



## **GINTER PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**EST. 1917**

**1010 W. LABURNUM AVENUE**

**RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23227**

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September 1, 2020

Dear Member of the Ginter Park United Methodist Church Family:

Over the past few months, since the beginning of the COVID-19 closure, our church's Healthy Church Team (HCT) has worked on plans for the reopening of our church. A plan has been developed and approved by the Church Council which we believe will provide a safe, but streamlined, format for in-house worship. This plan meets the requirement as set forth by the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church. This will not be church as usual but we hope this will provide a meaningful worship experience during this interim period until this pandemic is over and we can return to normal.

During this interim period, the following procedures and structures will be in place:

- There will be only one service held in the sanctuary during this interim period. That service will begin at 10 AM. No congregational singing. Worshipers must refrain from handshaking and hugging. Music will be provided by our pipe organ and a soloist.
- Activities for children will be available during the service in our Social Hall. The children and the adult supervisors will wear face masks and maintain social distancing.
- Face masks covering both nose and mouth will be required to be worn from the time a worshiper leaves his or her vehicle until the worshiper returns to that vehicle. Face masks must remain on during worship and everyone must stay at least 6 feet away from persons who do not reside in their household. Children over the age of two who want to attend the worship service with their family may do so if they wear a face covering and remain with their family at all times. Families with children are asked to sit near an exit in case the child removes their face covering and will not put it back on. This will allow the parent or guardian to remove the child from the service. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children under two should not wear face coverings. Therefore, parents with children under two should make alternate arrangements for them. A child under two being baptized may be in the worship service for that part of the service.

- Entrance to the church will be through the front door of the Sanctuary. The middle double doors will remain closed. The door to the right of the middle doors will be designated as the entrance door and the door to the left of the middle doors will be designated as the exit door. Inside of the Narthex, the middle doors to the Sanctuary will remain closed. Entrance to the Sanctuary from the Narthex will be via the side aisle doors. The door opening from the Memorial Garden will be available for those who wish to use the ramp. Additional directional signage will be available in the parking lot and in other places as appropriate.
- There will be no entrance through the Side Door.
- An Entryway Health Acknowledgement poster will be placed in the Narthex. A greeter will be located near the poster and worshipers will be required to read the form, acknowledge that they can affirm “yes” to all of the statements on it and provide their name and contact information to the greeter who will record this information for filing in the church office in the event that someone tests positive to COVID-19. Social distancing will be required during this entry process. Noncontact temperatures will also be taken.
- Worshipers are asked to sit at least 6 feet away from other individuals or family units. Pews available for seating will be so designated.
- Offering plates will be available in the Narthex and worshipers are asked to use these for their tithes and offerings. Offering plates will not be passed during the service.
- There will be no fellowship time either before or after the service.
- Prior to each service, the church will have been cleaned in accordance with the “Cleaning Plan” as prescribed by the Virginia Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Both the Virginia Conference and our church recognizes the seriousness of this COVID-19 pandemic and are making every effort to provide a safe and meaningful worship experience. We realize this is not an ideal situation but we ask that you help make this as good a spiritual time as possible. We also ask that you let us know if you will be able to worship with us during September by contacting the church by Noon Wednesday of each week via phone at 804-262-8651 or email at: [ginterparkumc@ginterparkumc.org](mailto:ginterparkumc@ginterparkumc.org). If you feel you are unable to attend during this pandemic, please also let us know how you are doing and if you are in need of any services which the church may be able to provide.

We pray that you are remaining safe and well during this stressful time and we look forward to seeing you in worship as soon as you feel comfortable in returning.

Yours in the service of Christ,