

DEPT. OF HEALTH: NEW YORK FORWARD COVID-19 REOPENING SAFETY PLAN

Note: This document will be provided electronically to congregants prior to resumption of on-site outdoor worship services, tentatively scheduled for July 12, 2020. The document will also be posted at the church and made available to state or local health authorities in the event of an inspection.

NAME OF ORGANIZATION: New Hempstead Presbyterian Church

ADDRESS: 484 New Hempstead Rd., New City, NY 10956, Rockland County

CONTACT INFORMATION: Office telephone: (845) 354-2372; Website: www.nhpchurch.org

LEADER OF ORGANIZATION: The Rev. Dr. Lori Knight Whitehouse [Telephone: (845)362-0729]

DATE: June 23, 2020 (Phase 3 of reopening)

I. MANAGING PEOPLE

A. PHYSICAL DISTANCING

1. Encourage people to maintain 6 feet of distance between each other through signage and verbal reminders. Any time a 6 ft. distance cannot be maintained, masks or other suitable face coverings, which cover both nose and mouth, shall be worn.
2. For outdoor services, sanitized folding chairs will be set up at 6 ft. intervals, and congregants will be directed to sit in those chairs and not move them. For those in wheelchairs, the person will be directed to a spot 6 ft. from an existing chair.
3. Any children attending worship shall remain seated with their parents/guardians for the entire service. Simple activities will be provided (e.g., take-away crayons and coloring pages).
4. Foot traffic will be directed from the parking lots (entry to the lots only from Old Schoolhouse Rd.) to the seating section by an usher.
5. Congregants are asked not to excessively socialize before and after worship so as to maintain social distancing.
6. Entry into the church building will only be for the use of the bathrooms in the Colonial Room. Signs will designate traffic flow in/out of the building and 6 ft. increments will be marked on the floors to allow for social distancing.
7. For those not comfortable attending the in-person service, rest assured that the service will still be live-streamed on YouTube as it has been prior to/during the pandemic.

II. MANAGING PLACES

A. PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)/PROTOCOLS

1. Everyone participating in the service will wear a mask unless they are separated from others by a distance of 12 ft. Children under two and those not able to wear masks for medical reasons are exempt. Masks will be provided to anyone needing one.
2. Ushers will wear a mask and disposable gloves.
3. No Bibles or hymnals will be available. People may bring personal Bibles for their own use during the service.
4. Single-use bulletins will be available then discarded after the service.
5. Worship leader will use a microphone to amplify the spoken part of the service.
6. No communion will be offered during worship service for the foreseeable future; however, an online version of the sacrament will be presented via YouTube so that congregants may participate remotely.
7. There will be no passing of the collection plate. A plastic bowl will be available for congregants to drop off their offerings before/after worship service.
8. Passing of the Peace will be done without touching anyone outside of your own family unit. Use of appropriate hand gestures is encouraged instead.
9. Congregational singing will not occur during the service.
10. Special in-church arrangements will be provided for baptisms:
 - No more than 10 total people can be in attendance, all wearing masks
 - Minister will wash/sanitize hands before the sacrament
 - Caregiver holds the child during the entire rite
 - Water is added to the font immediately before baptizing, and a small, sanitized ladle is used to pour a small amount of water over the child's head
 - A video recording of the baptism will be shared with the rest of the congregation with the parents' consent

B. HYGIENE AND CLEANING

1. Hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) will be available at the usher table before congregants go to the seating area, and also in the Colonial Room.
2. Bathrooms will be well-stocked with hand soap and paper towels for hand-washing. Reminders will be posted to ensure proper hand-washing protocols are followed.
3. A trash can will be placed by the usher's table for disposal of used PPE's and bulletins.
4. Persons who set up folding chairs for the service will wear gloves and sanitize the chairs in place with a wipe or spray before and after service.
5. Access route to the bathrooms in the Colonial Room and bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized in advance of each service.

6. Church sextant will have forms to maintain a record of the cleaning of the church and Murchison Hall.

C. COMMUNICATION

1. Signage will be posted conspicuously around the grounds to remind people about mask use, social distancing and hand washing/sanitizing.
2. If there will be inclement weather on Sunday morning, the service will not be held outdoors, but will revert to an indoor, live-streamed event. In this case, only the worship leader, music director and IT support person will be in the church.
3. Notification of cancellation of the service will be the responsibility of the Worship Committee. It will be accomplished via an email blast, phone contact and/or message on the church office's answering machine.
4. As a record of weekly attendance, a digital photograph of the congregants will be taken during the worship service. This photo is not for publication anywhere – is only serves as a way to identify who was present at the service.
5. If a person attending a service becomes COVID-19 positive within 14 days of attending the service, they must notify Dr. Knight-Whitehouse at once. Dr. Knight-Whitehouse will then contact local and state health departments.

III. PROCESS

A. SCREENING

1. The minister will periodically assess the well-being of the church employees (music director and office support staff) via a phone call/email and keep a record of the contacts. Employees continue to work from home except for the Sunday morning church service.
2. During the service, trained ushers will be responsible for maintaining the safety protocols and will be stationed at a table between the parking lots and the seating area. They will be wearing a mask and disposable gloves.
3. The usher will assess the health of each attendee by asking the following questions: (a) Are you feeling well today?; (b) Have you had Covid-19 symptoms, tested positive for Covid-19 or been in close contact with people possibly having Covid-19 in the last 14 days?
 - If the answer is that they're not feeling well or yes to exposure, the person will lovingly be asked to go home. A no-touch thermometer will be available if it's needed.

- If all is well, the usher will ask the congregant to use a squirt of hand sanitizer, then offer them a single-use bulletin and direct them to the seating area. In addition, if the person needs a mask, one will be provided.
4. Ushers will also note visitors and record their names and contact information.

B. CONTACT TRACING AND DISINFECTION OF CONTAMINATED AREAS

1. Upon learning of a COVID-19 exposure, Dr. Knight-Whitehouse will contact local and state health departments to apprise them of the exposure.
2. Contact tracing of potentially exposed congregants may be accomplished by reviewing attendees using the digital record made on the date in question. A listing of attendees and contact information will be assembled by the Worship Committee.
3. Any areas potentially contaminated will be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected using Lysol/Clorox wipes or spray cleaners. Areas include bathrooms, and frequently touched surfaces like door knobs and light switches.

IV. OTHER

These guidelines are intended for outdoor services only. Under Phase 3 regulations, churches can hold indoor services for a 25% capacity attendance, which would be about 45 people for the New Hempstead Church building. For the near future, our congregation as well as other users of our facilities will be having outdoor services and activities. Prior to moving to inside services and activities, we will review and modify our procedures accordingly. Final plans will then be available to all users of our buildings and grounds.