

# First Mennonite Church Reopening Plan

## Guiding values and goals

In deciding when to resume indoor face-to-face worship services and other gatherings, leadership at First Mennonite Church needs to consider our values and goals as a diverse community, which include:

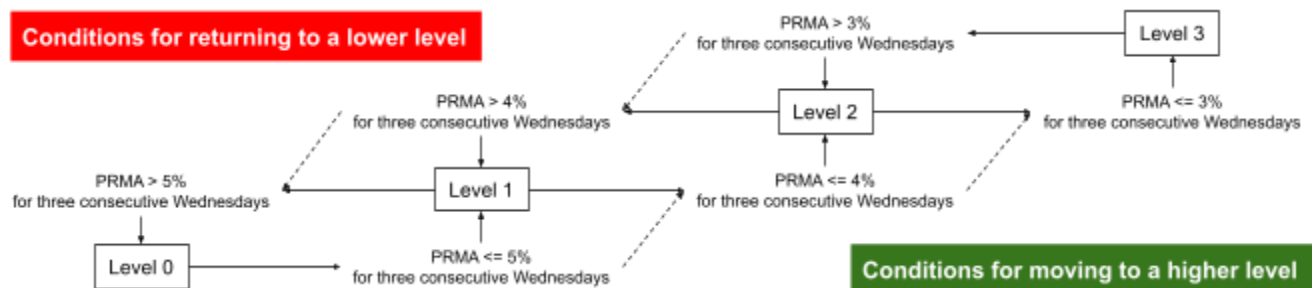
*Love.* At the core of our beliefs is that love comes from God, and showing love to others is the best expression of gratitude to God. Therefore, these guidelines for re-opening will prioritize the welfare of the most vulnerable among us as an expression of that love.

*Inclusion.* As part of loving others, we seek to ensure that as many people as possible will be included in our worship services and in our interactions with each other. As we resume initial indoor gatherings, we will provide virtual options for people who are at increased risk for severe illness.

## Minimum requirements for resuming indoor worship services and other face-to-face interactions

The following model (adapted from *Resuming Care-Filled Worship and Sacramental Life during a Pandemic*, a guide created by several denominations - see [Resources](#)) provides guidance for a phased resumption of indoor face-to-face worship services and other uses of the FMC building. The model and/or specific details contained therein can be revised as new information emerges.

Transition between levels in the graphic below will be based on Marion County statistics found at: Indiana COVID-19 Dashboard and Map <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/2393.htm> (filter for Marion County by clicking on it within the Indiana map). The specific leading indicator metric we are using is the **Positive Rate Moving Average (PRMA)** for “All Tests”, found within the “Positivity” panel below the map.



(Note that we are at **Level 0** as of 2/23/2021.)

The dotted lines indicate that we can ascend or descend by multiple [levels](#) if the required conditions are met. Wednesday is used as a component of the conditions because that day aligns with the publication of First Things First. Since some of the values posted at the ISDH link above are tagged as preliminary, when checking the status of PRMA we will use the most recent date at which non-preliminary values are present.

Sample scenarios:

<i>If...</i>	<i>Wednesday 1</i>	<i>Wednesday 2</i>	<i>Wednesday 3</i>	<i>Then...</i>
Level 0 on Tuesday 1	PRMA = 4.6%	PRMA = 4.5%	PRMA = 4.7%	Move to Level 1 on Thursday 3
Level 0 on Tuesday 1	PRMA = 3.9%	PRMA = 3.8%	PRMA = 3.4%	Move to Level 2 (skipping over Level 1) on Thursday 3
Level 0 on Tuesday 1	PRMA = 4.6%	PRMA = 3.8%	PRMA = 3.4%	Move to Level 1 on Thursday 3 (PRMA = 4.6% on Wednesday 1 means Level 2 condition was not met)  If PRMA = 3.9% on Wednesday 4, move to Level 2 (from Level 1) on Thursday 4
Level 3 on Tuesday 1	PRMA = 3.1%	PRMA = 3.2%	PRMA = 3.1%	Move back to Level 2 on Thursday 3
Level 3 on Tuesday 1	PRMA = 4.1%	PRMA = 4.3%	PRMA = 4.2%	Move back to Level 1 (skipping over Level 2) on Thursday 3
Level 3 on Tuesday 1	PRMA = 3.8%	PRMA = 4.3%	PRMA = 4.2%	Move back to Level 2 on Thursday 3 (PRMA = 3.8% on Wednesday 1 means Level 1 condition was not met)  If PRMA = 4.1% on Wednesday 4, move to Level 1 (from Level 2) on Thursday 4
Level 3 on Tuesday 1	PRMA = 3.1%	PRMA = 3.2%	PRMA = 2.9%	Stays at Level 3 on Thursday 3 (PRMA = 2.9% on Wednesday 3 means the Level 2 condition was not met, since the required thresholds were not achieved for 3 consecutive Wednesdays)

