

Matthews UMC: Phase One Reopening

Updated May 12, 2020

As we plan strategically for returning to in-person worship and other gatherings in our buildings, we want to ensure the safety of everyone who walks through our doors. Many changes and protective measures will be practiced now and for the foreseeable future, and we are implementing them in the most responsible way possible.

The Transition Task Force will offer suggestions for a multi-phase re-opening based on:

- Governor Cooper's direction for North Carolina.
- Guidelines from Bishop Leeland, our Western North Carolina Conference leader.
- Best medical advice and practices from the CDC and local health professionals
- Honoring Matthews UMC's goal of being a church both IN and FOR the entire community.

As you know, each stage outlined by Gov. Cooper depends on evidence that we are successfully "flattening the curve" of viral contagion, as well as accomplishing other benchmarks set by medical advisors. This document shares **Phase I** of Matthews UMC's plan, taking into account the latest information we have received related to re-opening churches.

Phase 1: at least May 10 – May 31, 2020

- Matthews UMC remains closed except for essential staff.
- Worship will remain online, as will small group meetings, Daily Devotionals, and other activities until May 31, and afterward as directed by Gov. Cooper and Bishop Leeland.
- All those entering the church will practice 6-foot social distancing, wear face masks, perform hand hygiene upon entering the building, and after each contact with high-touch surfaces
- Staff may return to work in a phased approach, with some working remotely and others at church, possibly with rotating schedules. Staff and worship volunteers will endeavor to maintain the 10-person limit and other safety protocols.
- Only graveside services will be held with possible memorial services sometime in the future. We anticipate resuming weddings when we begin offering Sunday worship on site (attendance numbers yet to be determined).
- Children and Youth programming will continue online; summer plans to be announced.
- Meals and food will not be provided or served during this phase.
- The Facility team has implemented new cleaning & sanitation procedures, while seeking to secure adequate cleaning and personal protection supplies prior to re-opening.

We will continue outreach in the church and community working with our Pastoral team and Global Impact leaders to determine how best to minister to those around us.