



# First Presbyterian Church

123 FOURTH AVENUE S.W.

CONRAD, MT 59425

(406) 278-3043

May 26, 2020

Dear Members and Friends of First Presbyterian Church:

First, I want to thank all of you for your gracious onboarding as I arrived in Conrad and began serving as your pastor. Since my arrival, we've had an unprecedented set of challenges! I've seen that many of you have joined us for online worship and others have joined for our conference call worship these last several weeks. Thank you for demonstrating such incredible flexibility as we have protected one another from COVID-19!

It's been very good to have some of you at the church building for meetings these last few weeks. We're using room 3 in the Christian Education Wing and the Fellowship Hall for these meetings with social distancing. As I expect more meetings to begin happening, I'm attaching guidelines for meetings.

Most of all, I'm looking forward to meeting more of you in worship in the next few weeks! We will begin in-person worship this coming Sunday, May 31 at 11 am. Do note that worship will move to our summer schedule starting June 7 at 10 am. It's a very appropriate time for our first gathering as we will celebrate Pentecost Sunday! Acts chapter 2 begins, "When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place (NRSV)." This is not to urge that all of us be present. Make an appropriate decision for you and your household. It will be wonderful to have some of you at the church in-person, and we will continue to anticipate a day when all of us can once again gather.

Worship in-person will be a little different for some time, and I'm enclosing our worship guidelines, also, with this letter. Please do read through them as this will assist our ushers in helping people through the process and give you guidance on whether you should attend.

We will continue to offer an online option for some time for those of you who fall into high-risk categories or prefer online worship for other reasons. We will record our Sunday worship and post it online. We'll have to do some processing of the video, and I expect the upload to take several hours. As a result, I would encourage you to start looking on the website for the service starting Monday morning. I will also play the service on a conference call for as long as we have people who join the call. That will happen on Tuesdays at 10 am.

Again, thank you for your flexibility, and continue to let us know of any needs you have.

Grace and peace,



Pastor Andy

**Reopening Guidelines for Meetings**  
First Presbyterian Church — Conrad, MT  
May 12, 2020

In order to reduce the spread of COVID-19, we request you follow these guidelines for church meetings:

**Deciding whether to come physically to meetings**

1. If you are feeling ill with any suspected infection, have been around someone in the last 14 days who tested positive for COVID-19, or have been to an area in the last 14 days where the virus was common, please do not join us physically for meetings. We'll look forward to having you join as you feel better.
2. We recommend all individuals who are high risk for COVID-19 complications not physically attend meetings during this time.
  - a. The CDC has indicated any of the following suggest one is at high risk: those with an age 65 or greater, moderate or severe asthma, chronic lung disease such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other lung disease, diabetes (type I, type II, or gestational), serious heart conditions, chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis, severe obesity, living in a nursing home or long-term care facility, immunocompromised (including due to cancer treatment, HIV, bone marrow or organ transplantation, prolonged use of corticosteroids, and other causes), or liver disease.
3. If you are regularly in contact with people in the above categories we would, also, recommend you not physically attend meetings for their benefit.
4. If you are unable to join physically for these reasons, we would like to try to accommodate you through a conference call line or Zoom. Please contact the meeting chair before the meeting so that we can make these accommodations.

**Guidelines for meetings**

1. Please wear a cloth mask for the duration of your time in the building. We will have some cloth masks available, but the quantity will be limited. Children under 2 are exempt from this request as the CDC recommends they not wear masks.
2. Please use restroom facilities before coming to the church, if possible, as we do not have adequate bathroom facilities to socially distance and will not be sanitizing the bathrooms as frequently as might be required.
3. Please keep 6 feet between you and members of households other than your own.
4. Please enter the building through the doors closest to the meeting room, if possible.
5. If you would like to have coffee or another beverage during the meeting, please bring your own and take it with you at the end of the meeting. We look forward to sharing food and drink during our time together when the situation changes.

## Reopening Guidelines for **Worshippers**

First Presbyterian Church — Conrad, MT

May 18, 2020

We are happy to finally begin worshipping together in person. For some time, we expect to continue to offer an online experience for worship; though, its format will likely change as we begin to gather in person. Details will continue to be posted on the website and on Facebook. So that we can protect one another as we're called to love our neighbor, we have a number of guidelines for and change to worship as we start back.

### **Deciding whether to come to worship**

1. If you are feeling ill with any suspected infection, have been around someone in the last 14 days who tested positive for COVID-19, or have been to an area in the last 14 days where the virus was common, please do not join us physically for worship. We'll look forward to having you join as you feel better.
2. We recommend all individuals who are high risk for COVID-19 complications not physically attend worship during this time.
  - a. The CDC has indicated any of the following suggest one is at high risk: those with an age 65 or greater, moderate or severe asthma, chronic lung disease such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other lung disease, diabetes (type I, type II, or gestational), serious heart conditions, chronic kidney disease being treated with dialysis, severe obesity, living in a nursing home or long-term care facility, immunocompromised (including due to cancer treatment, HIV, bone marrow or organ transplantation, prolonged use of corticosteroids, and other causes), or liver disease.
3. If you are regularly in contact with people in the above categories we would, also, recommend you not physically attend worship for their benefit.

### **Guidelines for Worship**

1. Please wear a cloth mask for the duration of your time in the building. We will have some cloth masks available, but the quantity will be limited. Children under 2 are exempt from this request as the CDC recommends they not wear masks.
2. Please use restroom facilities before coming to worship as we do not have adequate bathroom facilities to socially distance and will not be sanitizing the bathrooms during worship.
3. Please keep 6 feet between you and members of households other than your own.
4. Please enter the building through the glass doors to the narthex (back of the sanctuary) or the side door if you intend to use the elevator.
5. Use hand sanitizer located in the narthex as you enter and exit worship.
6. After worship, please leave the building so that we can socially distance and allow all to leave as quickly as possible.

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7. To limit cleaning, please avoid all areas of the church except the sanctuary, narthex, and direct paths into and out of those room from outside.

### **Worship will look different for a time**

1. We will have a social distance pattern in the pews to maximize our distance from one another. Ushers will guide you to an open place, and we will fill the church from the front to the back. We'll have to sacrifice our regular seating spot for a time.
2. As we depart worship, pews will be dismissed individually from the back of the sanctuary forward.
3. Please drop your offering in the plates in the narthex as you arrive or as you leave.
4. In order to maximize safety and your touchless experience, we will be projecting contents of the bulletin and texts from hymns and scripture on a screen at the front of the sanctuary. Bulletins will be available to those who prefer. We will be removing hymnals, Bibles, and other paper from the pews to limit cleaning necessary after the service. You are welcome and invited to bring your own Bibles. Any translation is helpful; we will continue to read from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). If you do request a bulletin, please take it with you after the service.
5. We may or may not sing in the service as singing has been shown to increase the probability of spreading the virus.
6. We will not be providing child care nor will the "cry room" be available. We will also be removing the child activity bags from the narthex but invite you to bring appropriate activities or toys for your children. I'd invite all of us to be gracious to the challenge this offers parents and to expect a little more noise at times.
7. As much as possible, we will be leaving windows and doors open to the sanctuary to reduce risk of virus transfer. You may want to dress appropriately for temperatures outside.
8. We will not have communion initially, but the session does intend to re-evaluate this in mid-June.
9. We will not have coffee/fellowship hour or Bible Study for some time after we begin worshipping in person.

Most of all, though, we're looking forward to having some of us gather in person and having others join online as fits their particular circumstances!

