

The Reformed Church of Bronxville: Coronavirus Health Protocol

September 1, 2020

Our Church School theme this year is based on Philippians 4:4: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice." Though much will be different as our program season begins, we still rejoice in the ways we can be church together, even with certain restrictions, which are outlined below. Our goal is to maximize opportunities for worship, learning, service and spiritual growth while ensuring the safety of all who grace our campus.

As the church year begins, we are adhering to the following guidelines to protect staff and visitors. These precautions are adapted from New York State Department of Health's recommendations (see https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/NYS_BusinessReopeningSafetyPlanTemplate.pdf). We will continually monitor health regulations and adjust as necessary or appropriate.

Individual Precautions

Ultimately, safety depends on decisions all of us make. Health authorities uniformly recommend the following basic precautions:

- Wear face masks in enclosed spaces and keep six feet apart
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (including cell phones!) using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Stay home when you are sick.

General Church Response

The church will adhere to these guidelines (see various sections below for specifics on worship services, Church School, Youth Groups, choir programs, Mission/Education activities and outside community groups):

- Health screening self-assessments will be provided to the staff, congregation and all visitors, as well as emailed weekly to the congregation. Everyone should self-assess before coming to the campus for any reason. The church will not take temperatures, but part of the self-assessment should include a self-monitored temperature check before arriving at the church.
- Face masks are required in tight spaces and where social distancing is not possible. (Extra masks will be available in the kitchen and Narthex.)
- Six-foot distances shall be maintained between individuals.

- Signage will be placed throughout the church as reminders to adhere to proper hygiene, social distancing rules, etc.
- Tightly confined spaces should be occupied by one person only.
- All staff and visitors shall refrain from physical touch.
- Hand sanitizer will be supplied to all areas including offices and classrooms; major meeting rooms (Edwards, Calvin, Copenhaver, and Music Rooms); and the kitchen, Library, Narthex, Sacristy and Congregational Hall.
- Food Service:
 - Coffee hour will remain suspended.
 - Public sharing of food is prohibited, unless the food is packaged in individually wrapped portions.
 - If food is provided at any event, it shall be served by one or a limited number of people. No self-serve.
 - Nozzles on the water jugs in the Choir Room and near the Sanctuary will be cleaned frequently. If filling a cup or water bottle, please do not touch the nozzle with your cup or hands.
- Clean Building Protocol: In addition to regular daily cleaning, sextons will wipe down handrails and doorknobs in high-traffic areas each day, and thoroughly clean meeting rooms, classrooms and the Sanctuary after each use.
- The Nursery School shall abide by its own safety precautions.
- **If anyone who has been on church grounds tests positive for COVID-19, they should immediately inform the church. Then, the church will notify state and local health departments and cooperate with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, while maintaining confidentiality required by state and federal law and regulations.**

Worship Services

- All worshipers are required to complete the church health self-assessment and abide by the church COVID-19 protocol.
- All attendees are required wear masks for the duration of the service. Extras are available in the Narthex.
- Attendees should enter and leave the Sanctuary only through the large double doors facing Pondfield Rd. Those requiring an accessible entrance should ask an usher, who will guide them.
- To maintain social distancing, worshipers should sit only in open pews. Couples and families may sit together, but all individuals and groups should sit six feet apart within the pews.
- All should refrain from hugs, handshakes, elbow bumps and other physical contact.
- All are encouraged to remain seated through the end of the service, including the postlude, and then exit as instructed by the minister and ushers. Only service participants may enter the Chancel area.
- Children should remain in the pews at all times, even during Chancel Talks. Activity bags are available in the Narthex.

- Until further notice, all indoor church areas other than the Sanctuary and Narthex will remain closed.

Church School and the Nursery (Applies When In-Person Church School Resumes)

- The Nursery will remain closed through December.
- Church School parents and teachers will be required to sign a one-time attestation form at the beginning of the year (NY State form OCFS-6040), which will be kept on file, promising to complete health self-assessments for themselves and their children whenever they plan to enter church grounds.
- All Church School meeting spaces—including classrooms and Congregational Hall—will be thoroughly cleaned after each use.
- Attendance will be taken at each class or event to keep an accurate list of participants.
- All participants (students, volunteers and teachers) will wear masks and distance themselves appropriately. Students will be seated six feet apart, and rooms will be well ventilated. Some classes may be held outdoors to maximize distancing. No snacks should be eaten or served in Church School.
- Students will be given their own supplies that only they will touch.
- Whenever parents, teachers and students enter the Sanctuary for worship, all are required to abide by the guidelines for all worshippers (see above).

Youth Groups and Confirmation

- Parents, chaperones and volunteers will be required to sign a one-time attestation form at the beginning of the year (NY State form OCFS-6040), which will be kept on file, promising to complete health self-assessments for themselves and their children whenever they plan to enter church grounds.
- All participants (students, guests, volunteers, chaperones) will wear masks and distance themselves appropriately according to “General Church Response” above.
- Programming will be held outdoors as much as possible. Indoor programming will take place in Congregational Hall or the Youth Suite.
- Attendance will be taken at each event to keep an accurate list of participants.
- Programming will be limited to 60-minute sessions until further notice
- Student Ministries is prepared to shift to virtual programming at any time.
- Confirmation class will take place virtually until the Youth Suite renovation is complete.

Choir Rehearsals

- Chancel Choir has been suspended through the end of the year, but will meet remotely on a periodic basis for fellowship.
- Parents, chaperones and volunteers for children’s and youth choirs will be required to sign a one-time attestation form at the beginning of the year (NY State form OCFS-6040), which will be

kept on file, promising to complete health self-assessments for themselves and their children whenever they plan to enter church grounds.

- Masks will be required for the duration of the rehearsal, and all chairs will be distanced at least 6 feet apart.
- Attendance will be taken at each event to keep an accurate list of adult and student participants
- No vocal choir rehearsal will be longer than 30 minutes.
- There will be at least 15 minutes in between each rehearsal to allow the air in the room time to clear.
- The windows in the music suite will remain open during rehearsal and the AC on for circulation
- Choir will consist of rhythm instruments, games, learning to read music and, if health guidelines allow, some singing (through masks).
- Vocal choirs will not perform in church for the foreseeable future.

Adult Education, Small Groups and Mission Activities

- Most adult education will be held remotely.
- Most mission activities will be held remotely or off-site. If they are held off-site, participants must abide by the health guidelines of the host organization.
- Any small group that meets on-site must adhere to the general church health guidelines above and self-assess their health using the church .

Outside Organizations

- Meetings of community organizations (Boy Scouts, Bronxville Seniors, etc) will remain suspended until further notice.