

**REVISED RE-LAUNCH PLANS IN RESPONSE
TO COVID-19**

November 17, 2020

As of November 17, 2020
First United Methodist Church
317 South Main Street
Monticello, AR 71655

On March 13, 2020 First United Methodist Church took the precaution of canceling all services, programs, meetings, and group activities on-campus. At that time, our worship services were transitioned to exclusively online through Live Streaming, Facebook Live, and rebroadcast of services.

The Executive Council serves as the governing board of our congregation. Current Executive Council members include Rev Mark Norman, ARUMC District Superintendent; Rev. Lori Fallon, Associate Pastor; Julie Smith, Lay Leader; Mike Stephenson, Trustees Leader; Paul Griffin, Finance Leader; Justin Atkins, Stephanie Brown, LeAnne Burch, Jack Lassiter, and Ray Ryburn.

In September 2020, an initial relaunch plan was approved by the ARUMC District Superintendent and the Executive Council. On September 27, 2020, First United Methodist Church restarted in-person worship in the sanctuary. The Executive Council will continue to follow guidance from ARUMC Bishop Mueller, Arkansas Department of Health, Governor Hutchinson, CDC, and others but will always seek input from the congregation. This relaunch plan will continue to be revisited and modified as needed to meet the needs of our church family while also maintaining safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Revised Relaunch Plan was approved by the Executive Council on 11.17.2020
Reviewed by the District Superintendent on 11.17.2020

Disclaimer on changes/updates

Due to the nature of the coronavirus and the current rising rate of cases, this plan will be revised as necessary. This may include:

- Suspending in-person worship
- Suspending all on-campus meetings or programs
- Suspending office hours or requiring remote work for appropriate staff

What would cause these actions to take place? It is impossible to predict how long this pandemic will last, if the virus will change, or if infection rates will continue to rise. Our goal is to provide a safe, healthy environment for all using reasonable measures and with the best interests of the church as a whole in mind. If it is felt that we cannot provide a safe environment, changes will be mandated. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Staff Member in a position that requires personal contact with members who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past fourteen (14) days.
- Participant in worship or on-campus activity tests positive for COVID-19
- Positive cases of COVID-19 in Drew County that are greater than 10% of total tests
- Directives from the Governor
- Directives from Bishop Mueller/Arkansas Annual Conference
- Inability to procure proper cleaning/sanitizing products
- Observation of unforeseen issues that endanger those attending worship or on-campus activities
- Disregard of protective measures required by the relaunch plan

General Expectations for all Ministries

First United Methodist Church will follow the guidance provided by the Arkansas Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church, various departments of the State of Arkansas government, and the CDC. As a part of the United Methodist Connection, we will give priority to the directives of the bishop of the Arkansas Annual Conference. With this in mind, the following actions are required for all ministries, volunteers, employees and guests at FUMC Monticello.

1. Face coverings must be worn by everyone 2 years of age or older at all times while on the campus. This includes inside and outside activities. All activities should also follow social distancing (36 sq. ft./household) guidelines.
2. Upon entering any part of the campus, all persons must have their temperature taken by an authorized person, answer general health questions, and questions regarding any possible COVID exposure. The group leader must prepare a list of all persons present and deliver this list in person or by email to the Administrative Assistant in the church office (870-367-2471, masterfumc@gmail.com)
3. If someone is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, has known exposure to COVID within the last 14 days, or tested positive for COVID within the past 14 days, that person shall not enter any campus building and shall not interact with any person on the church campus. If there is a pastoral need please contact the church at 870-367-2471 so that the church can care for you.
4. Individuals who are in the high-risk categories as defined by the CDC are strongly encouraged to limit their exposure and stay home. For information on high-risk categories, please access the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>. First United Methodist Church will continue to offer worship services and other programs via electronic means.
5. Groups meeting in-person, whether at the church or off-site as an acknowledged group of FUMC Monticello, must observe face coverings and social distancing guidelines at all times.
6. There shall be no unscheduled meetings or groups at this time. Any ministry, group, or individuals wishing to meet in-person at FUMC Monticello must schedule their meeting through the Administrative Assistant (870-367-2471 or masterfumc@gmail.com). This is to ensure that rooms are set up with proper social distancing, sanitization/cleaning is

done properly and timely, and to facilitate contact tracing in the event a person in the group tests positive for COVID-19.

