

UCM Covid-19 Task Force Final Minutes  
Twenty-eighth meeting 12/14/21

Present: Allen Clark, Scott Hess (facilitating), Judith Hinds (recording), Rev. Joan, Jen Matthews, Leslie Parr, Gale Pekar, Janet Poeton, Donia Prince, Charlotte Root.

Agenda:

- Changes to minutes of 12/1/21
- Changes to the agenda
- Staff feedback on reopening protocols, specifically vaccinations
- Montpelier mask mandate
- Reopening guidelines (ref. Jen and Cass's draft from 11/10/21)
- Other business
- Next meeting

1. Changes to Minutes

None.

2. Changes to the Agenda

Ref. item #6, Other Business.

3. Staff Feedback on Reopening Protocols

Joan received staff replies to her questionnaire. They will discuss their range of responses at staff meeting tomorrow. They seem generally in favor of a limited increase in in-person activity in the building, with appropriate mitigation measures in place. It's not clear yet whether there is any consensus on a vaccination requirement, either for themselves or for others in the building. To be continued.

4. Montpelier Mask Mandate

The City of Montpelier passed a mask mandate this week. See [https://www.montpelier-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/7950/CITY-OF-MONTPELIER\\_City-Mask-Mandate\\_Emergency-Order-Adopted-12082021](https://www.montpelier-vt.org/DocumentCenter/View/7950/CITY-OF-MONTPELIER_City-Mask-Mandate_Emergency-Order-Adopted-12082021). Since UCM is not a public building and is not open to the public at this time, the mandate doesn't change what we are already doing. Our current requirements are already aligned with the city mandate.

5. Reopening Guidelines

For reference, here are the 5 major questions that stood out as a result of all the comments Cass and Jen received on their first draft:

Q1. Are we OK with using CovidActNow as our reference point for Washington County data? [At our last meeting, we decided YES to this question.]

Q2. Do we want to consider any sort of vaccine mandate in any stage to attend in-person worship?

Q3. Under which scenarios are we OK with singing in the sanctuary? Is there a difference between the choir and the congregation singing?

Q4. Do we recommend returning to any version of in-person service while we're in the red/orange stage, which we are today?

Q5. In yellow and green stages can we drop some masking or social distancing requirements?

Today's discussion focused on Q4. We reviewed the bulleted points in Stage Orange lifted from the Nashua UU church guidelines. (Stage Orange is based on CovidActNow risk level being in red [Very High] or orange [High].) After much discussion, we agreed to recommend that the ET approve a limited version of in-person Sunday services as follows –

“In Stage Orange, *before* completion of the Air Quality Project, up to 30 congregants may attend Sunday services in person if:

- They “RSVP” ahead of time via some system such as EventBrite.
- They wear proper face masks that cover mouth and nose.
- Six-foot social distance is maintained between individuals and/or pods.
- They do not sing. They may hum.
- They provide evidence of a negative rapid Covid test taken that day or a negative PCR test taken within the previous 48 hours.
- They sign in, providing contact info and certifying they are symptom-free.
- There is no indoor coffee hour or lingering to socialize after the service.
- These in-person services occur no oftener than every 14 days (the Covid incubation period).
- Notice of these requirements is given to all potential attendees sufficiently in advance to allow them to meet the conditions.”

By making this recommendation, we implicitly accepted the concept of “Stage Orange” as suggested in the draft of the new guidelines. We have not yet discussed Stage Yellow or Green, nor have we settled any of the other issues outside of this one defined recommendation.

#### 6. Other Business

- (a) The ET has approved allowing a small number of family members of the worship team and choir to attend the Christmas Eve service in person. This first experience with a small in-person congregation will provide helpful information for planning others going forward.
- (b) The ET is considering the two bids that were received for the AQP.
- (c) The choir asked the ET to approve a requirement for vaccination-or-testing for choir members to record music in the sanctuary for Christmas Eve, and the ET did approve. Masks will be worn.
- (d) The ET is discussing the composition of the TF. It's important to have representation from Property, Safety, and Membership Committees. The TF also needs to define its decision-making protocol.

7. Next Meeting: TBD. Scott will poll the group on good dates for January meetings.