

CHEHALIS UMC STAGE 2 MINISTRY PLAN

PREAMBLE:

The General Rules of The United Methodist Church are: 1. Do no harm; 2. Do good; and 3. Stay in love with God. We are committed to doing no harm by prioritizing the health and safety of our congregation, our neighbors, and our community as we discern how to return to in-person ministry in a way that promotes the greatest good and encourages ongoing discipleship for the transformation of the world.

Transitioning to Stage 2 of Chehalis UMC's reopening plan requires the Bishop's permission and District Superintendent's approval; compliance with state, county, and conference guidelines; and the prayerful discernment of the Reimagining Life Together Task Force about the readiness of our leaders and our congregation to begin returning to in-person ministry in a way that is as safe, inclusive, and meaningful as possible. It is important to note that Chehalis UMC's stage of reopening will not always align with Washington State's or Lewis County's phases of reopening. When guidelines compete, we will always follow the strictest guideline available.

This reopening plan was written and commended to the District Superintendent by the Chehalis UMC Reimagining Life Together Task Force: Rev. Karla Fredericksen, Stan Long, Dianne Stefanini, Kathy Westergard, Valerie Sullivan, Carla Wiseman, Jeff Sherman, Mary Dahlstrom, Dave Campbell, Grace Stratton, and Monica Ferguson. Questions and comments may be directed to any member of the task force or to ChehalisUMC@rainierconnect.com.

NOTE: This is a living document that may be subject to revision as pandemic conditions evolve, and as we are ready to enter into a new stage of re-opening.

THE PLAN

GENERAL SAFETY PROTOCOLS – Unless specifically altered elsewhere in this document.

Face masks and strict physical distancing of at least 6-8 feet (except with one's own household) is required at all times when the building is in use or officially sanctioned church activities are offered in any other indoor or outdoor location. Participants will be strongly encouraged to supply their own masks however face masks will be supplied at no cost for those lacking one. Masks will be worn over both nose and mouth at all times. The Pastor or designated monitor will ask/instruct anyone who is not to become compliant, and if noncompliant to leave.

Should a participant gain entry but subsequently become noncompliant with face masks or social distancing they will be asked to leave. Should any person(s) refuse to leave all activities will cease and all participants will be asked to leave. The activity will continue when it is safe to do so.

Hand washing or sanitizer will be used consistently by each participant upon entering the church and each time hands are possibly contaminated. We will support the use of disposable gloves as desired by individuals, however they are asked to supply their own gloves, unless in food prep (see M&O activities below).

ENTERING CHURCH BUILDING – Signs will be posted about how to stop the spread of COVID-19 will be at entrances, and the sign with questions being asked about symptoms. This will be referred to as all participants will be asked by a monitor/greeter/screener (who has been instructed in protocol) prior to church entry: **if they have been exposed** to anyone with a positive Covid-19 test and if they are **experiencing any symptoms** such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, general malaise or loss of sense of taste or smell, or have a positive COVID-19 test. Participants who are positive for any of these will be asked to return home. If an individual refuses to leave for noncompliance, the building will remain locked and the activity will be postponed until it can be achieved safely.

Each participant will be asked to use **hand sanitizer** upon entering (sign will be pointing to sanitizer station), and the volunteer will direct them to the nearby dispenser.

Each person entering the building will sign in (after masking, monitoring for health questions by self or a monitor if there for a meeting with others, and hand sanitizing) – a clip board with a place for date, name and daytime phone number will be on a table just inside the door for that purpose. This is to be used only for the purpose of contact tracing in the case of a reported positive test of COVID-19 among possible contacts.

SANITIZING SURFACES PROTOCOL after each use of the building:

Disinfectant spray will be supplied in each space used, and will be clearly labeled for use according to the manufacturer's directions. Paper towels will be provided and a container to dispose of them after use. Each participant is responsible for reading the disinfecting procedure for each product on the label and/or on a sign next to the disinfectant bottle, and for sanitizing all areas touched during activities, including all high-touch objects and surfaces – See the extensive list by room of most possible objects/surfaces in Appendix A.

Use of restrooms:

Each restroom will be limited to one person at a time during Phase 2. Each participant is responsible for washing hands thoroughly after restroom use. And each participant is required to sanitize all items/areas touched during their use, before leaving the restroom, by spraying all high-touch surfaces with **supplied disinfectant** following the posted directions. And each (small in phase 2) group using the church will wipe down the restroom with disinfecting spray before leaving the building, preparing for the next time a group is there.

Work parties of 2-3 people will be scheduled regularly to complete tasks necessary to implement the plan. Each work party will be responsible to comply with the safety actions noted in the plan while they are in the building, as well (masks, distance, sanitizing, etc.).

Doors will be designated for **one way traffic** in and out of the building and rooms being used, also in and out of the sanctuary, to avoid passing in the narrowest part of the hallway altogether. All **non essential items** will be removed from hallways and floors and doors marked for one way traffic (walking on the right side), using **directional arrows and signs** as appropriate. **Eight foot distancing markers** will be placed as visual cues inside of the sanctuary and Boadway Hall at strategic points. (A coordinator from the Reimagining Team has been designated to see to signage, etc.)

