

Hickory United EPC
(A Proud Congregation of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church)

Pastor Dan Clark

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God's grace and peace to you,

Let us pause in our daily lives to praise God for His many blessings! Though more and more of you are returning to Sunday worship, many others continue to remain at home until they have either received their vaccination or when masks are no longer required. If you have been following the news, you are aware, that as more and more people receive their vaccinations, the CDC and PA state officials are slowly beginning to lift the protective restrictions that have been in place for the past year with a 'new' set of revised guidelines.

In an attempt to be pro-active, the Session has reviewed the 'new' revised guidelines and has approved two changes concerning social distancing and the manner by which the Communion elements will be distributed during our worship services.

- 1. Social distancing has been reduced from six (6) feet to three (3) feet.**
- 2. Beginning with our worship services on May 2nd, we will transition back to the traditional Presbyterian method of distribution by permitting our Ruling Elders to distribute the Communion elements, row by row, with Communion plates containing both the traditional wafers and trays of juice in open cups. The sealed wafer and juice 'combo' cups will still be available when you enter the sanctuary for those who prefer this method of receiving their Communion elements.**

General 'Guideline' Review:

1. If you are experiencing 'flu-like' symptoms or have been recently exposed to someone with 'flu-like' symptoms, we encourage you to stay home. If your symptoms worsen, please seek medical attention.
2. Face masks must be worn by all who enter into any area of the church campus and are walking about. As approved by the Session six months ago, the wearing of face masks for the youth and children will remain at the discretion of the parents. If you forget your mask, we have available face masks, including N-95 PPE's in the Welcoming Area. During worship service, we will continue seating you in every other pew. Face masks remain optional when you are seated in the sanctuary pews according to your comfort level.
3. Greeting one another in the name of Christ is most certainly encouraged with masks in place.
4. Hugging, handshakes, fist or elbow bumps are encouraged according to your comfort level.

5. Hand sanitizer stations remain available and their use is encouraged.
6. The Session requests, that if you attend a church function and test positive for COVID-19, please notify the church office.
7. The coffee/tea station is open for self-service with social distancing in place and masks at your comfort level.
8. Adult, youth and children's Sunday school continue to be offered and you are encouraged to attend.

If you have any questions about returning to services safely, or if you need a 'N-95' mask, please contact the church office. We will make every effort to ensure your concerns are addressed. The Session will continue to monitor any changes in the guidelines and restrictions as revised by the government. Upon review, we will communicate to you our responses/changes in a timely fashion.

Please continue to pray for one another, our state, our country, and the world. Pray for those who have contracted the virus, for those who have recovered from the virus but continue to deal with the after affects, for those who are grieving for lost loved ones who have died as a result of the virus, for those who are offering social, psychological, physical, and medical care to those affected by the virus, and for those who remain isolated because of their fear and anxiety for the virus.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan", written in a cursive style.

Pastor Dan