

Dear Stone House Presbyterian Church,

Yesterday evening, our session met to approve a plan for re-opening in-person worship here at Stone House Presbyterian Church. I am so grateful for the hard work of our session members and those who were served on the working group for re-opening: Genevieve Owens, Anne Grossman, Jimmy Despinis, Ken Hodge, Melanie Pesola, Iris Redmond, Roger Cross, and Maureen Lee. These individuals have given so much of their time and energy to working on this plan and serving our church, and have done so out of the guiding principle of “Love one another as I have loved you” (John 13:34), calling us to inclusive, genuine connection while protecting people’s health and honoring people’s choices for themselves and their families.

Our plan is to begin welcoming people back to in-person worship starting **Sunday July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2020**. Along with in-person worship we will still be live-streaming the services online, as well as offering an on-line coffee hour to talk over Zoom after worship. We want everyone to be able to continue to worship with us, whether that is in the sanctuary or in their home.

**As we do open up again for in-person worship, the safety and health of everyone is incredibly important to us. Because of that, we will be implementing the following safeguards for worship:**

- All in-person worshipers over age 3 will wear a face mask and register for worship over the phone or online before Sunday.
- All in-person worshipers will sit six-feet apart from anyone outside of their immediate family group.
- There will be no food or drinks served (people are invited to bring their own covered cup or thermos of coffee or water if they choose).
- We will be suspending Discovery Time and Nursery Care for the current time. We will still have packets of children’s bulletins, coloring sheets, and crayons available to take each Sunday.
- As singing has been found to be a super-spreader of Covid-19, we will be suspending all in-person singing for the time being.
- Bulletins will be posted online ahead of time at <https://shpchurch.org/bulletins>
- We will be inviting all who are able to enter in through the kitchen door and exit out the sanctuary doors. Hand-sanitizer will be available for all as you enter. There will be an offering basket at the back door as you exit. We still highly encourage everyone to give online or with a check, and not cash at this time.
- We will have a safety team wipe down all door handles and shared surfaces after worship each week.

**For fellowship and small groups:**

- We are now opening up our outside church grounds (lawn, parking lot, prayer garden) for small groups to gather in. The groups must be less than 50

individuals, everyone must stay 6 feet apart, and the building will remain closed for small groups and fellowship. If you would like to use the church grounds for a small group gathering, we ask that you let us know at (757) 565-1130 or email [office@shpchurch.org](mailto:office@shpchurch.org)

- We are still highly encouraging small group studies to meet online to be as inclusive to as many people as possible.
- We hope to have an on-line coffee hour each Sunday after worship on Zoom.

**For us to take this next step to in-person worship, we will need lots of help from the Stone House Presbyterian Church community. Specifically, we are asking people to step up in the following ways:**

- Join the Safety Team, which will help clean and disinfect surfaces each Sunday after worship. You can sign up for this team here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080f45afa82fa2fc1-safety>
- Serve on the A/V Team. ***We especially want to invite youth to consider serving in these roles*** We now need two individuals coming each Sunday to arrive by 10am for the following vital roles:
  1. Running the Mevo Start Camera for our Livestream. All those serving with this will be invited to an in-person training ahead of time.
  2. Running the slides for those in-person worship.You can sign up for the two A/V roles here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080f45afa82fa2fc1-avteam>
- Become a scripture reader who digitally records scripture readings ahead of time for us. If you are interested in this, please reach out Melanie Pesola at: [melanie.pesola@gmail.com](mailto:melanie.pesola@gmail.com)
- Become a part of our ushering team. Welcome and check people in on Sunday mornings to worship, making sure they know our safety procedures. If interested, please reach out to Anne Grossman at [lifesteps@cox.net](mailto:lifesteps@cox.net)

I am sure there will be many more ways we will be needing help and service in the weeks and months to come. Thank you for the many ways you all have continued to be the church in this time, worshiping, praying, learning and growing, calling one another and writing cards, donating and serving, and lifting all of us up with your encouragement, faith, and love. We ask that all of us keep that spirit of love and mutual care alive as we take this next step as a church community. God bless.

-Rev. Alex Creager  
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