All shared items such as hymnals, bibles, donation envelopes, attendance pads, pencils etc will be removed from the sanctuary and Boadway Hall. All children's items will be removed (including from stage in Boadway). The water fountain will be "closed" using a tape and sign telling people it is closed for use.

No use of the kitchen – with the **exception** indicated below with missions and outreach use, and the exception that staff and volunteers may bring a lunch and prepare beverages in the kitchen and use refrigerator, microwave and small dishwasher, using sanitizing practices after use. Volunteer *groups* must plan to eat at home, however.

No food service will take place in the church building itself.

High Risk Populations – Encourage Stay Home, Save Lives Directive. Vulnerable adults and persons with underlying conditions are encouraged to participate *from home* by offering activities such as recording of a liturgical reading, Scriptures, announcements, or music to be included with the online worship. However, respecting the right of adults to choose the level of risk they will accept, no adult may be excluded from church activities due to age or health conditions that may make them vulnerable to the disease. (See Appendix B for the list of persons considered most vulnerable to severe cases of COVID-19, if it is contracted by them.)

Leadership Responsibilities (the Reimagining committee, Pastor, and those designated by task group)

- Pastor and Property and Finance Chair coordinate communication between work parties and monitor completion of tasks prior to inviting participants to worship recording or other activity.
- Each group to use the building has a designated person, either a member *of* or trainee *of* the Reimagining team who is responsible for compliance by participants and educating them as needed.
- Property and Finance Chair will monitor availability of needed supplies such as hand sanitizer and disinfectant.
- Reimagining Team together will review and update this document (and get District Superintendent permission to implement changes) as necessary.

ACTIVITIES UNDER STAGE 2 PLAN

All meetings will be scheduled in advance on the church calendar. One group of people are to be in the building at any one time (up to 10 persons), and not on the same day. The building will remain locked when designated participants have arrived.

WORSHIP RECORDING/PREPARATION

Only designated participants will be allowed in the building during recording of worship with an absolute limit of 10 participants, including Pastor and a tech person(s). The building will remain locked during in church activity.

All participants must follow the general safety protocols (masks, distancing, sanitizing), with the following two exceptions: 1- To sing a solo or play a wind instrument, mask may be removed while playing/singing. 2 - To speak into a microphone while recording a reading or sermon, etc. Mask must be replaced after each of these.

Recording of parts of the service with **vocal or wind instruments** is limited to one vocal or one wind instrument during the recording, and other participants (except immediate household members) in the room must leave the room during the time of recording the voice or woodwind. Other musical instrumentalists will be following the regular masking and distancing rules, during their performances.

Sanitizing surfaces protocol will be followed at end of each session, keeping in mind that microphones should be included in the sanitizing protocol, if used. (See Appendix A, for more details)

MISSIONS AND OUTREACH

The exception to the no use of the kitchen rule is for the Missions and Outreach Committee to use the kitchen for:

1 - their approximately quarterly mission brunch-making activities – breakfast casseroles prepared in trays and frozen. Then monthly 1-2 persons come in to bake the casseroles on the morning they are to be used, and transporting directly to the mission, where mission personnel serve/distribute.

2 – approximately monthly preparing sack lunches/dinners for the homeless persons who come to the mission. These again, are prepared in the kitchen, and transported to the mission to be distributed by mission personnel.

For both of these activities of the Missions and Outreach: The participants should be up to 7 persons in the kitchen (number appropriate to keep distancing in the kitchen) following all the “general safety protocols” listed at the beginning of this document (masks, distancing, sanitizing), as indicated all surfaces and objects used or touched, at the end of the session. In addition, all health department regulations for food preparation and kitchen cleanliness, will be followed carefully.

REIMAGINING TEAM

The reimagining team may continue a hybrid meeting at the church building in Boadway Hall to continue plans for the next stages and/or revisions to Stage 2. No more than 10 persons maximum may attend at the church

building, as needed, with additional persons attending through zoom. “General safety protocols,” and “sanitizing surfaces” protocols will be followed in the building.

OTHER COMMITTEES, ETC.

Church Council, committees, and ministry teams will continue to meet online, except for when an online meeting is too burdensome for the task at hand. Indoor in-person meetings may never exceed ten people. Every effort will be made to make sure individuals can connect via an internet connection or by phone. Some persons with band-width issues who have difficulty staying connected at home, may bring their own laptops or devices to use the church wi-fi for a zoom meeting, maintaining protocols, especially if more than one person is present in the building, perhaps even from their vehicle in the parking lot. ~~If more than 10 persons would be available to attend an in-person meeting, the Leader can use discretion in setting up who will be there, and who might attend by zoom.~~

At the discretion of the Pastor or other leader, a hybrid meeting with partial zoom and partial in-person participation may take place in Boadway Hall for persons without access otherwise. Persons who are able to attend by zoom will not be invited to the church location other than one who knows how to set it up on the big screen in Boadway Hall, and of course the absolute upper limit is 10 persons.

An alternative will be to have an outdoor meeting with social distancing, if weather permits.

