**Guidelines for Outdoor Worship at McFarland UCC beginning 6/20/21**

Greetings Members and Friends of McFarland United Church of Christ,

The time has finally come! We’re going to be worshipping together in person again! As promised, here are the guidelines we are going to follow in order to remain as safe and respectful of each other as possible. We are not trying to create too many rules, and everything is on the table for discussion. Being as BRIEF as possible, here’s where we are at this point.

I hope to see you in person on Sunday mornings from now on.

Pastor Bryan

**To Those Continuing On Zoom Only:** (please see the note to you at the end of this message)

**Picking up members who need rides:** There may be some folks who could use a ride to church, including John Reed and Jackie Cairns on the East side of Madison (near American Family Insurance). If you’d be willing to be on a list to bring people to church now and then please let Pastor Bryan know.

1. **In case of bad weather:** We will make the call no later than 8 a.m. on a Sunday morning if outdoor worship is going to be canceled because of heat or rain. If outdoor worship is not going to happen we will put a notice on the website AND we will send an email out to everyone who receives the Pulse. If we must cancel outdoor worship, then Diane and Bryan will go indoors and conduct the worship service and do their best! Everyone else will have to join in on zoom and together we’ll make the best of it.
2. **Parking:** If you are going to park in our lot (and thanks Gregg Krattiger and Building & Grounds for the new surface and parking spaces!), please come early enough so that we do not have too much traffic in the lot as people are finding their place on the lawn. We need to run a power cable across the parking lot also and would prefer not to have that driven over anymore than necessary. Parking on the street works also.
3. **Bathrooms:** The building will be open for bathroom use only on Sunday mornings. Please avoid the temptation to walk around the rest of the building, including the sanctuary. We are not open yet and do not want to send mixed messages. It should not be too long now. Please use on the bathrooms as needed and then come back outside immediately.
4. **Name Tags:** If you already have a name tag, we will have them outside on a table with someone there to help you find yours. If you do not have a permanent name tag we will have temporary tags available for everyone. Let’s give each other the gift of wearing these! It’s been a LONG time since some of us have seen each other and it’s completely understandable that we could all use some help with names!
5. **Masks:** We are not going to in any way attempt to see who is vaccinated and who is not. You are welcome to wear a mask, and you are welcome not to. If you are not vaccinated the wisest and safest course of action to protect yourself and others would be to wear a mask. We are simply going to trust and respect everyone’s choices, especially since we are outside.
6. **Children:** Since children under 12 are not yet vaccinated, we are going to trust parents or grandparents to do what is best for their children. We ask that no adults initiate physical contact with children unless a parent/guardian is with the child and gives consent to do so. Let’s make this as easy and gracious as possible for each other. Yes, it will be hard not to want to give these kids a hug, but let’s do what’s best for them and NOT initiate contact or let them do so without a parent’s permission. Parents, please know you will not hurt anyone’s feelings if you ask them not to hug or touch your children at this point.
7. **Seating:** We ask that if at all possible you bring a lawn chair(s) or blanket for you and your loved ones to sit on. We have plenty of folding chairs at the church, but they tend not to be very stable on the grass as the legs sink in. If you have extra lawn chairs you can bring along in case someone needs one that would be great.
8. **Social Distancing:** Once again, since we are outside this is a bit less of an issue, and we are not going to have strict guidelines. Please just place your chair where you feel most comfortable, and let’s all simply ask those next to you if they would like a bit more space between you. If you do not care how close someone is to you you may say so, but please just make it easy for those who DO care to have the space they need in order to take care of themselves and their loved ones. This is one area where people are in many different places at this point in the process of reentry. Let’s just do what we always do, and that is to go out of our way to be welcoming and warm and accommodating.
9. **Physical Contact:** As with social distancing, this is a place of potential awkwardness and great diversity of opinions and comfort levels. In general, do not initiate physical contact without asking someone if it is okay. If you know you are not comfortable having people touch you, you can use the “prayer hands” posture to gently indicate that you would like to offer your greetings without physical contact.
10. **Singing:** The science clearly suggests at this point that it is okay to sing unmasked outside together. So let’s sing! But if you are uncomfortable with this, feel free to move around and get some more distance from those near you at this point. Since all our music will be live from now on, let’s sing loud enough so that those on zoom have something to listen to!
11. **Fellowship after church:** SaLT has decided that for our first few weeks of outdoor worship we will not provide coffee and that we will encourage people not to linger too long after worship. While we will not be obnoxious about clearing people out (we know how eager some of you are to visit with each other again), let’s just all do our best to honor this decision and make this as easy as possible. We’ll get back to full on post church party mode soon if things continue to go well.
12. **Tear Down (& set up):** We would love help carrying equipment back into the church and setting it up at 8:45 a.m. each Sunday morning. Just lend a hand regarding tear down if possible, and please let Pastor Bryan know if you can help set up.
13. **If You Test Positive For COVID-19 after attending an outdoor worship service:** If by chance you test positive for COVID after being with us in person for worship, please let Pastor Bryan know as quickly as possible. We are not going to do formal contact tracing because we do not feel inclined to record contact information for all persons who join us each week. It would be only respectful however to let others know if someone in our midst tests positive so that each of us can do what feels best to us in light of this information.
14. **For Zoom Only Participants:** As has been stated many times, we will do our very best to make worship compelling for you and to make sure you feel included and part of the worshiping community. There will be a “zoom usher” in charge of zoom each week. To begin with that will be our wonderful Tom Ludwig, but we’ll need to train others to serve in this capacity as well.

By Saturday each week **the order of worship for the upcoming Sunday will be available on our website** ([www.mcfarlanducc.org](http://www.mcfarlanducc.org)). Just click on the “Sunday Morning Outdoor & Zoom Worship” banner and then you will find a button you can select in order to read and/or print out the order of service so you can have it in your hands. This printable bulletin will include all unison prayers and song lyrics that will be in the bulletin that those gathered in person will also have**. A link to this bulletin will also be placed in the chat on zoom.**  If you do not see it when you sign in to zoom worship please send a chat message to the zoom usher asking him or her to post that link again. We discovered that persons who join later than others may not have access to earlier chat messages.

**When we are in times of sharing such as sharing joys and concerns for prayer**, you will be able to send a chat to the zoom usher, or raise your hand if you are visible on the screen. The zoom usher will raise his or her hand to let Pastor Bryan know you would like to share something, and **the zoom usher will repeat over a microphone what you’ve said or written in the chat so that you are able to communicate with everyone**. We’ll feel our way into this and have a sense of humor about what is and is not working well!

When we are in what would have been “Gallery Mode” on zoom, the zoom usher will have a movable camera and will do his/her best to help you see what’s going on outside. We will make sure the laptop is near a speaker so that you are able to hear the music and what is being said. The biggest difference will be with regard to music. We will from now on be doing all music live. Feel free to join us in song, or to just follow along with the lyrics in the bulletin and listen to those who are singing together. Unfortunately we will not hear your voices singing with us, but God will!

Please let us know any thoughts or suggestions you may have so that this is as meaningful for you as possible. We love you and want to stay connected!