



## **Neshaminy-Warwick Presbyterian Church**

1401 Meetinghouse Road

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The Rev. Mark Lyndaker-Studer  
*Pastor*

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Dear NWPC family,

We think of you and pray that you are doing well and staying healthy in these challenging times.

You are probably wondering when we can start worshipping in the sanctuary in person. June 26, 2020 has been mentioned as a date when the Green Phase will open for Bucks and Montgomery County. However, the church will **NOT BE OPEN for IN-PERSON WORSHIP then**. Before we can reopen, we need to make preparations at the church, and make decisions to keep everyone who attends as safe as possible. A Task Force, composed of Session members and members of the congregation, is doing just that. This team is putting together a detailed implementation plan for re-opening of the church so we will be ready.

The service will look and feel different than our services in February 2020. When the time comes to return to worship, numerous changes will be made to the way we worship. Some are listed below but others will be communicated to you as we get closer to the opening.

Based on recommendations by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as well as the Presbyterian Church USA (PC USA), we will be implementing the following procedures for your safety when we return to worship.

1. All individuals will be required to wear masks. (CDC guideline -Encourage use of cloth face coverings for staff and congregants.)
2. Temperatures will be checked prior to entering the sanctuary and anyone with a temperature above 100.3<sup>0</sup> F. will be asked to not attend worship. (CDC guideline for maximum temperature increase)
3. Plexiglas shields will be installed in front of the sanctuary to prevent in-air virus transmission. (PC-USA – "...use a shield in front of a podium while leading worship service that can reduce the risk of contagion by blocking airborne agents of infection.")
4. Singing by the congregation will not occur during worship nor will verbal participation. (PC-USA Guideline-Studies have shown that this is one of the key ways at the virus is spread. Singing increases the likelihood of in-air transmission. Singing and choir music are particularly risky activities when it comes to the spread of COVID 19. These elements of worship should be omitted when churches first return to public worship, until such time as it is deemed safe.)
5. The choir will not be singing for the foreseeable future. The worship team will continue to sing.
6. Members will be required to observe social distancing through assigned seating. (CDC guideline-Promote social distancing at services and other gatherings, ensuring that clergy, staff, choir, volunteers and attendees at the services follow social distancing, as circumstances and faith traditions allow, to lessen their risk).
7. There will be multiple worship services with each service limited to 50 people.

8. People will need to sign up on-line or call the church office to attend worship services so that we have only 50 people at each service. There will be more information as we approach an opening date. (As noted above, to maintain social distancing)
9. Passing of the peace and passing of the collection plate will be suspended to eliminate contact with commonly touched items. (PC-USA guideline-5 (b) 4. Refrain from ..., handshakes and hugs, passing plates..." )
10. Members will be dismissed by rows from worship at the conclusion of the service using social distancing similar to that of a wedding or a funeral. (PC USA guideline – “rearrange gathering, passage, and seating spaces in a way that will facilitate physical distancing and reduced crowding”.)

We are strongly urging those with 1.) underlying health problems, 2.) over the age of 65, or 3.) showing symptoms of COVID to enjoy the worship service from your home. We will continue to tape the service and post it to the church website as well as post to Facebook. We are also hoping that you will be able to see the live service at 9:00 a.m. Sundays but that needs to be worked out.

To still keep us together as a faith community, we are considering an outside service using social distancing and possibly a parking lot service. We want to involve you in outreach and mission projects similar to the June Food Drive that allows members to participate and continue as part of our Neshaminy worship family.

As the congregation begins to resume public activities, we will do so through a careful process of discussion and discernment, using scientific knowledge and constant prayer. We may make mistakes along the way. There will be awkward moments as we adjust to new protocols and practices. There will be times of frustration, disappointment, and grief. But, by putting our full trust in the grace of Jesus Christ, we know we will get through this difficult time.

We will communicate with you as frequently as possible by posting all letters and documents to the Church website. We know that everyone may feel a little out of touch so we are planning a newsletter for the near future. It will include financial information, what’s happening around the church, what’s going on with staff, etc.

We will be emailing you a survey regarding worship within the next 2 weeks or mailing it to those who do not have email. If you don’t receive it by **July 8**, please let us know by emailing Cheryl Overton @ [Cheryl.overton@nwpc.net](mailto:Cheryl.overton@nwpc.net) with your email address or leaving a phone message (215-343-6060) with Cheryl. She will add you to the church email list so you receive all of our communications in a timely manner.

When we are satisfied it is safe to open and all preparations are completed, we will notify you and provide detailed information for you to attend church. This information will be based on guidelines from several respected resources. If you are interested in finding out more about what Guidance documents we are using as resources, the links are at the end of this letter.

We miss you and we want to be together in worship as a family. Please pray for the Session, the Task Force, and for all members of our church family.

In Christ’s love,  
Neshaminy Warwick Presbyterian Church Session

CDC Interim Guidance for Communities of Faith

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/faith-based.html>

PCUSA

[https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/covid-19/returning\\_to\\_public\\_worship\\_may\\_2020.pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/covid-19/returning_to_public_worship_may_2020.pdf)

A Pediatrician's Take on children's health during the pandemic-submitted by a Session member

[https://m.facebook.com/pg/HatboroPediatrics/videos/ref=page\\_internal&mt\\_nav=0](https://m.facebook.com/pg/HatboroPediatrics/videos/ref=page_internal&mt_nav=0)