What to Expect when returning to Worship at Summit

Hello! We are excited to be able to meet again for worship starting on May 24th! It has been way too long since we last saw each other! Although we are excited to meet together again, please understand that the pandemic is still ongoing, so things are going to be different for now. We have compiled this list of what to expect when you return to Summit so that you can be prepared.

1. When you arrive and park, we ask that if at all possible you leave several feet between each car to maintain social distancing.

2. We STRONGLY request that you wear a mask at least while entering and exiting the building. Wearing a mask is the loving thing to do, as it provides some protection to the people around you. If you do not have a mask, we may be able to provide one.

3. We ask that you only use the main entrance when entering and exiting the building. All other doors will remain locked, and we ask that nobody open them. This cuts down on the amount of cleaning and sanitizing that our janitorial service will need to do between services. Someone will be stationed at the main entrance to open the door before and after the service so that we are not all touching the door handle and increasing the risk of cross contamination.

4. Sunday School classes will not be able to meet yet due to being in close quarters. We will only be gathering for worship.

5. Because we are in Phase I of re-opening, we will need to maintain social distancing while in the sanctuary. To comply with this requirement, some pews will be closed off so no one can sit in them and we can maintain a 6 ft. buffer between people. Each pew can have one family unit, or if there are only one or two people in a family unit then two units can sit on opposite ends of the pew. Please understand that this may mean you won’t get to sit in or near your usual spot! You may need to sit near the front or in the balcony. We will have ushers present to guide you to available seats.

6. The service itself will be different. There will not be an open microphone for announcements, as that poses a health risk. Instead, if you have an announcement or prayer request, please get them to Pastor Tim before the service (preferably in writing!) and he will share them from the pulpit. It has been recommended that we not use any printed bulletins for now to prevent any germs from spreading.

7. There will not be any congregational singing, as that has been shown to be harmful due to the fact that projecting our voices causes bacteria to travel farther than 6 feet. The hymnals and Bibles will be removed from the pews to reduce the risk of contamination, as well as to make it easier for the sanctuary to be sanitized after the service. Please know that we are exploring alternative ways to incorporate music into our time together.

8. There will not be a children’s story at this time, as doing so would counteract all efforts to maintain social distancing.

9. We will not be passing offering plates during the service, but instead we will have the offering plates on stands by the sanctuary entrances where you may place your offerings before or after the service.
10. The service itself will be shorter than usual, probably 30-40 minutes long. Once the service has ended, please remain in your pew and wait for the ushers to come and dismiss you by row. We ask that you exit the sanctuary and building as quickly as possible. Once outside, you are free to remain as long as you want so that you can visit and socialize, but please maintain 6 feet of space as you are talking with someone.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Pastor Tim. We realize that this list seems overwhelming, but please know that all of these precautions are being taken to ensure the health and well-being of each person to the best of our ability. We encourage each of you to use your best judgment as to whether or not you think it’s safe for you to come. Please don’t feel that you have to come just because the doors are open. We will continue to post videos of the message at https://summitcob.org/sermons/index.html and on Facebook, as well as having CDs and DVDs available for anyone who would like them. We look forward to the time when none of these restrictions will be needed, but until then we will strive to provide the opportunity to worship in a safe environment.

May God bless you and keep you safe!

The Executive Committee of Summit Church of the Brethren