Potential committee hybrid zoom/in-person use: Church Council - quarterly; Property and Finance Committee (Trustees/Finance/Endowments) – monthly, if members who are inactive due to zoom difficulties will participate with this alternative; Memorial Committee (less than 5 members) – infrequent (less than quarterly) meeting; Care Team (7 persons, as below) – less than quarterly.

NEWSLETTER ASSEMBLY TEAM

The newsletter assembly team will meet once a month to assemble and prepare for mailing the monthly newsletter in Boadway Hall. “General safety protocols,” and “sanitizing surfaces” protocols must be followed. The person responsible to see that they are followed is Valerie Sullivan, the office assistant.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Pastor and Treasurer/Office Assistant may resume working from their offices, but can and are encouraged to continue working remotely as much as possible. If coming to the church office for any purpose they should self-screen for symptoms to determine if they should be in the building with potential of meeting other persons. When in the building they must follow all general and sanitation protocols. They should sanitize their hands upon entering the building, and upon leaving wipe down all shared items (See Appendix A) and surfaces in the offices, and the restroom, if used.

Volunteers are only allowed in the building for essential and pre-approved tasks as determined by Pastor and/or the Chair of Property and Finance (Trustees), or as mentioned in this document. They must self-screen for symptoms and not go to the building if feeling ill. Volunteers, even if going in alone must follow all general and sanitation protocols. Masks are required except when sitting at an assigned desk, or designated workspace alone. Volunteers will be trained on cleaning protocols by the Reimagining Team member assigned to that group of volunteers. High-touch objects must be sanitized before leaving the building. (See Appendix A for full list).

Staff and volunteers must sanitize their hands before and after using shared equipment like the copy machine, paper cutter, etc.

Financial Secretary

The Financial Secretary will come at her own discretion (usually it’s Friday). She is not required to wear a mask when in the office alone, but if another person such as the office assistant is present they must each wear a mask and keep appropriate distance. She must follow the safety guidelines. It is important, especially if cash is handled, to sanitize hands frequently and wipe down the surfaces before leaving.

(See Appendix A for full list of high-touch items).

Property and Finance (P&F) (Trustees) Chair

The P&F Chair frequently makes checks on the building, and occasionally must bring workers to repair and maintain building and heating/utility equipment. It is his responsibility to see that he and other volunteers or contracted workers follow all safety protocols while in the building.

BIBLE STUDY

~~A Bible Study or Discussion group may meet in the building, under the following conditions. Meetings are no more than twice monthly, and each time no more than 1.5 hours. Only Boadway Hall may be used, but with no more than 10 participants. A designated member of the Reimagining Team or person trained by Pastor or a member of the Team will be one of the 10, and all “General safety protocols,” and “sanitizing surfaces” protocols must be followed (as at the beginning of this document).~~

PASTORAL CARE

- Pastor may, at her discretion have an approximately quarterly meeting with the 7 care team members, meeting up to 1.5 hours in Boadway Hall, and following all safety and sanitation protocols.
- There will be no on-site weddings.
- No onsite funerals. Virtual memorial services and graveside services only (number of attendees depends on state guidance).
- No baptisms.
- No homebound communion. Virtual communion is still offered first Sunday in the evening.
- No hospital or nursing home visitation, unless an outdoor location is available, where distancing is possible, and of course all will wear masks. Visits may be done by phone, zoom, etc.
- Pastoral visits are conducted over the phone or via video chat. Pastor will refrain from visiting parishioners in their homes except for emergencies and must maintain safety guidelines when doing so. The exception is that she may call and arrange for a meeting with parishioners in their yard or other designated outdoor location, with masks and hand sanitizing and distancing.

Appendix A

High-touch Objects/Surfaces

High-touch objects/surfaces include, but are not limited to:

- Building proper:
 - Doorknobs/handles, crash bars, and surfaces on doors used to push open
 - Railings, stairwell railings
 - Light switches
- Bathroom surfaces:
 - sink taps, toilet handles, countertops, etc., rail in handicap restroom
- Office(s):
 - Doorknobs/handles
 - Light switches
 - Shared computer keyboards and mice
 - Phones
 - Copy machine*

- Shared office supplies/equipment* (paper cutters, three-hole punches, staplers, tape dispensers, etc.)
- Cabinet handles
- Countertops and Desks

*Shared office supplies/equipment should be disinfected after use (*Exception: The copy machine. Staff and volunteers are required to sanitize their hands both before and after using the copy machine. The copy machine will be disinfected again at the end of the workday.)

- Sanctuary:

- Doorknobs/handles and crash bars and surfaces where swinging doors are pushed open
- Railings
- Light switches
- Microphones
- AV equipment
- Shared musical instruments (yes, all the piano keys, too)
- Pulpit
- Backs of pews

APPENDIX B

Vulnerable Populations

According to [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus), based on what we know now, those at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- Older adults (over 65)
- People of any age with the following:
 - Cancer
 - Chronic kidney disease
 - COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
 - Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
 - Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
 - Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
 - Sickle cell disease
 - Type 2 diabetes mellitus

These should be encouraged to stay home until stage 4, but are given the discretion to make their own personal decisions about which activities are safe for them, in every stage.