**Grace is reopening for in-person worship on
Sunday, November 1, 10:00 am!**

Grace UMC Family,

In my last communication to you regarding Grace’s reopening for in-person worship, I talked about the procedure for making a reservation and what will be expected of you as you arrive for worship and are screened to enter the building.  Now I’ll share how the worship services themselves will be different. Some points here are a repeat of last week’s letter, some information is new.

The worship services will follow the guidelines described under “Block 2” on the attached document. While this offers a different worship experience than what you are accustomed to at Grace, please remember that this plan was designed, above all else, with your safety in mind. While “Block 2” is the place we begin, the plan is to add other pieces of the Sunday experience as safety allows.

Here is a snapshot of what in-person worship will be when we first reopen:

* Weekly registration for worship will be required. This will help us keep the numbers in the room at a safe level. You will be able to register either online or by calling the church office. Registration for each Sunday in-person service will open on the Monday prior and will close on Thursday at noon. Details about the online registration will be coming soon.
* The doors to the Bullock Activity Center will be opened to receive worshipers at 9:30 on Sunday mornings. It is suggested that you arrive early, as it will take time to properly check in each person.
* You will enter the building through the door facing the church’s parking lot off Walnut Street (lower lobby door). As we first reopen, traffic in the building will be limited to the Bullock Activity Center, its lobby by the parking lot door, and the restrooms nearest the gym (only 2 people in each restroom at one time).
* Masks will be required to enter the building. Some masks will be available for those who need one.
* Once checked in, you will be escorted to your seat(s). The chairs in the Bullock Activity Center will be socially distanced from one another. Ushers will help families move chairs so they may sit together.
* At the beginning, worship services will probably be shorter in duration than usual; lasting perhaps 40 minutes or so.
* Bulletins will not be used in order to avoid shared points of contact.
* Your offering will be received in baskets that will be available as you enter and exit the building.
* In the beginning, we will offer only instrumental music. Particles produced from singing can travel as far as 16 feet.
* No group recitations of prayers, creeds, etc. Reason: same as in the point above.
* At first, we will not use liturgist or acolytes.
* For the Children’s Sermon, children will be asked to remain in place with their parents rather than coming forward.
* We will wait to reopen activities for children (nursery, Children’s Church). These will reopen as soon as safely possible. In the meantime, we’d love to have children present in worship with their parents.
* Please maintain at least 6 feet of social distance at all times.
* At the conclusion of the service, ushers will direct attendees to leave by section; beginning with those closest to the exits.  This is to ensure safe social distancing as we depart.

Under these guidelines Sunday morning worship at Grace will feel different. But I’d counter balance that with two thoughts:
1) these restrictions are designed to keep everyone who comes to Grace safe, and
2) This plan reflects where we’ll start, not where we’ll stay. We want to add other pieces of the Grace experience as soon as we safely possible.

When considering whether or not to return for in-person worship at Grace, we encourage you to weigh your comfort level and personal risk factors. As much as we love seeing you present at worship, we encourage all to follow what is best for them.

Our current online worship service will continue to be available after in-person worship is reopened.

Excitedly looking forward to reopening,
Tal Madison