

Please note: Carter-Westminster will not ask for reservations for in-person services at this time. Face masks are required, and extra safety measures such as taking temperatures will be in place.

*Worship services will be videotaped on Sunday mornings for later viewing and will be posted at **cwupc.org** after the video is processed (a lengthy computer procedure)*

Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)

GUIDELINES FOR CHURCHES

Avoid the riskiest activities - COVID-19 spreads primarily through respiratory droplets in person-to-person contact (within 6 feet); risk grows as exposure time increases. Some activities at places of worship pose a heightened risk that should be avoided:

1. Singing and group recitation - Strongly consider discontinuing singing (and post signage discouraging singing), group recitation, and other practices and performances where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets. Modify practices by calling for silent recitation, using prerecorded music, or having a single singer in a separate area with speaker transmission.
2. Greetings and person-to-person contact - Discourage staff, congregants, and visitors from engaging in handshakes, hugs, and similar greetings that break physical distance. Take measures to remind people to wave or use other greetings.
3. Children should remain in the care of those in their household unit and not interact with children of other parties at any time while visiting facilities. Close play areas and discontinue activities and services for children where physical distancing of at least 6 feet cannot be maintained.

Some best practices include:

- Congregants who are living together sit together, at least 6 feet apart from other groups.
- Wear face coverings.
- Especially indoors, refrain from singing and group recitation, which significantly increases the risk of transmission of the virus by projecting respiratory droplets. Consider pre-recorded music or other alternatives.
- If continuing with singing and group recitation, increase social distance to at least 10 feet between groups and ensure face coverings are worn.
- Restrooms should be regularly sanitized and have sufficient soap and hand sanitizer.

Strict social distancing, wearing face coverings, and cleaning and disinfecting are paramount to reducing the risk of infection for in-person gatherings.

Capacity limits

Set a capacity limit for the place of worship that allows for extensive social distancing (6 feet or more) between congregants. Consider a reservation system to limit capacity, to assign seating to ensure social distancing, and to allow for contact tracing in the event of a confirmed COVID-19 case and the need to contact exposed individuals. Develop and communicate a social distancing plan that includes where congregants will sit, how they will enter and exit seating areas (including staggered and scheduled arrival times and varied exit times), and how social distancing can be maintained at all times given the physical layout of the place of worship.

Excerpted from Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH)

<https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/community-guidance/places-worship-guidance>