

Saturday, June 13, 2020

City Reformed Green Phase Announcement

Following Pennsylvania's move from Yellow Phase to Green Phase, City Reformed will change many of our COVID-19 related policies. In general, we will be able to relax restrictions around our smaller gatherings (such as community groups), but seek to maintain a much more cautious approach to our worship service because this is a large gathering of people and poses a higher risk for infection.

City Reformed is planning to move to a socially distanced and open worship service beginning as soon as July 5, 2020.

By "socially distanced" we mean that we will attempt to provide significant spacing between people and limit personal contact. Groups of people, either families or people who function as a "household unit", are welcome to sit together. (A household unit would include roommates, coworkers, or people who otherwise have been in closer contact already.) Furthermore, because there is some evidence that singing can create a higher risk of transmission, and because we have clear guidelines on this matter from our health officials, we will continue to wear facemasks during our worship services. Children ages 2 and under are not expected to wear a facemask.

By "open" we mean that the worship services will no longer require advanced registration. Until our move to an open service, we will continue to meet at Greenfield and will ask attendees to register in advance through our office. We believe it is likely that when we move to an open service, we will also return to hold our services in Winchester Thurston. In order to prepare for this transition, it is important for us to gather more information about the expected behavior patterns of our congregation. We are including a [survey](#) in this email. Please complete the questions as soon as possible – the [survey](#) will close on Tuesday evening, June 16.

When we first resume the worship service we will not have a nursery or children's church, but a cry room will be offered for parents. We will not offer any food or have a fellowship time. Following our move to an open service, we will begin to address other questions related to the worship service, including nursery and communion. Because communion is an activity that expresses our solidarity as a covenant community, and because we do not serve communion in a setting that is not open to the public, we will not be able to serve communion until we return to an open service. But, because there is also an added wrinkle of distributing the bread and cup in a manner that reduces the possible spread of infection, we will not celebrate the Lord's Supper immediately after starting an open service.

City Reformed Community Group Policy will be relaxed during Green Phase.

Community groups that meet outside and have ample space for appropriate social distancing will not be required to wear masks.

Community groups that meet inside are advised to wear masks, but they are not mandatory. Each group will need to evaluate the setting in which they meet and the parameters that govern their interactions. When individuals are not able to be consistently distanced, or when higher risk activities like singing are happening, masks are particularly important.

City Reformed Food Policy will be altered to comply with the CDC guidelines for faith-based activities.

Our prohibition of eating food in the church building and in community groups will no longer apply. Instead we will ask groups to serve food only when the food is *prepackaged, pre-portioned and the people are able to maintain appropriate social distancing.*