



Updated July 27, 2020

Dear Friends,

The Regathering Committee has continued to gather information to keep the plan current while our state is in Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois plan. With support of the Church Council, guidance from Pastor Nicole Cox, and input from your surveys, we have a revised Regathering Plan that will guide our in-person activities until further notice. Willow Hill will continue to do ministry online during the coming months and as we continue the transition into the new leadership of Pastor Nicole.

During this time of transition, church leaders are preparing the building and supplies needed to return to in-person worship safely as we work to "Do No Harm" while continuing our mission to Gather~Grow~Go as a body of Christ. The return to in-person worship will look different than worship services prior to Covid-19 as we adhere to requirements for gathering. While indoor worship will not take place yet, occasional outdoor worship services are being planned. As we continue move toward more in-person gatherings, the survey results will help guide our planning. Thank you to all who took the time to share your thoughts through the survey.

The Regathering Committee will continue to meet regularly to share information and develop guidance for next steps. The current plan will remain in effect until further notice, but revisions to the plan may occur at any time based on new information and guidelines from public health officials and the Illinois Great Rivers Conference of the United Methodist Church. We will update documents on the church website at www.willowhill.org as new guidance becomes available. Please continue to extend grace and prayers as the committee and other church leaders work to guide the church and congregation through this ongoing time of uncertainty.

In the meantime, consider engaging with your Willow Hill family through our online worship services that continue to improve, online studies or groups, in-person small groups as they become available, and mission opportunities. Consider connecting through a porch visit or Zoom social hour. And finally, sign up to meet Pastor Nicole in a small group, on-line or in-person, between now and September. She looks forward to getting to know the congregation and helping you get to know her.

In Christ's love,

Willow Hill Regathering Committee

Gail Brown
Staff Parish
Relations

Gina Hulett
Director of
Discipleship

Mark Hull
Church
Council

Kari Moses
Board of
Trustees

Jeff Ringness
Lay Leader

Erin Thomas
Strategic Direction



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www.facebook.com/WillowHillUnitedMethodistChurch

www.willowhill.org



WILLOW HILL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

PHASE 4 PLAN

The church office remains closed but emails, phone messages, and postal mail are retrieved daily.

Email: office@willowhill.org

Phone: 309-383-2700.

Website: www.willowhill.org

PROPERTY & BUILDING USE REQUIREMENTS:

- ◆ People entering the building must be fever & symptom free for 14 days prior to entering the building.
- ◆ All people must sign the log upon entering the building for any reason.
- ◆ **Face masks need to be worn in the building.**
- ◆ **Face masks need to be worn outdoors when not able to maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance.**
- ◆ Groups meeting on the property **or in the building** must keep 6 feet distance between participants.
- ◆ Persons using the building are asked to wipe down touched surfaces with a disinfecting wipe **before and** after use.
- ◆ The kitchen will be closed. Food and drink may not be served within group meetings on the property **or in the building.**

During a time of global pandemic, caring for one another's safety is of utmost importance. Willow Hill Church continues to work toward our mission of *Gather~Grow~Go* through new ministry avenues as we follow the guidelines of the *Restore Illinois* plan from our state government and the *Returning to the Heart of Worship* plan from our United Methodist Bishop of the Illinois Great Rivers Conference. Willow Hill Church will operate under the following framework until further notice.

• **WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORSHIP ONLINE**

Due to restrictions on the number of people that can safely gather **and our pastoral transition**, Willow Hill will continue to faithfully worship online. We encourage people to engage in our meaningful worship experiences through our website, YouTube or Facebook. **An outdoor worship service will be held on occasion where attendance will not be limited to a specific number but appropriate physical distancing will be required.**

• **SMALL GROUP MINISTRY WILL CONTINUE ONLINE**

We encourage classes and fellowship groups to meet online. **The church classrooms will remain closed at this time, but groups of 10 or less may gather in the lobby area and groups of 30 or less may gather outdoors at the church following all use requirements.** Group leaders must contact the church in advance by emailing the office at office@willowhill.org to schedule the meeting. Leaders will be required to submit the name of group, date of meeting, and names and contact information of those present to the church office within 24 hours after the meeting. **Children's ministry will remain online only.**

• **LEADERSHIP MEETINGS WILL CONTINUE ONLINE**

Since it is not necessary for teams to meet in person to conduct most business, and because it will protect those in leadership who may be at risk, leadership teams and committees will continue meeting online only.

• **CHURCH STAFF WILL WORK FROM HOME WHEN POSSIBLE**

Following the recommendation of our Bishop and our state government, all staff will continue to work from home but may also use the building for specific business or ministry needs, following building use requirements.

• **WE ENCOURAGE ALL PEOPLE IN HIGH RISK CATEGORIES TO PROTECT THEMSELVES BY CAREFULLY CONSIDERING IN-PERSON GROUP GATHERINGS OF ANY SIZE**

Following the recommendations of leaders in health care, our state government, and our conference of the United Methodist Church, we encourage all people who are at high risk of complications from COVID-19, which includes people over age 65, to consider thoughtfully their engagement with in-person ministry at Willow Hill.