

Message from the St. Mark Re-Entering Well Task Force. We greet you in love and peace. Effective Friday, March 12 at 5:00pm, Governor Hogan lifted capacity limits, at religious facilities. Large outdoor and indoor venues may operate at 50% capacity; however, the statewide masking and social distancing protocols remain in place. We wanted to take this opportunity to share with you our thoughts on what this means for us - the community of faith we call St. Mark United Methodist Church.

At this time, we have decided to err of the side of safety and not expediency and therefore will continue doing virtual FACEBOOK (every Sunday 10am) and Tele Worship (every Sunday 10:15am) services. As a reminder, the virus pandemic is a fluid situation requiring attentive and adaptive responses. It only takes one person to infect many others, and some people who carry the coronavirus may be asymptomatic and may not realize they carry the virus. In addition, as Maryland expands mass vaccination sites and access, more people will receive the vaccine, however the risk to human life is still high.

Therefore, we will continue to work together with you to connect and develop a measured, phased approach and action plan that moves us towards re-entering the sanctuary in a safe, risk-management based manner. With God's grace and mercy, we will comfort one another, and enjoy the fellowship and the blessings he has given to us. God has blessed us to be a blessing to others. Ephesians 4:1-16 reminds us to pour ourselves out in acts of love for one another, which includes the sacrifice of refraining to gather prematurely. There are many within our congregations who are in the highest risk categories, and any personal desires must be secondary to caring for the most vulnerable among us.

We look forward to a continuing dialogue as we work through this together. Until then, there are several upcoming virtual opportunities to connect, be informed, and share your thoughts and concerns with us and others. To highlight a few, every Wednesday during Lent – Virtual Services at 12:00noon and 7:00pm; Saturday, March 27 – Drive Thru distribution of Palm and Communion Elements, 10:00am – 12:00noon; Sunday, March 28 – Virtual Palm Sunday Services at 10:00am and 10:15am, and Call Connect Zoom Celebration at 6:00pm; Friday, April 2 – UMM's Darvin Hebron Good Friday Fish Fry beginning at 11:00am; and Sunday, April 4 – Virtual Easter (Resurrection) Sunday Services at 10:00am and 10:15am.

We pray that God will continue to keep you safe. Please feel free to contact the church office, ATTN: Re-Entering Well Task Force, if you have questions or concerns, and stay in touch with each other through acts of love.

St. Mark Re-Entering Well Task Force