



First United Methodist Church

The Reopening Team has approved a protocol telling us when we will and when we will not gather for in-person worship or gatherings throughout the pandemic. The plan is clear, consistent, and based on the metrics. It calls for us to be adaptive, but it allows us to gather when risks are within what we have deemed to be acceptable levels. The decisions for opening or closing will be based on the COVID-19 number for Washington County from the Tennessee Department of Health County Data Snapshot <https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov/data/county-data-snapshot.html> and other trusted sites.

PROTOCOLS FOR GATHERING

We will monitor the average number of new COVID-19 cases per 100,00 people in Washington County over the past 14 and 7 days. The higher of the two averages will determine the zone level. When numbers increase to the next zone, those protocols will go into effect immediately. When numbers decrease to the next zone and stay in that zone for at least 2 consecutive weeks, then those protocols will go into effect. Decisions will be made and announced on Thursdays.

GREEN ZONE: up to 15

Service in the sanctuary will be open for in-person worship with required safety precautions

Groups may gather indoors with required safety precautions.

YELLOW ZONE: 15 to 25

Worship in the sanctuary will be online only (no in-person)

Small groups of 15 or less may meet in large spaces with required safety precautions

Groups may meet outdoors with appropriate safety precautions

RED ZONE: Above 25

Worship Service will be online only (prerecorded in separate groups)

Small groups of 5 or less may meet in large spaces to prepare for worship with required safety precautions

All meetings will be online only.

The Reopening Team may need to create additional protocols specific to groups and types of gatherings. The pandemic is ongoing and changing, and our response to it will also be ongoing and changing.