## Levels and associated restrictions

The restrictions associated with each level will allow for a gradual resumption of indoor face-to-face activities. However, we will consider them in a broader context, as there may be other unforeseen factors or newer evidence for best practices. Activities at each level in the table below include those at lower levels. The levels apply to decisions about worship services and other uses of the church building, such as gatherings of FMC small groups, youth activities, committee meetings, funerals, etc., as well as building use by non-FMC groups.

<b>Level 0</b>	<b>Level 1</b>	<b>Level 2</b>	<b>Level 3</b>
<b>Outdoor gatherings only with physical distancing and masks. No number limitations.</b>	<b>Indoor gatherings of up to ~10 with physical distancing and masks.*</b>	<b>Indoor gatherings of up to ~50 with physical distancing and masks.</b>	<b>Indoor gatherings of over 50 with physical distancing and masks.</b>
People at increased risk <sup>^</sup> and other vulnerable individuals (and/or those who live with individuals at increased risk) should consider participating virtually.	People at increased risk <sup>^</sup> and other vulnerable individuals (and/or those who live with individuals at increased risk) are encouraged to remain away from these gatherings.*	People at increased risk <sup>^</sup> and other vulnerable individuals (and/or those who live with individuals at increased risk) should consider participating virtually.	People at increased risk <sup>^</sup> and other vulnerable individuals can resume public interactions. Virtual options will remain available.

<sup>^</sup>For guidance on people at increased risk, refer to: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>

\*Level 1 primarily applies to committee meetings and other small group activities. To be inclusive, such gatherings should include a virtual option whenever possible.

Individuals or groups (internal or external) desiring to use indoor facilities while FMC is at Levels 1, 2, or 3 must receive approval from Trustees and clearance from the church office. The process is initiated by submitting [this form](#). Approvals may be suspended or revoked if FMC transitions from a higher level back down to Level 0.

Symptomatic individuals should participate virtually (for guidance on symptoms, refer to: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>). Shared food and congregational singing will not occur at any of these levels. Conditions for lifting restrictions entirely and resuming pre-pandemic church activities will be determined later. To work out details surrounding further practices and necessities for indoor gathering (e.g., sanitization), Trustees will confer with FMC medical professionals, the Worship Commission, the Faith Formation Commission, and the Buildings and Grounds committee. Other interested people may also participate in developing these plans by contacting the Trustees.

## Resources

Resuming Care-Filled Worship and Sacramental Life during a Pandemic:

<https://www.ministrymatters.com/files/862/Resuming%20Care-filled%20Worship%20and%20Sacramental%20Life.pdf>

National Center for Disease Control info:

[https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/faith-based.html?CDC\\_AA\\_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fphp%2Ffaith-based.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/faith-based.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fphp%2Ffaith-based.html)

Indiana Department of Health info: <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/>

Marion County Department of Health info:

<http://marionhealth.org/coviddashboard/DR4417-COVID-Public-Information-Dashboard.html>

Plans from various conferences, denominations, etc.:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1zil5q5ssl6faxgR2WBbPDHg\\_4kvp6YOS](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1zil5q5ssl6faxgR2WBbPDHg_4kvp6YOS)

Revised 2-23-2021