



August 1, 2020

Subject: Lovely Lane United Methodist Church Re-Entry Policy

Introduction Statement:

At Lovely Lane UMC we are concerned about each individual's physical and spiritual health. This concern is especially important during a pandemic, epidemic and/or isolated outbreak of any communicable disease, including COVID-19. For that reason, we have developed a church policy for conducting ministry activities, church hosted or sponsored events, church related meetings and/or pre-approved gatherings at our location.

The following are critical factors for any reopening of Lovely Lane:

1. Protection for employees, congregants and visitors.
2. Changes to the physical workspace.
3. The implementation of processes that meet our changing public health obligations.

Lovely Lane believes that:

1. We must protect our leaders and members, giving special attention to the most vulnerable populations that make up most of our church body.
2. Changes must be made to our sanctuary and other common gathering areas, with special attention given to office space and the use of our building by various groups.
3. We realize we cannot go back to the way we were before. Our changing public health landscape will require us to make significant changes in order to comply with health regulations placed upon us all by the pandemic.

Phased Approach to Re-Entry:

The Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church has published several guidance documents that help ensure we are prepared for conducting worship in a safe and effective manner. An overview of this guidance material is available at this [link](#).

Re-Entry Guidance is divided into three stages based on a number of factors impacting the likelihood of transmittal of COVID-19.

Level 3 - Red Light Status: Stop All Non-Essential Gatherings.

Church is closed for in-person gatherings and extracurricular use. Essential workers only.

This is the "Stay in Love with God" and stay at home phase of our ministry.

Level 2 - Yellow Light Status: Cautionary Return.

This is the “Do Good” phase as restrictions are lifted. This means a gradual return to gatherings and doing so in a cautionary manner.

Level 1 - Green Light Status: Virus is Contained and People are Safe.

This is the “Do No Harm” phase and permission will be granted to communities of faith to return to full activity and mass gatherings will be permitted. This will be in place only as church leadership is confident in the care of their community of faith.

As of July 24, 2020 Lovely Lane UMC is Level 2 Yellow Light Status: Cautionary Return

Church Protocols:

Consistent with the policies of Linn County Department of Public Health, US Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church, the following church protocols are in place for a Cautionary Return.

Personal Measures:

The coronavirus spreads mainly by person-to-person contact. The best way to prevent illness is to act prudently and avoid exposure.

- Wash hands for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer
- Maintain six-foot social distance
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Wear masks in public
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Clean and disinfect touched surfaces
- Stay home when sick
- Remember that people without symptoms can spread coronavirus

General Guidelines :

- Official church office hours, until further notice, are Monday-Thursday, 9 AM - 12 Noon, and closed on Friday. Contact the church office at 319-393-6674 to gain entrance to the building for appointments or meetings.
- Face coverings are required for all staff, church members, and visitors.
- Daily cleaning/sanitation checklists will be followed for frequently used spaces during weekday operations. Event based cleaning/sanitation checklists will be followed on a per room basis. Room occupants will be responsible for conducting cleaning/sanitization activities following their event closure.
- The following room capacities shall be followed to provide proper social distancing.
 - Sanctuary 100 persons, pews spaced for social distancing
 - Fireside 8 persons
 - Library 7 occupants

- Rooms not listed above (Fellowship Hall, Choir Room, classrooms, etc) are subject to Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) guidelines in support of our Children's Weekday Ministries programming and will not be made available for general church use.

Church Sunday Worship:

- Lovely Lane UMC will continue to deliver worship services via YouTube each Sunday.
- Once appropriate, in-person worship in the sanctuary capacity is reduced from 300 to 100 persons. Pews have been spaced according to CDC guidelines.
- Families who live in the same household will sit together; this includes youth and children. Youth will remain with their families before, during, and after worship services.
- Bulletins will not be made available. Information will be projected on the screen.
- The congregation will not be asked to sing or provide liturgical responses. Hymnals and Bibles will be removed from the pews.
- Congregants will be allowed to bring their own Bibles.
- During Children's Time, children will stay with the parents in the pew.
- Sharing of joys and concerns may be done in advance of the worship service to the Senior Pastor or Associate Pastor.
- Holy Communion will be conducted in a non-contact manner. Pre-made, self-service communion cups will be made available. Online Holy Communion will still be permitted until such time as we determine when we can re-assemble with no restrictions.
- There will not be a receiving line to greet persons exiting the sanctuary.
- Fellowship and coffee time between services will not be offered.
- Nursery services will not be offered.

Church Groups (Bible study, mission groups, community organizations, etc.)

- Adult groups (18+) are encouraged to meet virtually. If not possible, follow physical distancing guidelines. In-person meetings should be restricted according to room capacities above.
- The adult group will be responsible for cleaning and disinfecting the space used.
- Youth and Childrens groups will continue to meet virtually.
- There should be no organized sports, camps, or other activities that do not honor social distancing guidelines.
- The playground is closed to children and youth.*

*Children's Weekday Ministries shall apply guidelines as approved by DHS

Life Rituals (funerals, weddings, graduation, etc.)

- Attendance will be limited according to policy room capacities noted above
- Baptisms will be delayed until the restrictions are lifted to ensure safety of the families and the person being baptized.
- Facility rental fees are modified to reflect enhanced cleaning before and after the event

Children's Weekday Ministry and Before/After School Program

- Children's Weekday Ministry programming is subject to the latest rules and guidelines as mandated by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS). The following guidelines are proposed by Lovely Lane United Methodist Church and will be implemented per DHS plans.
- Screen children upon arrival. Establish a routine of daily health checks on arrival, such as temperature screening for both staff and children.
- Clean, sanitize, and disinfect railings, frequently touched surfaces (door handles, toys, sink handles, drinking fountains, etc.) multiple times each day. Create and ensure adequate ventilation of the space.
- Ensure that classes include the same group of children each day and that the same child care providers remain with the same group. Restrict mixing between groups.
- Restrict non-essential visitors, volunteers, and activities (including parental visits except for drop-off and pick-up).
- Avoid overcrowding in the hall spaces.
- Serve meals in the classrooms instead of a group dining area and limit the use of shared serving utensils. Use of pre-packaged boxes or bags is recommended.
- Keep each child's belongings separated and in individually labeled storage containers.
- Minimize sharing of high touch materials (art supplies, equipment, electronic devices, toys, books, games, and other learning aids).
- Avoid immediate contact such as shaking or holding hands, hugging, or kissing.
- Make sure that all staff are trained in the procedures and precautions outlined in this document.

References:

The preparation of this policy has been completed in alignment with the following references:

<https://www.iaumc.org/files/tables/content/13653399/files/Church+Re-Entry+Guide.pdf>

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

<https://www.iaumc.org/123churchreentry>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html>