

Guidelines for in-person worship at Rye Presbyterian Church Updated May 2021

I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord!”

Psalm 122:1

In June of 2020, a reopening task force was established by the Session to deliberate carefully regarding the most prudent course going forward for our church. It has continued to study recommendations and guidelines from the NYS Department of Health, the CDC, and Presbytery. The guiding principle of the task force has been to ensure the health and safety of our congregants and of our leadership.

In light of recent decisions by the CDC and New York State reflecting the improving situation regarding COVID-19, the Session has adopted revised guidelines regarding in-person worship and other gatherings at the church facility. Below are the new worship guidelines. We realize that some people may not yet be fully comfortable with changing safety precautions. Know that our live-stream services are going well and will continue in some form for the foreseeable future.

The following are procedures for in-person worship in the RPC sanctuary:

1. Worship attendance remains limited to allow for safe distancing for all present. For our sanctuary, that is about 150 people, depending on household size.
2. Those fully vaccinated may remove their masks if comfortable doing so, while those not yet vaccinated will be asked to wear masks and refrain from singing.
3. Pews will remain marked off to maintain social distancing. Please only sit in pews with the cushions turned down.
4. For the time being, we will not be requiring reservations to attend in person. This will be revisited for the fall season.
5. We request that you attend only if you are healthy, and are showing no signs or symptoms of illness. In addition, if you have not been fully vaccinated, please attend only if you have not had any known exposure to COVID-19 in the preceding two weeks.
6. Entry into the church will continue to be through the main sanctuary doors facing the Post Road.
7. Through the summer there is no Sunday School, but children are welcome to sit with their families during worship. Unvaccinated children over two years of age are required to wear masks. We will provide coloring pages and illustrated children’s bulletins that will be connected to each Sunday’s readings.
8. As has been our practice over the last year, the following remains true:
 - Families of five or less will be able to sit together. If your family group is larger, we ask that you split up and use two separate pews.
 - To increase air circulation, while the AC will be running, we will also have windows open. Please feel free to dress comfortably.
 - The offering plate will not be passed. Offerings may be put in the offering plates at the exits.
9. Coffee and refreshments will be available after worship in front of the sanctuary.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. It is good to be celebrating real progress together!