



Dover First Christian Church

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To Our Church Family,

We are so excited to share this letter with you. Ohio has begun to lift restrictions on people staying at home, so for the first time since March 11, we will be hosting ministry events in our building again on **Sunday, June 7**. This has been a crazy time for all of us, and everyone's opinions and emotions have run the spectrum from frustration to fear to anger. In the midst of it all, we have tried our best to minister to our congregation and community while still loving them enough to keep everyone safe.

A few weeks ago, we started hosting some small groups of 8-10 people for fellowship and Bible Study. These gatherings have been a blessing to us personally and to the people joining us. It has been great to gather again as the church. If you want to join us at some of these small group meetings, let us know so we can include you. Although the mass gathering number remains at 10, as Ohio opens more and more businesses, we feel like now is the time to take advantage of our exempt status and begin to meet together again. These services, however, won't look or feel like the services you are used to. On the following page we have included nine bullet points on how worship will function for the next few weeks as we continue to navigate the current situation. **Please read through the entire letter**, and then reach out to the church office if you have any questions about how things will work and to register for attendance at a service.

We know this is hard. We have been waiting for this day for months now, and it will be frustrating to be at church, but not have it feel like church. I know the extra regulations and precautions will not be enough for some, and seem extreme to others. Our goals since the beginning of this pandemic have remained the same. We want to keep people safe. We want to lovingly minister to them. We want to humbly submit to the authorities God placed over us. We will continue to strive to accomplish those things as our meetings resume.

In Christ,

Bob Anders, Ray Beal, Andrew George, Rich Halchuck, and Josh Robinson

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT RETURNING TO CORPORATE WORSHIP

1. We are going to divide our congregation into two services to limit the service size. Because most of the furniture in our worship service is made of soft surfaces, it is going to be incredibly challenging to sanitize. For this reason, are going to host the two services in two different room. Our first service will begin **at 9:30 and meet in the Burris room**. This service will hold 25-35 people while allowing for social distancing. Our second service will meet in the **worship center at 10:45** and be able to host 65-85 people while maintaining plenty of distance. If the situation arises where we need more room for people, we will make additional accommodations.
2. **We need you to register for the service you plan to attend by calling the office and telling us which service, and how many people will be in your group. This is especially important for our smaller first service, as there will only be so many seats available.** That may sound strange to you, but the White House has asked us to “operate under strict physical distancing protocols.” This requires us to have enough room to keep households at least six feet away from each other. We are trying to honor that request.
3. For the first service (Burriss Room at 9:30), we will be clustering chairs together for each family and leaving empty spaces between the groups. When you enter, please sit in a section with the appropriate number of chairs for you family. If you attend the second service (Worship Center at 10:45), we will be blocking off some areas to alternate where people sit in each row. Please only sit on the open end of each row. Again, if we need to adjust our times and service locations based on interest, we will do that.
4. We will ask you to refrain from physical social interaction. If you are like me, I know the first thing you want to do is hug the people you haven’t seen for months. This defeats the purpose of physical distancing. I know it will be hard, but we will ask you to refrain from handshakes, hugs, and other forms of physical contact. We will not be requiring facemasks, but if you’d like to wear one, we certainly understand. We even have some here at the church you can use if you need them.
5. **We will not be providing childcare or kids programs for the time being.** By its very nature, childcare forces people of different households to closely interact with one another, and the State has issued a long list of regulations for childcare For the time being we think it will be better to keep family units together instead of trying to navigate that list of requirements. We will be shortening our services and modifying them slightly to make them as kid friendly as possible. Bring your kids with you, we will welcome the energy and joy they bring to our gatherings.
6. Hand sanitizing stations will be set up out side both entrances. Please use these prior to entering the building to make sure we are bringing in as few germs as possible to our congregation. We will be sanitizing high touch surfaces and our bathrooms often, and minimizing as much cross-contamination as possible.
7. Both our kitchen and water fountain will be closed during this time. Both areas are potential points of high traffic and cross-contamination. In place of this, we will provide water bottles and pre-poured cups of coffee for people as they enter the building. You are, of course, also welcome to bring your own beverages with you.
8. Both communion and offering will look different. We will be using individually packaged cups for communion. When you enter the building, pick up a cup from the table (and a bulletin too) and keep it with you for the service. Please dispose of the cups on your way out of worship. When you pick up your cups, we will have a basket available for offerings. We hope by removing these points of contact we can help limit any possible exposure.
9. From what we are being told, there is still a lot of risk associated with COVID-19 spreading, and we want to provide as many options as possible for you to stay safe. Some of you are highly vulnerable, others simply would prefer to stay home, and we desire to loving serve you too. So **we will continue to live stream our Sunday (10:45 service only) and Wednesday services** on our website at doverfcc.com, facebook.com/doverfcc and on our YouTube page. Please be patient with us as we attempt to adapt to the necessary technology to start streaming a full service.
10. **We need some extra help.** If you are willing to volunteer on Sunday morning to help clean and sanitize, or to help coordinate the kitchen, we need four volunteers of each type. If you want to help clean, contact Bob Anders. If you’d like to oversee the kitchen, contact Ray Beal or Rich Halchuck.