

[For more details on re-opening](#)



First United Methodist Church of Hanford

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.



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REOPENING UPDATE

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs, indeed it faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the living God. –Psalm 84:1-3

Dear Church Family,

It has been a long time since we last met in-person. Like many of you, I have been longing for the day when we can gather again and worship together. I'm happy to tell you that day is not far off! [Sunday, November 22nd at 2 pm](#), will be our first Outdoor In-Person Worship Service. The church leaders and I have had been working and Superintendent Debra Brady approved a "Reopening Plan" that details how we will safely come together for worship and ministry. Our plan closely follows the guidelines and recommendations made by the State of CA and the California-Nevada Annual Conference. We will adapt our policies as these mandates change.

Changes to the Worship Services

I want you to be prepared for a different experience when we [reopen Sunday, November 22nd at 2pm](#). We will continue to celebrate Jesus Christ as we always have but the changes we have made may make Sunday worship feel unfamiliar. These necessary changes will not be permanent. They reflect our needs for right now and they include:

- The Worship Service will be outside, weather permitting, at 2pm.
- We will use the court yard enter by Center St. gate.
- Greeting lines, passing of the peace, and other contact activities are on hold;
- An offering plate will be available as you exit but no offering plates will be passed;
- For Communion Sunday (every 1st Sunday of the month) prepackaged communion will be taken in your seat, not at the altar;
- No Hymnals and Bibles. You can bring your own Bible.
- The order of worship will be shortened and we would not sing.
- We will provide chairs.
- Only the outside restrooms will be open. All other rooms will be closed;
- Children are welcome but there will not be Sunday school or any nursery during service.

Our Responsibilities to Each Other

Our primary goal is to keep our congregation, volunteers, and visitors as safe as possible from exposure to COVID-19. We cannot do that unless everyone abides by these policies and procedures. I urge all of you to view following these measures through the lens of love, honor, and respect for one another. For the time being, we ask you to commit to:

- Wearing a Face covering at all times if you are over two years old;
- Maintaining a six-foot distance from one another at all times;
- Socializing only outside the church premises;
- Monitoring your health and **STAYING HOME** If you feel sick or think you might be or, if you believe you were exposed to the coronavirus;
- Answer the Screening questioner;
- Notifying the Pastor or the church office if you become sick or test positive for COVID-19. Your name will be kept confidential but, we will notify that service's attendees of possible exposure, if necessary;
- Using your best judgement as to whether you and your family can attend safely or should continue worshipping with us online.

Praising God, No Matter What

Our church has weathered this pandemic with patience, ingenuity, and grace. We have endured self-quarantining, isolation, and the changes to so much in our day-to-day lives we take for granted. When we could not meet together anymore, we swiftly transitioned to online worship and ministry. We have continued reaching out to one another with care and compassion, especially to our "offline" sisters and brothers. Our Re-launching team has adapted many of our current and future plans with creativity, hope, and a passion for Christ. Thanks to those who keep our Webpage, ministries and our Sunday services going, we have reached new people who would not normally come on Sunday.

Our church has always been open even though our facilities are closed!

I praise God for you, our whole church family, and our ministry together. As we prepare for the day we reopen, I ask for your prayers, your patience, and your participation. Pray that we would have the people and resources we need in place. Be extra patient with one another as we wait and as we worship in different ways than we are used to. Be ready to do your part by following these guidelines faithfully and treating one another with love, compassion, and grace. Consider helping out as well because we need people to set up and break down the worship service and help with ushering, greeting, and hospitality, and more.

We are all in this together and God is with us. Let us lean on him together and show his love to one another so that through all this, Jesus Christ may be glorified and his love be revealed through us.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Pablo Róvere