7. All groups meeting either on campus or off campus shall record the names, and telephone numbers of the person participating in the group activity in order to facilitate contact tracing in the event that it is necessary. This list is to be delivered in person or by email to the Administrative Assistant in the church office (870-367-2471, masterfumc@gmail.com)
8. Any events involving children, youth or protected persons must follow the Safe Sanctuary Policy of FUMC Monticello.

Worship Services

As of September 14, 2020, the Arkansas Annual Conference is allowing groups to meet for services as long as the length of the service does not exceed 35 minutes and social distancing guidelines are followed (36 sq. ft./household). This includes in-person worship, funerals, and weddings. If the Arkansas Annual Conference modifies these limits, this relaunch plan will automatically be amended to reflect the new guidelines. Our worship service schedule will be as follows:

- 1) Online at 9:00AM. Worship services are available on the FUMC Monticello website, YouTube, and Facebook pages.
- 2) In-person 11:00-11:30 in the sanctuary.

In person attendance limits for worship in the sanctuary follow the Bishop's "36 sq. ft. /household" guideline. As necessary, additional in-person services will be added.

In order to maintain safety protocols, the following procedures will be enforced.

1. All worship services will be limited to the "36 sq. ft. /household" guideline. This includes all worship leaders/staff.
2. To assist with preparation for services Individuals/families are encouraged to notify the church office of their intent to attend in-person worship no later than noon on each Friday preceding Sunday Worship services. (870-367-2471, masterfumc@gmail.com)
3. Participants shall enter the facility through the front doors of the Sanctuary. The Disability-accessible doors on the west front side of the sanctuary for individuals needing this assistance.
4. All worshippers over two years of age shall be required to wear a face covering at all times when inside the church facility and maintain social distancing from all other households present.
5. The ushers will seat attendees so that social distancing can be observed.
6. There will be no nursery or children programs provided at this time, per the Arkansas Annual Conference directives. Children are welcome to worship with their family.
7. After the service, the congregation will be ushered out through the Disability-accessible doors on the west front side of the sanctuary. Once out of the Sanctuary, attendees are encouraged to return to their vehicle, observing social distancing between households.

8. For safety reasons, there will be no refreshments, snacks or water fountains allowed.
9. We ask that only one person or family group at a time be in the restrooms.

Communion

When communion is offered the congregation will meet after the service in the handicap parking area. Pre-packaged juice and wafers will be provided for each participant. Social distancing must be observed. In the event that weather prohibits this procedure, communion will be offered by a drive-through procedure using the covered area on the south side of the church.

Bulletins, Hymnals, Pew Bibles

Following the guidelines of the Arkansas Annual Conference and to prevent the spread of COVID-19, we will not be providing bulletins, hymnals, pew Bibles, or paper items.

Offering

Offering plates will not be passed during the worship services. There will be offering plates placed at the entrance and exit to receive your gifts. We encourage all to continue to support the mission and ministry of FUMC Monticello through regular, faithful giving. Gifts can be mailed to the church, given on-line, and by electronic funds transfer.

Congregational Singing/Passing of the Peace

At this time, singing will not be allowed. Additionally, there will be no passing of the peace. We strongly urge everyone to maintain social distance. Handshakes, fist bumps, hugs, or touching of anyone outside of your immediate family are prohibited.

Nursery

Per the Arkansas Annual Conference directives, there will be no nursery or child care provided for any worship service. Children are welcome to attend worship with their families.

