



****Please read the following letter completely for all necessary details. We hope that many of your questions will be answered in this thorough letter****

Beloved Friends and Members of the Church,

On Sunday, August 23rd, we will begin to bridge the virtual and in-person worlds of worship. This decision was made by a majority vote of the church council as we held the feedback of a recent congregational survey by the Diaconate, considered the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of our congregation, evaluated the coronavirus statistics for the state of Maine, and reviewed again the protocol outlined below which are informed by the Maine Council of Churches and Maine CDC guidance.

As we begin this journey and strive to do so as safely as possible for those who wish to attend, please know that **livestreamed worship will continue as it has been!** You will still be able to watch and worship with us via Zoom and Facebook Live at 10am on Sunday mornings, receiving the same worship as those who may attend in-person. A recording of the service will continue to be made available afterwards.

As each of us make the best choice for ourselves, our households, and all whom we love, please review carefully the information below and prayerfully consider which option is best for you.

If you have any cold or flu-like symptoms, if you have a fever, if you have been in contact with a Covid-19 positive person in the last 14 days, or otherwise feel unwell, please continue to worship virtually. If you have particular concerns about your personal health or the health of others in your household, please continue to worship virtually. We too encourage prayerful decision-making regarding worship if you are in a particularly vulnerable group for Covid-19 as defined by the CDC.

The following protocol will be in place for in-person worship. If you cannot, for whatever reason, adhere to these, please continue to worship virtually:

- 1) Masks are required to be worn in the sanctuary for the entire duration of the service.
- 2) Hand sanitizer will be at the entrance for use.
- 3) Those planning to attend in-person worship must sign-up each week as there is limited space available. This will help the ushers plan for seating. A Google Form will be emailed each week on Tuesday morning for you to sign-up online. You may also call the church during office hours (Tuesday - Thursday from 9am to 12noon) to let us know you would like to attend. **Sign-ups will be accepted through Thursday at 12noon each week.** Due to the need to plan, we will not be able to accept any sign-ups after this time. If you have questions about signing up, please call the church office.
- 4) The ushers will seat households as they arrive a minimum of 6 feet apart, beginning at the front of the sanctuary and working toward the back. At the close of the service, congregants will exit the church working from the back to the front of the sanctuary.
- 5) Ushers will keep a list of those attending worship to facilitate contact tracing if needed.
- 6) Access to the sanctuary will be limited to the front doors of the church. Please enter here. The sanctuary side door will be unlocked for anyone who may need the ramp.
- 7) We will not be passing the collection plate. Offerings may be left in a plate by the door as you exit or may be mailed to the church office.
- 8) There will be no passing the microphone for announcements or prayer requests. Prayers should continue to be emailed to Rev. Josh by Saturday evening.
- 9) There will be no congregational singing. A soloist will offer the hymns from the side hallway by the piano for us to receive.
- 10) There will be no coffee hour.
- 11) Bathrooms by the church office will be available if needed. Please use extra care when accessing them and be mindful of passing others at the greatest possible distance.

This list of protocol is not exhaustive and may be added to or adapted as situations require. Our ushers will be implementing any additions or adaptations as needed. If

you have specific questions that are not addressed here that would impact your decision, please reach out.

Please note that, while we are beginning to offer an in-person option, this may change at any time. In the event that these protocols are not being adhered to, if there is a coronavirus contact that directly impacts our worship leaders or congregants, if cases in Maine begin to spike, or if the Maine CDC guidance changes, we may shift back to virtual only.

This decision has not been made hastily and has been prayerfully held for several months now by Church Leadership as we weigh the needs of our congregation and community. Please do what you feel is right and best, especially for you and your family. If changes are needed to this plan, please know that we will communicate them as quickly as possible.

As a church in the heart of Wiscasset, we strive to care for the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of our community. It is our hope and prayer that this plan will meet the spiritual and emotional needs of many while also doing our best to maintain the health of all.

If you have any questions, please contact Anne Harris (annepharris58@gmail.com or 207-882-7705) or Rev. Josh Fitterling (joshfitterling@myfairpoint.net or 207-882-7544).

May we prayerfully, graciously, and with love for the needs of one another, journey onward together!

Yours in Christ,

Anne Harris, Council President

Rev. Josh Fitterling, Minister