

Metropolitan Spiritual Church of Christ



COVID-19: RETURN TO SANCTUARY

Worship Guidelines

This document is for the care and health of the Body of Christ during our return to Worship

MSCC Officials

Metropolitan Spiritual Church of Christ, Inc.

As the congregation of the Metropolitan Spiritual Church of Christ begins to resume public worship activities within the confines of its physical campus, rest assured that we will do so through a careful process of constant prayer, discussion, discernment, and preparation. We recognize, out of an abundance of caution, that we must have the safety and well-being of all members and visitors as our number one priority.

The COVID-19 pandemic will require that we return to worship in a manner that is measured and mindful of the expectations of the congregation; that appropriate federal, state, and local guidelines for faith based organizations have been reviewed; and the appropriate safeguards for our church environment have been implemented.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), along with the Missouri Department of Public Health, established recommended guidelines for public houses of worship to return to worship in a cautious and safe manner. It is our intent to fully take all guidelines into consideration and develop safety-driven practices and procedures to limit the transmission and spread of the COVID-19 virus.

While many of our members will begin to return to worship on the initial date of return, we do recognize that some will choose to continue their worship experience at home via our live stream services. We wholeheartedly support your choice to do so and look forward to you worshipping, in person, with us when you feel more comfortable or when you are physically able to do so.

As we move forward with this phase of our return, let us all be mindful of the historical mission of the church as it relates to our worship:

“The Metropolitan Spiritual Church of Christ, a Church of Worship, Family, Hospitality and Community, exists to share the Gospel with people, connecting them with other Christians, developing their faith and acknowledging God in their lives and personal ministry following the commission of Jesus Christ to Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (Matthew 28:18:19)”

It is our blessed hope and prayer that the guidelines prepared within this document - for the safe return to our worship services - are properly and efficiently executed and decently and orderly followed by all. Its development and administration is for the safety of everyone. Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation.

MSCC Officials

Bishop James G. Bryant – Senior Pastor

COVID-19: Return to Worship Guidelines

Key Principles

As the most emergent threats of the COVID-19 pandemic ease in our regional area and we prepare to return to worship, many decisions and interventions are taking place to prepare our physical church campus and its members for re-occupancy. To ensure thoughtful and effective modifications, the key principles outlined in this document will guide our church in preventing the spread of COVID-19. It is a sincere request and expectation of the Pastor that all Metropolitan members, visitors, and staff will follow these guidelines to ensure we sustain a healthy worship environment.

How to Protect Yourself and Others

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) provides helpful guidelines against COVID-19 spread:

(Wash your hands often)

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in public places, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

(Avoid close contact)

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick - even inside your home. If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.
- Put distance between yourself and other people outside your household.
 - Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread the virus.
 - Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
 - Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting sick.

(Cover your nose and mouth with a cloth face cover or mask)

- You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
- The cloth face cover or mask is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- The cloth face cover or mask is not a substitute for social distancing.

(Cover coughs and sneezes)

- If you are around others and do not have on your cloth face covering or mask, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. When coughing, try to use the inside of your elbow and do not spit.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.

- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

(Clean and disinfect)

- Daily clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces. Surfaces include tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks.
- If surfaces are dirty, first clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Then use a disinfectant to kill germs. Most common household disinfectants will work.

(Monitor your health)

- Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, sore throat, muscle aches or other symptoms of COVID-19.
- Take your temperature if symptoms develop. Follow CDC guidance.

Social and Physical Distancing

Increasing the physical distance between individuals can reduce transmission of COVID-19. Our return to worship must follow social distancing practices. The CDC recommends practicing a distance of 6ft. between yourself and others. Avoiding direct contact with people and objects in public spaces reduces transmission opportunities. In all shared spaces, such as our sanctuary, lobbies, restrooms, conference rooms, meeting rooms, and offices, you will see signage, markers, protocols and procedures. You may also receive verbal instructions to keep at least 6 ft. of space between members. When you return to worship you may see:

- Markers on the floor/wall and in hallways to establish people circulation patterns
- Signage indicating marked off seating areas
- Reduced occupancy in our sanctuary and elimination of access to meeting rooms
- Signage, partitions, physical barriers or locks to limit access to specific areas

