

Protocol for Indoor Worship Service Frequently Asked Questions

1. Do I need a reservation to attend in-person church services?

YES.

We have a spacing protocol in the church pews and choir loft so that we are separate...but together. You can call the church office at 541-344-1425 to let us know you're coming, or sign up via Breeze at <https://www.heartofeugene.org/services/>. Click on the Sunday worship poster and this will connect you to our Breeze RSVP. This link has also been provided In the Friday e-news.

Please consider arriving 10-15 minutes early, as seating folks and communicating the safety protocols will add some time to the arrival process.

2. What kind of mask will I need and where will I get one?

Every person who attends in person worship will need to wear a mask. By now you have your preferred masks at home that cover your mouth and nose well for you to be shopping, at the doctor's office, in the grocery store. The church will provide masks at the door on your way into the Sanctuary if you have forgotten yours.

3. Will I need to be vaccinated to attend church in person?

YES.

Everyone who is 12 and older must provide proof of vaccination or proof of a negative COVID-19 test result from the last 72 hours, in order to attend indoor Sunday worship service.

Children under 12 years: Vaccines are only now becoming available for children ages 5-11. Until vaccines become available for young children, children under 12 years may not attend in person worship activities without a negative test result or until we can set up a separate space for unvaccinated children to gather safely. See our preparations below.

4. Why must I be vaccinated to attend in-person worship at FCC?

Safety and care for others in our church family and our community is, and always has been, a central tenet of our faith. Vaccination for COVID-19 and the use of face masks have been shown as the most effective tools against the life-threatening effects of the disease. In this way, we show love for each other and our greater community.

Asking everyone to provide proof of vaccination will reassure our congregants and our community that we are committed to keeping public health as our guiding light. Proof of vaccination is a standard at many public sites, including restaurants, entertainment and sports venues, etc.

Please consider providing this proof before Sunday, either by emailing a picture of it to the church office (office@heartofeugene.org or to april@heartofeugene.org), uploading a photo of your vaccination card when you register for worship on Breeze, or you can also show your vaccination card at the entrance to the church on Sunday morning (come a little early, please!). You will only need to show your proof of vaccination one time. We don't need a copy of it, we just need to see that it's completed.

If you haven't shared your card in advance or don't have proof of vaccination or proof of a negative test within 72 hours with you, we will invite you to return home and watch the service at home via Zoom or YouTube. We will look forward to seeing you at a future worship service once you have provided proof of vaccination.

5. What provisions will be made for young families and maximizing safety for children?

The health and safety of our yet unvaccinated children is of utmost importance. We are doing our best to keep our unvaccinated children separate from our adults for their safety and for the safety of the congregation. So, at this time, unvaccinated children will not be able to be in the Sanctuary which will be reserved for vaccinated adults.

We are preparing Grace Chapel, so that families with unvaccinated children who wish to attend worship may do so in a separate space and watch the YouTube broadcast from that room. We hope this room is available to families with young children on November 7.

We hope that as vaccines become available and we learn more information about COVID risks to our children, we will be able to welcome children into the Sanctuary and Nursery facilities.

6. Is there a deadline for reserving a spot at church each week?

No.

Attendance on Sundays will be on a "first come, first served" reservation system: However there is a limited capacity of 75 in the Sanctuary because of our need to maintain social distancing. Once the Sanctuary is full, we will ask you to watch online from home.

So, please contact the church office before Friday at 541-344-1425 to let us know you're coming, or reserve a spot via Breeze at <https://www.heartofeugene.org/services/>.

7. Will services be offered on-line as well as in person?

Absolutely!

We will continue to offer our Sunday worship services live via YouTube and Zoom.

8. How will I enter the building safely?

There will be a table set up outside the red Sanctuary doors entrance off of Oak Street with Deacons sharing our protocol of being fully vaccinated (proof of vaccine will be asked for), wearing masks, and social distancing. If you meet the above requirements, you will be welcome to head on into the Sanctuary. The same scenario will also be set up at the Northside entry to the Elevator. You are welcome to get your nametag and take it home with you, bringing it back each Sunday. Sanctuary Doors open at 10:00 am. Please be patient and maintain social distancing during the check-in process.

9. How will we decrease the chance of breathing in germs from our neighbors?

- Wear your mask over your nose and mouth at all times.
- Stay distanced by 6 feet. The ushers will seat people to facilitate this distance.
- We have increased airflow in our spaces. The church is maximizing ventilation with fresh air flow and air filters.

10. How will we find our seating?

The ushers will indicate to those entering the Sanctuary what the seating configuration is (there will be X's indicated by tape on the pews indicating properly distanced places to sit). Sit on an X!

11. Because no activity is risk free, how shall I calculate my personal risk to guide my decision about whether to attend church in person or on-line?

Talk with your doctor. Include in the discussion the safety measures we are putting in place. Your doctor will look at age, underlying conditions and medications that could increase susceptibility and help you to get a better understanding of your individual risk level. This is also a personal decision about how much risk or anxiety feels acceptable for you. Sadly, it is not possible to provide a risk-free experience.

See the following examples that increase risk:

- Your doctor feels that you, or someone you live with, are at high risk of hospitalization or death if you contract COVID-19.
- You or someone you live with is very frail or has low immunity (as with chemotherapy or other immunosuppressive drugs). Common diseases treated with immunosuppressive drugs are: Psoriasis, Lupus, Rheumatoid Arthritis, Crohn's Disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Alopecia Areata.

12. How will we safely leave the church building after service?

Deacons will assist us in exiting the sanctuary doors and encouraging everyone to socialize outdoors.

13. How and where will I safely socialize after church?

Once you are outside, please feel free to socialize while you continue to be masked and socially distanced on the North lawn or the front steps.

14. Are there times when I should not attend church to protect others?

Yes.

Please, plan to not attend in-person church if:

- You are unvaccinated.
- You have any symptoms: Fever, chills, cough, headache, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, muscle or body aches, chills, runny nose, increased sneezing, new loss of taste and/or smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea.
- Your doctor feels that you are immunosuppressed.

15. Who developed these protocols?

Our Executive Team and members of our COVID-19 response team met and were supported by members of the Board in deciding to require proof of vaccination for worship. These protocols are based on our shared desire to demonstrate Christian love by caring and protecting members and friends of our church community by following the best available public health advice and recommendations to keep everyone safe. They were provided to us by our friends at First Congregational Church and are based on best practices provided by medical professionals and through scientific research.