Weddings/Funerals

Weddings and funerals will be limited to the maximum allowed by the 36 sq. ft/household rule. All of the standard procedures listed above for Sunday worship are to be followed (exception being reservations). These must be scheduled with a pastor in coordination with the Administrative Assistant (870-367-2471, masterfumc@gmail.com)

Baptisms

Baptisms should be scheduled with the Associate Pastor in advance. They may be conducted during an in-person worship service. They may also be recorded in advance and included in the live-stream service. Contact the Administrative Assistant for information and scheduling.

MINISTRY AREAS

This section of the Relaunch Plan goes into effect immediately upon approval of the Executive Council.

Adult Small Groups and Sunday School Classes

Sunday School classes are encouraged to continue to meet via video conference at this time. If a group does wish to meet in-person, a request must be submitted to the Associate Pastor. In consultation with the Administrative Assistant appropriate rooms, entrances, and meeting time will be assigned so that social distancing guidelines can be followed and proper cleaning performed after each meeting. Sanitization/cleaning requirements and instructions are available in a document provided by the Administrative Assistant (870-367-2471, masterfumc@gmail.com).

We do ask that groups take attendance in case the need for contact tracing arises. The attendance list should be shared with the Administrative Assistant (masterfumc@gmail.com).

Bible Studies, Prayer Groups, UMW, and other small groups may meet in-person at the church provided appropriate space is available for social distancing (e.g. the Sanctuary or FLC worship space). Groups must contact the Associate Pastor to arrange room, time, and review the general expectations. Attendance should be kept in case the need for contact tracing arises. The attendance list should be shared with the Administrative Assistant (masterfumc@gmail.com).

In-person gatherings are limited to 30 minutes taking no more than 45 minutes to be in and out of the building.

Fellowship Meal

Wednesday Night Dinners will not be offered until further notice.

Care Ministries

Support Groups, classes, and non-related groups (AA, NA, Al-Anon) may also meet in-person as long as the general requirements above are followed. Groups must request to meet in-person and schedule through the Associate Pastor. Temperatures shall be taken and masks worn at all times. Attendance shall be taken as well and recorded with

telephone numbers of those in attendance. The list must be maintained by the person(s) in charge of the meeting in the event contact tracing is necessary. The attendance list must be shared with the Administrative Assistant (masterfumc@gmail.com). In-person gatherings should be limited to 30 minutes taking no more than 45 minutes to be in and out of the building.

Pre-School Ministries

FUMC Monticello Pre-School may operate beginning October 1, 2020. They shall continue their programming following the guidelines of Arkansas Department of Human Services and Department of Health Guidelines.

Children's Programming

Sunday School

The Arkansas Conference has directed that Children's Sunday School will not meet at this time. Our children's minister, Brenda Wright, provides a pre-recorded children's message for worship each week and materials are available at the request of parents.

Wednesday After-School Programming

Children's choir, children's handbells, and other children's mid-week activities will not be held until further notice.

Nursery and Childcare

There will be no nursery or childcare provided for any on-campus program until further notice.

Scouting

Boy Scouts may begin meeting inside as of November 11, 2020.

Cub Scouts will meet in FLC on Mondays, 5:30 – 6:10 PM (25-person limit)

Boy Scouts will meet in FH on Mondays, 6:30 – 7:10 PM (15-20-person limit)

Safe Sanctuary policy for meetings must be followed. Temperatures shall be taken and masks worn at all times. Attendance shall be taken as well and recorded with telephone numbers of those in attendance. The list must be maintained by the person(s) in charge of the meeting in the event contact tracing is necessary. The attendance list must be shared with the Administrative Assistant (masterfumc@gmail.com). In-person gatherings should be limited to 30 minutes taking no more than 45 minutes to be in and out of the building.

Youth Ministry

FUMY must follow not only the protocols set forth in this document, but also the guidelines established by the Arkansas Annual Conference as well.

Sunday School

Youth Sunday School may meet on-line for the foreseeable future. Safe Sanctuary policy for on-line meetings must be followed.

