

# Guidelines for Worship and Activities

American Protestant Church e.V. (APC)

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The following are important points of information and requirements that APC members and friends who participate in worship services and activities will need to agree and follow.

Update 12 April 2021

The guidelines for the use of the fellowship hall have been tightened with view to the current rise in infection numbers:

- a. Masks need now to be worn also by leaders at all times, i.e. also when speaking (teaching, scripture reading, prayer etc.) even if a distance of 4m is observed. In A.II.6 and B.II.5 the fourth sentence has been deleted accordingly.
- b. The interval after which airing is required has been shortened to 30 minutes (from 45 minutes). See A.II.12 and B.II.3.
- c. The recommendation to only meet virtually for all Christian groups has been prolonged until 17 May 2021.

## A. Guidelines for Worship Services

### I. Sanctuary

Worship will commence again on Sunday 21 March 2021.

1. Attendance will be by preregistration only, coordinated through the APC church office. Preregistration necessarily will include providing name, email address, and phone number for purposes of contact tracing in the event of an infection, as required by authorities. Records will be kept for four weeks and will be destroyed after that period. Please preregister by using your Church Suite access or by contacting the APC office via mail ([apcoffice@apcbonn.de](mailto:apcoffice@apcbonn.de)) or phone (0228-374193).
2. The preregistration process for worship will be designed for participation on a rotational basis as we strive for fairness and equal opportunity for all to worship over a period of time.
3. Any preregistered person who has a cold, cough, fever, or any symptoms of illness must stay at home. Persons who have been tested for COVID-19, but who have not yet received their test results, must not attend worship services or any other APC activities until after receiving negative test results. Persons in quarantine must also stay at home.
4. The APC strongly encourages persons living in the same house with someone in quarantine to stay at home and not attend any APC service, event, or meeting.
5. At-risk individuals, or those living with at-risk individuals, are strongly encouraged not to join.
6. Maximum 30 persons can attend a service as congregants in the sanctuary. Maximum 15 persons may be involved in providing the service and will be recorded on a duty roster. This includes, the pastor, staff, speakers, ushers, the tech team, and children's church leaders.

This means in an overview:

- Congregants in the sanctuary: Max. 30
- Children in Children's Church downstairs: Max. 10
- Persons involved in the service: Max. 15.

7. Entrance to the sanctuary will be via the front door only.
8. At the entrance, persons will be required to:
  - a. Use the hand sanitizer provided.
  - b. Adults and children, age 6 and older, must wear a medical (FFP2, KN95, N95 or surgical) mask at all times. Masks may not have an exhalation valve. Should no medical mask be fitting for children younger than 14, they may wear a community mask instead.
  - c. Confirm name and contact details from preregistration list.
  - d. Sit only in the pews that are open and in the marked seating areas designed to keep a minimum distance of 1.5 meters.
    - Half of the pews are closed to all seating. The balcony is closed.
    - Members of the same household may sit together in seating areas marked for families.
9. Singing during the worship service is not allowed. This includes congregation members and visitors seated in the pews, as well as music ministry groups. Music ministry groups must prerecord their songs and submit to the tech team in advance of the service.
10. Medical masks must be worn at all times, even when seated. Exception: Persons leading during worship do not need to wear a mask while speaking (during sermon, scripture reading, prayers, etc.) provided a distance of 4 meters is observed.
11. Worshippers will exit the sanctuary, row by row, in an orderly fashion, according to instructions given.
12. Only toilets closest to the nursery may be used. All other rooms, apart from the fellowship hall, which is used for Children's Church, may not be used (this includes the kitchen).
13. Time gap between two services must be at least 1 hour.
14. Additional instructions for ushers before and after worship:
  - a. Provide 15 minutes of full ventilation (windows and doors opened as wide as possible) of the sanctuary both before and after the worship service. During the service windows and doors remain closed.

- b. Ensure all entering worshippers comply with entrance responsibilities.
- c. Cleaning and sanitizing of areas used must be done before and after worship. Cleaning must include sanitizing:
  - all handles, stair rails, doorknobs, pews, and seats,
  - light switches,
  - bathrooms,
  - any other items used.
- d. Aid in orderly dismissal of congregation at the end of the worship service.

## **II. Fellowship Hall (Downstairs) – Children’s Church**

Children’s church will commence again on Sunday 21 March 2021.

1. Family members, including all children, must be preregistered for the worship service.
2. Maximum 10 children can participate in Children’s Church. Leaders may choose to divide the children into 2 groups (size and number of each group will vary from week to week based on who is registered).
3. Up to 2 persons can lead Children’s Church and will be included in the worship service duty roster.
4. Children should generally be between the ages of 2-10.
5. Children must be able to be dropped off and left in the care of the Children’s Church leaders.
6. Adults and children, age 6 and older, must wear a medical (FFP2, KN95, N95 or surgical) mask at all times. Masks may not have an exhalation valve. Should no medical mask be fitting for children younger than 14, they may wear a community mask instead.
7. No singing is allowed.
8. Parents will drop off their children downstairs between 09:45 and 10:00 and collect their children directly after the worship service ends.
9. Parents are required to attend the worship service.

10. Leaders should attempt to keep all children and leaders socially distanced from each other, as much as possible.
11. Cleaning and sanitizing of areas used must be done prior to and after the meeting. Cleaning must include sanitizing:
  - all handles, stair rails, doorknobs, and seats,
  - light switches,
  - bathrooms,
  - any other items used (i.e. scissors, rulers, pencils, toys).
12. Provide 15 minutes of full ventilation of the fellowship hall, both before and after the meeting. In addition, airing is required after each 30-minute interval for a minimum of 5 minutes. Airing means all windows are wide open. Windows must be closed when the last person leaves.
13. The nursery will remain closed for everyone.