Social Distancing in Sanctuary and Other Worship/Teaching Locations

The Metropolitan Spiritual Church of Christ has established strict social distancing practices for seating within the sanctuary and other designated locations for worship and bible class. Except for members of the same household seated together, the congregation must maintain a 6ft. social distance while seated. Children must remain with their parents at all times. When entering in the various worship locations:

- Follow the guidance and direction of the ushers
- Recognize the color sign on the back of the pew that are positioned every 6ft.
- Sit in the open row facing the sign and position yourself as close as possible to a sign.
- The pew row in front of you and the pew row behind you should be empty
- If possible limit your movement during the services

As a result of the implementation of social distancing measures, the seating capacity of these locations will be reduced. Once capacity is reached, the ushers will give alternate instructions. All attendees will be signed in and at minimum name and number logged for contact safety information. This information will not be shared.

At the conclusion of our services, ending with the benediction, we ask that the congregation remain seated. The ushers and the internal security ministry will lead facilitation of an orderly and efficient exit from the service location. Please adhere to their direction. During the organized exit from worship services, the 6ft. social distancing requirement must be maintained.

Social Distancing in Corridors, Lobbies, and Stairs

In corridors, lobbies, and stairs, there is often limited space. As a result, social distancing may be more difficult to achieve - so, follow this additional guidance:

- Wear a face mask when inside and using and walking through corridors and lobbies.
- Follow signage designating direction of foot travel. In the absence of signage, stay to the right of any hallway or stairs while others are passing.

Social Distancing in Restrooms

In restrooms, you may find an outer door open to avoid frequent touching of doors and door handles. Certain restroom sinks, urinals, and toilet stalls will be taped off and out of service to maintain social distancing and reduce occupancy in that space. Adhere to any posted social distancing signage or floor markings. Notice nearby drinking water fountains will be shut down during this period of return.

Physical Contact Reductions

Reduction in physical social contact is highly recommended by the CDC to avoid transmission of COVID-19. Therefore, members and visitors of Metropolitan Spiritual Church must refrain from any physical greeting - including hugging, kissing and hand shaking. An acknowledgement of someone's presence while in the house of worship during this period of COVID-19 will require your own personal and unique greeting beyond physical contact. Other eliminations of personal contact include:

- During the lifting of tithes and offerings, the walking by each member of the congregation will not occur. The trustee/usher will utilize the un-occupied pew aisle to walk and collect the offering in a touch free manner. There may be additional collection points designated. Text-To-Give and on-line giving remains an electronic opportunity to give.
- Members of the Usher/Hospitality Committee will refrain from handshaking when greeting you at the lobby doors. They will continue to greet all members and guests from a safe social distance. The entrance doors will be propped open, eliminating the need for anyone entering to personally open the doors.
- The Pastor will continue to greet the congregation before and after services in a touch-free, socially distant manner.
- The church van will not be in service until further notice.
- The Choir will not minister in song in this phase of return. The Praise Team will minister from a social distance.
- At the end of all services an alter call will be made and the doors of the church will be open to baptism.
- No food service will occur
- Programs, classes, special events, and children's activities that require on-site meeting rooms and event space are postponed during this period.
- Limit group gathering that inhibits the congregations foot traffic flow and social distancing
- The Pastor may adjust service start times, reduce the length of services, or increase the number of services to accommodate service capacity reductions

Face Coverings (Face Masks)

When used properly, face coverings and face masks can reduce transmission of the COVID-19 virus. In accordance with CDC and state and local guidelines (See KCMO Ninth Amended Order 20-01 Mayor Lucas), the Metropolitan Spiritual Church of Christ members and visitors over the age of two(2) along with the church staff requires face coverings in all public and shared environments. Members are expected to bring and wear their own face covering or face mask, however single use masks will be made available at all building entrances if needed. Cloth face coverings and face masks do not protect you from exposure, and are only intended to help contain your respiratory droplets from being spread to other people. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs. Follow these additional requirements:

- Entry into the church building requires that you wear a face covering or mask. (See KCMO Ninth Amended Order 20-01 Mayor Lucas)
- A face covering or mask must be worn at all times in all areas of the church regardless of social distancing practices.
- Anyone who has difficulty breathing, or is unable to remove the face covering or mask without assistance, or feels they cannot wear it within the building, should remain home at this time
- Briefly lowering or adjusting your face covering or masks for a breath of fresh air is acceptable.
- Upon noticing that a member or visitor of the congregation is not wearing a face covering or mask, an usher will humbly and gently provide a reminder of the requirement and may offer a replacement, if necessary. Blatant and aggressive refusal to adhere to this church requirement may result in Internal Security asking that you remove yourself from attendance in the service

