

# EMMANUEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

## REOPENING PLAN



**Church Theme:**

**KINGDOM FOCUSED (MATTHEW 6:33)**

**Church Motto:**

**“BUILDING PEOPLE FOR CHRIST”**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This Emmanuel AME Church Reopening Plan complies with the most current Center for Disease Control (CDC) Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19), Commonwealth of Virginia, Local Government, and Second Episcopal District of the AME Church Checklist for Reopening Churches guidelines. This is a living document and will integrate new safety guidelines and directives as required.

## **CDC GUIDELINES**

Per CDC guidelines “Fully vaccinated people can resume activities without wearing masks or social distancing, except where required by Federal, State, Local, Tribal, or Territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance. Fully vaccinated persons are however, encouraged to wear masks at all times during the worship service.

Unvaccinated persons should comply with the current CDC COVID-19, Commonwealth of Virginia, Local Government, and Second Episcopal District of the AME Church Checklist for Reopening Churches guidelines. While unvaccinated persons do not pose a risk of COVID-19 exposure to fully vaccinated persons, they do pose a risk of exposure to other unvaccinated persons.

## **IN-PERSON WORSHIP PROTOCOLS**

The following protocols will remain in place until COVID-19 is no longer deemed a threat by the CDC as safety mitigation steps for our in-person worship services:

### **Sanctuary Preparation and Maintenance**

1. Remove Bibles, hymnals, fans, and other paper items from the sanctuary for a paperless worship experience.
2. Install monitors in the sanctuary to project the worship services for congregation participation.
3. Designate seating areas for families and individual worshippers.
4. Install CDC approved signs about social distancing, hand washing, and non-contact greetings in the vestibule, common areas, and restrooms.
5. Professionally clean Church facility on a periodic basis. Conduct weekly cleaning and sanitation of Church facility and equipment after each service.
6. Manage microphone usage and instruct speakers on microphone protocols.
7. Maintain adequate quantities of the following sanitation supplies at all times: (1) Hand sanitizer (2) Soap and paper towels in restrooms (3) Disposable face masks and (4) Disinfectant spray and wipes.

## **SANCTUARY ENTRY PROTOCOLS**

The following protocols will remain in place until COVID-19 is no longer deemed a threat by the CDC as safety mitigation steps for entering our Church sanctuary for in-person worship:

**\* Do not enter the Church if you: (1) feel ill, (2) have a temperature, (3) have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past fourteen (14) days, or (4) have been in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.**

1. Ushers/Greeters will remain in the vestibule and assist in proper sanctuary entry protocols while avoiding large gatherings in the vestibule.
2. The front door will be the main entry/exit point for all worshippers. (**\* Persons should use the nearest exit in an emergency.**)

~~4.3.~~ Provide disposable face masks to persons as requested/needed.

~~5.4.~~ Provide hand sanitizer for persons entering the sanctuary.

~~6.5.~~ Ushers/Greeters will seat persons by filling the sanctuary from front to back. (**Family members and those who reside in the same home may sit together without regard to social distancing requirements.**)

~~7.6.~~ Maintain a seat-tracking/recording system for contact tracing purposes only.

~~8.7.~~ Offering baskets will be located at entry/exit points in the Church.

## **SMART WORSHIP SERVICE PROTOCOLS**

The following protocols will remain in place until COVID-19 is no longer deemed a threat by the CDC as safety mitigation steps for worship services:

**S: SAFETY/SOCIAL DISTANCING - Maintain safety practices at all times.**

**M: MASKS - Wearing face masks/coverings is requested while in the Church.**

**A: ACCESS - Access to the Church is strictly voluntary and persons agree to comply with all SMART Worship service protocols.**

**R: RESPECT: Respect the personal space of others and their stated desire for interactions.**

**T: TIME: Worship services will be held to one hour and fifteen minutes as much as possible.**

## **OTHER SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

1. Persons are encouraged to wear face masks / coverings at all times.
2. Maintain proper social distancing practices at all times.
3. Ensure adequate ventilation (HVAC/ceiling fans) in the sanctuary at all times.
4. Encourage worshippers to not bring unnecessary items into the sanctuary.
5. Observe safety measures when conducting Church rituals (Baptism, Communion, welcoming New Members, altar call, etc.)
6. Encourage online giving option for tithes and offerings.

7. Dismiss/Exit worship services in an orderly manner.
8. Please notify the Church immediately if diagnosed with COVID-19.

## **CONCLUSION**

The purpose of this Reopening Plan is to help to keep our worship services as safe as possible during the continuing COVID-19 pandemic. The FDA approved vaccinations provide a high level of protection against all known COVID-19 variants, however we cannot guarantee against COVID-19 infection. Our Church is open to the public and we ask that everyone comply with our safety protocols and measures to help keep us all safe.

**Emmanuel AME Church has done everything humanly possible to remain in full compliance with all federal, state, local government, and Second Episcopal District AME Church COVID-19 guidelines. We encourage everyone to become fully vaccinated to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and its variants. Fully vaccinated and unvaccinated persons alike are welcome to enter our Church for services, but they do so at their own risk.**

**Welcome to Emmanuel AME Church  
and have a safe worship experience!**