

## ST. MARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH RE-GATHERING GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. **We will not be an early adopter.** *We must strive to do no harm. We must promote community engagement in a safe environment. It is our intention to observe and evaluate new developments toward reopening and learn from them.*
2. **We will prioritize the community over the individual.** *Because we are a multi-generational congregation, and because our church body includes people with various heightened risk factors, we need to advise for the good of the whole congregation, not for the wishes of any subset of the congregation.*
3. **We will strive to ensure the inclusivity of access.** *We want to continue effectively serving those who will be unable to gather on the campus, whether for a short season or permanently, using all we have learned about webcasting in this season.*
4. **We will follow the advice of the medical community.** *We believe there is no inherent conflict in being people of faith and people who believe in science. We act most wisely when we pay attention to expert counsel that comes from trained medical, scientific, and social scholars who use their God-given gifts to lead us into truth.*
5. **We will continue to search for ways that we can be the body of Christ for our community.** *We understand our church to exist for our greater community's common good. We will continue to reach out to our mission partners to share our gifts and resources in safe ways.*
6. **Churches are not like businesses...** *We (the church) are about group functions and large-scale gatherings, where the known risk of accidentally spreading infection is exponentially higher. We are relational in our work, not transactional, and this makes a fundamental difference in how we can reopen our buildings. The church, after all, is not and has not been closed. We continue to worship, serve, and care for each other.*

Completed by St. Mark Re-Gathering Task Force July 7, 2020

Approved by St. Mark Session on July 20, 2020

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