Cleaning and Disinfecting

Reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 by cleaning and disinfection is an important aspect of returning to worship. All high-traffic areas and frequently touched objects such as lobbies, buttons, handrails, doorknobs, restrooms, pews, and carpeting will be cleaned and disinfected frequently. Each sanctuary and location used for the conducting of services will be disinfected after each service ends with an extra concentrated focus on the pew's seat, back, frame and arm, along with any chairs used. Please leave the seated sign at your location upon exit to ensure cleaning of that location. Items used for the conducting of services such as microphones and offering baskets used by the ushers will also be addressed. The congregation will be directed to exit the location so that the disinfectant team can efficiently prepare the area for the next service. All of our disinfectants are EPA-registered and approved to use in our church environment to kill germs and viruses such as Coronavirus.

(*)To support proper ventilation of occupied areas, all systems have been assessed for proper operation by a qualified outside HVAC contractor. Open doors also aid in fresh air circulation within the building. Enhancements for continuous improvement to HVAC systems during the COVID-19 pandemic will continually be under review.

Good Personal Hygiene

Members are expected to maintain responsible personal hygiene. In addition to washing your hands frequently, you should also cover your face with a tissue when sneezing or coughing, do not attend worship service if you are sick, and limit the touching of shared surfaces to reduce the spread of the virus. Avoid hugging and shaking hands to prevent transmission of COVID-19. Avoid over handling of your cloth face covering or mask and wash it frequently. Parents must monitor the activities of their children and engage them in good personal hygiene practices. Do not exchange writing materials.

Hand sanitizer gel and wipes will be made available for the use of everyone throughout the church campus. When entering the church, and at other opportunities, it is expected that everyone will take advantage of its availability. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

Health Monitoring

A wide range of COVID-19 symptoms have been reported, ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms typically appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms or combinations of symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Persistent cough, dry or wet
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Or at least two of these symptoms:

- Fever greater than 100.4 °F (37.8 °C)
- Chills without fever
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle aches or pain
- Persistent headache
- Sore throat, and/or
- New loss of taste or smell

(*) Members and visitors should stay at home and not come to church if they are showing symptoms of COVID-19. Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Those with lung disease, serious heart conditions, compromised immune systems, diabetes and other serious health conditions should stay home during this current return to worship phase and until the COVID-19 pandemic is neutralized.

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the risk of exposure, a designated team will conduct individual temperature screening as members, visitors, and staff enter into the church building. Upon entry, a no-touch technology thermal screening camera will assess the person's body temperature near the head area. The screener is not a medical device. Anyone with an elevated fever temperature above 100.4° Fahrenheit or who is experiencing coughing or shortness of breath will be denied access and asked to return home. That person should monitor his or her symptoms and reach out to a health care professional for discussion on his or her condition. Additional action items to consider:

- Should an elevated temperature be assessed, one additional confirming test will be taken after a 5 minute "cool down" wait period between the 1st and 2nd screen. If the second screen is below 100.4 the person entering will pass and will be allowed entry into the church.
- A mask must be worn prior to entering the screening area.
- Children must be screened as well, with the same result actions being applicable.

- Should a screener recognize someone entering with signs and symptoms of illness, a member of the medical staff ministry will be summoned for assistance.

(*) The presence of an elevated temperature above 100.4 is not considered by the church to be evidence that the person screened is positive for COVID-19. The screening process does not make that medical determination. Denial of entry to the church due to an elevated temperature is a pre-cautionary measure as a CDC best practice for safety and implemented by the church.

Communications

Updates to the **Metropolitan Spiritual Church of Christ Return to Worship Guidelines** will remain dynamic and under review. The conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic will be monitored through CDC, state, and local health department agencies communication portals. Check the church website at www.metrospiritualchurch.com and our other social media platforms for any information affecting our worship services and church operational status.

Church COVID-19 administrative leaders will fully cooperate with any inquires issued by the Kansas City and the local health department concerning our campus operations and congregational services during this pandemic period. Should the church be informed that someone in attendance formally has reported a diagnosis of a confirmed case of COVID-19, the name of the individual will not be shared with the congregation or the public during any follow-up communication procedures.

For more information or to confirm service times, contact MSCC's administrative office at 816-231-2829.