Sunday Night and Mid-Week Programming

Plans for in-person gatherings need to be made very carefully, discussed, and approved by the Associate Pastor. All of the general expectations must be followed including, but not limited to: limit on attendees should be based on available square footage for appropriate social distancing, any food must be pre-packaged and individual portions, no group singing, face coverings must be worn, and social distancing observed at all times. Youth small groups may meet outside beginning September 20, 2020. Youth may begin to meet inside as of November 11, 2020 with the following approved schedule:

- Sundays 4-5PM in FLC
- Wednesdays 4:30-5:30PM in FLC

Meetings inside should be limited to 30 minutes, taking no more than 45 minutes to be in and out of the building. Attendance list should be maintained by Youth Minister/Associate Pastor in the event contact tracing is necessary.

Off Campus Events

These must also be planned carefully to ensure safety protocols are maintained. Transportation to and from events must meet the Arkansas Annual Conference guidelines. The Associate Pastor must be notified of any off-campus events and the event scheduled on the church calendar.

Missions

The work of the church outside of the walls has been critical during this time, and has not been stopped by the pandemic. We appreciate the leaders of various mission projects following the general expectations. Any mission project that wishes to meet on campus, must first contact the Associate Pastor. Requirements for participation in mission activities shall be consistent with the requirements of this relaunch plan, including the recording of those persons participating and their telephone numbers in the event that contact tracing is necessary. The attendance list should be shared with the Administrative Assistant (masterfumc@gmail.com).

Music Ministry

Children's Vocal and Handbell choirs will not be offered until further notice. Vocal and Hand Bell choirs for adults as well as praise team will be allowed to meet in person beginning November 17 provided that safety protocols are followed (social distancing and wearing of masks) with the following approved schedule:

- Chancel Choir (Wednesdays 6-7PM, Sanctuary)
- Adult Hand Bells (Wednesdays 7-8PM, Fellowship Hall)
- Praise Team (Wednesdays 7-8PM, FLC)

Gatherings should be limited to 30 minutes, taking no more than 45 minutes to be in and out of the building. Attendance list should be kept at each gathering and shared with the Administrative Assistant (masterfumc@gmail.com).

Instrumentalists may be a part of a worship service provided social distancing and safety precautions are taken. It is the responsibility of the Director of Music, Worship, and the Arts to ensure that the most current protocols from the Arkansas Conference and music experts are followed.

Outside Groups and Special Events

In general, and with any exceptions noted above, outside groups are not allowed to use our facility at this time. Requests may be received by the Associate Pastor.

Senior Adult Ministry

Due to our seniors being in the vulnerable category, we recommend that ministries by senior adults be conducted via video conference or another online platform. If a group wishes to meet in-person, please contact the Associate Pastor.

In the Event of Exposure

Anyone who has been on-campus or involved in a church activity off campus and either tests positive or has close contact with someone who tests positive within the past 14 days, shall notify the church immediately. The report should be made to the Administrative Assistant. Notification to the church body of exposure by a person participating in a church activity will be made as appropriate. The place/time/nature of exposure will depend on the extent of notification. Each exposure event will be handled on a case-by-case basis. For example: If one youth reported a second-hand exposure to COVID-19, we would follow the Arkansas Health Department guidelines for notification. If someone tested positive and attended a worship service, everyone in that service would be notified. Except as required for determining contact with a person who tested positive or to effectively facilitate or conduct contact tracing, the privacy of persons who have tested positive shall be maintained.

NOTICE: The goal of the Executive Council in providing these guidelines is to provide a safe healthy environment with reasonable measures and with the best interests of the church as a whole in mind. If we cannot provide a safe environment during the pandemic, changes will have to be made.

Groups who do not follow the safety guidelines will be warned that if errors are not corrected, continued use of FUMC-M facilities during the pandemic could be denied. Leaders of groups are encouraged to discuss or seek clarification on these guidelines from Associate Pastor, Rev. Lori Fallon or any other member of the Executive Council.