with the hope that we will do no harm to one another, that we will find creative ways to do good, and that in all these things we will come to love God and God's people more deeply.

### **1. Worship Service Time**

In-house worship services in our EUMC sanctuary will begin at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings beginning November 29, 2020. Members are encouraged to arrive at least 15-30 minutes ahead of time to allow time for everyone to be checked in and seated. Members are requested to practice "safe distancing" at all times.

### **2. Pre-Registration**

We ask that members pre-register for each service indicating who is planning to attend. This will allow us to plan for accommodating the number of people, following a "safe distancing" regimen. It will also allow planning for anyone with special needs. Members may register by visiting [www.englewood-umc.com/reservations](http://www.englewood-umc.com/reservations) or by calling or e-mailing the church office.

The pre-registration list will be used to check in members and guests upon entry on Sunday mornings. This will substitute for signing attendance registers in the pews and will make "contact tracing" possible in the event it is later discovered that someone in attendance was infected or was asymptomatic.

### **3. Safe Distancing**

Members are asked to limit movements to the entryways, narthex, and sanctuary and avoid congregating in small groups while inside. We must maintain "safe distancing." The bathrooms on the Fellowship Hall hallway are available, but distancing is also required in these areas.

#### 4. **Fellowship Gathering**

Upon entry to the building, members are to proceed to the sanctuary. We are suspending the traditional fellowship gathering time prior to the worship service.

#### 5. **Pre-entry Screen**

As members enter the narthex area on Sunday mornings, a greeter will be stationed to check their name off the pre-registration list for attendance purposes, check their temperature with a no-touch thermometer, and ask screening questions. We will also have notices posted prominently at each entry saying:

##### STAY AT HOME

- If you do not feel well
- If you have a cough or a cold
- If you have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID 19 within the last two weeks
- If you have travelled in the past 14 days to any regions affected by COVID - 19
- If you have a fever (temperature above 100 degrees Fahrenheit)

#### 6. **Spacing at Entry**

We ask that individuals or family groups maintain a distance of six feet when waiting to check-in and upon entering the narthex and sanctuary. Greeters and ushers will be stationed along entry routes and in the narthex to assist in this effort.

#### 7. **Entry Locations**

Church members may enter from the Sunset Avenue (Fellowship Hall entrance) parking lot or from the Bell Tower entrance. Greeters will be in place to welcome, hold doors, and “direct traffic” along entry routes and in the narthex to ensure social distancing.

#### 8. **Sanctuary Entry**

It has been common practice for church members to stand or congregate at the entry to the sanctuary while searching for a place to sit. At this time, we are asking church members to refrain from this practice and be seated by an usher. The usher will intentionally fill the pews from front to back, which will prevent members from walking past those who are already seated. The ushers will also alternate rows to ensure safe distancing, as well as to control the portion of seating that will subsequently need cleaning and disinfection. Members are asked to allow at least six feet of distancing at all times between individuals or family groups, which will require specific spacing in the pews.

#### 9. **Bulletins**

Bulletins will be provided online and through church e-mail in advance of the service. The worship program will also be available at [www.inglewood-umc.com/worship-program](http://www.inglewood-umc.com/worship-program) and can be accessed on-site.

**10. Masks**

In the interest of protecting those who are most vulnerable among us while we share the worship space, masks are required for entry and are to be worn for the duration of the worship service. We will have masks available for anyone who has forgotten to bring one. Members are asked to make sure the mask is positioned properly so that it covers both the nose and the mouth.

**11. Hand Sanitizer**

Hand sanitizing stations will be placed at various locations in the church that are convenient for all upon entry. Members are asked to apply sanitizer upon entry and after touching any common area inside the church.

**12. Narthex Sign-up Table**

We will not be utilizing the table in the narthex for sign-ups as we typically do.

**13. Collection Plate & Offering Envelopes**

Offering envelopes will be available at the entrance to the sanctuary. They can be deposited in the collection plates during entry or exit from the sanctuary. In lieu of passing collection plates along the pews during the service, we will place collection plates on both sides of the entry to the sanctuary. Tithes and offerings can be placed here when entering or exiting the sanctuary; they can also be dropped off outside the church office during the week or mailed.

**14. Music**

Because the coronavirus is spread mainly in aerosol form, we will not have congregational singing at this time. Hymnals have been removed from the pew pockets to prevent cross-contamination through touch.

**15. Choir**

Because of the risk of group singing, our music team will arrange for solos, duets, etc. to sing from the chancel area instead of having a choir.

**16. Children's Time During Worship**

We will not have a Children's Time as part of worship for the time being. We have a wonderful Children's Church that is currently being held in the Fellowship Hall for our children in grades K-5, as well as a fully staffed Nursery for younger children during worship. This is a wonderful opportunity for our children to learn and grow together for families who wish to take advantage of this time.

**17. Communion**

We are continuously exploring ways to safely share in Holy Communion. Once we are ready to proceed with this sacramental meal, instructions for receiving the elements will be fully explained during worship.

**18. Dismissal**

To ensure safe social distancing, as well as to prevent members from walking in front of those who are seated, ushers will dismiss us row by row from the back to the front of the sanctuary. Members are asked to maintain a safe distance from others while exiting and making their way to the parking lots.

**19. Receiving Line**

We will not have a receiving line at the narthex doorway following the worship service. Our pastoral staff will greatly miss this time of checking in with each person and receiving your words of encouragement. Feel free to touch base with our pastors through phone, text, or email throughout the week!

**20. Weekly Cleaning**

Our cleaning service will clean the sanctuary and the entry corridors thoroughly each week after each worship service.

**21. Restrooms**

Members are to use the restrooms in the hallway along the Fellowship Hall as needed.

**22. Overflow**

In the event the number of people attending the worship service exceeds pew capacity, we will place folding chairs along the rear wall and along the side aisles appropriately spaced.

**23. Facial Tissues**

We have provided facial tissues in each pew. Members should deposit used tissues in the waste basket at the rear of the sanctuary upon exit.

**24. Pew Pockets**

Pew pockets have been cleared hymnals, registration pads, offering envelopes, etc. to prevent cross-contamination through touch. Hymnals and registration pads will not be used during worship. If you need access to offering envelopes or prayer cards, please contact the church office and they will be provided for you.

**25. Security**

Fifteen minutes after worship service has begun, an usher will lock the exterior doors of the church to provide additional safety for us during worship.