## **B. Guidelines for Church Groups Using the Stimson Memorial Chapel (SMC) Building**

Starting from 15 March 2021 all Christian groups can use the church building for meetings to practice their faith together (e.g. prayer groups, Bible study groups, home groups (life groups), Christian youth group) observing the guidelines below. However, we recommend meeting virtually at least until 17 May 2021.

Council meetings will continue to be conducted virtually at least until 17 May 2021.

### **I. Sanctuary**

1. Groups must register a minimum of 48 hours in advance (2 workdays) with the office staff for scheduling. Please contact the APC office at [apcoffice@apcbonn.de](mailto:apcoffice@apcbonn.de) or by phone (0228-374193) to schedule use of the building. Name and contact information of the group leader must be shared with the APC office for record keeping. Office staff will give instructions to the group leader and will receive confirmation of instructions by the group leader signing the consent form.

2. The group leader in charge of complying with guidelines is responsible for the registration of participants and cleaning according to the rules listed below.
3. Entry to, and use of, the office area is to be minimized. Please clean and sanitize any equipment used.
4. If you have been tested for COVID-19 for any reason you must not attend until you receive a negative result. Any person who has a cold, cough, fever, or any symptoms of illness must stay at home. Persons in quarantine must also stay at home.
5. The APC strongly encourages persons living in the same house with someone in quarantine to stay at home and not attend any APC service, event, or meeting.
6. At-risk individuals, or those living with at-risk individuals, are strongly encouraged not to join.
7. Attendance must be taken by the group leader and kept for 4 weeks after which the record must be destroyed. Include contact details for all members of your group. A copy of the record (in a closed and sealed envelope with date and name of group) must be kept with the office staff and will be destroyed after 4 weeks.
8. Entry to the church is via the front door only. Upon entering, use the hand sanitizer provided.
9. Cleaning and sanitizing of areas used must be done prior to and after the meeting. Cleaning must include sanitizing:
  - all handles, stair rails, doorknobs, pews and seats,
  - light switches,
  - bathrooms,
  - any other items used.
10. The APC has supplies for cleaning. Please ask the office staff for further instructions and access to supplies. Dirty items must be disposed in designated bins.
11. Always keep at least 1.5 meters distance between all persons in all directions.

12. Meeting duration is limited to a maximum of 2 hours.
13. Adults and children, age 6 and older, must wear a medical (FFP2, KN95, N95 or surgical) mask at all times. Masks may not have an exhalation valve. Should no medical mask be fitting for children younger than 14, they may wear a community mask instead. Leaders do not need to wear a mask while speaking (teaching, scripture reading, prayers, etc.), provided a distance of 4 meters is observed.
14. Group size is limited to 12 or fewer in the sanctuary.
15. Provide 15 minutes of full ventilation of the sanctuary, both before and after the meeting. Airing means all windows are opened as wide as possible. Windows must be closed when the last person leaves.
16. Additional instructions for music ministry groups for practicing and recording for a service:
  - a. Up to 8 singers, 1 piano or organ player and up to 3 tech team members can meet for rehearsals and recordings.
  - b. The following distances must be observed:
    - A minimum of 3 meters between singers side to side.
    - A minimum of 4 meters front to back for singers
    - A minimum of 4 meters from singers to other attendees.
  - c. Rehearsals and recordings are limited to a maximum duration of 1.5 hours (excluding preparation and disassembly time of technical equipment).
  - d. When not singing a medical mask must be worn at all times and all social distancing requirements must be observed.
17. Please do not use the sound system or open the gates to the sound equipment. If sound equipment is needed, contact Dieter Federhen at [treasurer@apcbonn.de](mailto:treasurer@apcbonn.de) for assistance.
18. Half of the pews are closed and seats available per row are marked.
19. Do not change the seating system which is valid for all users.
20. Seats should be used only by the same person throughout the meeting.
21. The balcony is closed.

## **II. Fellowship Hall (Downstairs)**

1. Groups using the fellowship hall must follow the same rules as stated in the guidelines for groups using the sanctuary (B. I. 1-12; see above).
2. Group size is limited to 12 persons, not including kids who cannot move around on their own.
3. Provide 15 minutes of full ventilation of the fellowship hall, both before and after the meeting. In addition, airing is required after each 30-minute interval for a minimum of 5 minutes. Airing means all windows are wide open. Windows must be closed when the last person leaves.
4. The minimum gap between two meetings has to be 1.5 hours. This includes pre-and post-meeting clean-up time. For a minimum of 1 hour nobody may be present in the room. Meeting slots will be specifically scheduled by the office staff (including preparation and cleaning afterwards).
5. Adults and children, age 6 and older, are required to wear a medical (FFP2, KN95, N95 or surgical) mask at all times. Masks may not have an exhalation valve. Should no medical mask be fitting for children younger than 14, they may wear a community mask instead.
6. No singing is allowed (not even with masks).
7. The use of the kitchen is generally prohibited by the SMC e.V.
8. No eating is permitted.

## **C. Guidelines for all Church Groups**

All Christian groups including home groups (life groups) can only meet in person inside in the sanctuary or the fellowship hall following all guidelines for using the church building (section B; see above). However, we recommend meeting virtually at least until 17 May 2021.