



ROSLINDALE
CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH, UCC

September 2021

Dear RCC Family & Friends,

Here we go! Labor Day come and gone. The last days of summer. Back to school. And... yes, we're coming back together in person!!! **First with recent outdoor services, and now with a return to in-person worship on the 19th.** Church bell ringing. Our congregation together again. Children's Ministry. New members. Much to be encouraged by in the face of seemingly endless difficulties that surround us.

We are writing this letter in anticipation of a number of important activities happening this month. First and foremost, our coming back to worship in the sanctuary on Sunday, September 19. As we've discussed in fellowship and Church Council, we want to outline the safety protocols we're undertaking as provided by the conference ministry, the city, and the state. A lot to juggle, but we're up to it.

What's of paramount importance is for our members to feel safe as possible when returning to in-person. If you do not, then we totally understand and we will continue to broadcast on Facebook Live at <https://facebook.com/rosconucc>.

We have consulted multiple sources for best practices, relying heavily upon Debbie Ringen, the Minister of Health and Wellness in our Conference, as well as our own members engaged in health care.

Here are some of the safety protocols we are putting in place:

- Due to high level of transmission Suffolk County, CDC recommends all people wear masks indoors. We will have medical level masks available.
- We will have everyone sign in to make contact tracing possible.
- We will ask that people sit in family groups, six feet apart from other groups or individuals and will provide a seating plan. If needed, Deacons will be available to usher people in.
- We will open windows and use fans to ensure optimal ventilation.
- At first, we will not be singing indoors due to the risks associated when aerosols travel far as someone projects their singing voice. Juan will provide live music though, just no singing as of yet. (Some churches are singing masked, others are allowing unmasked vaccinated singers at least 15 ft. from others, or singing outdoors, while still others are only using recorded music. We will keep monitoring the situation.)
- While we will not pass an offering plate, we will still do a doxology and a plate will be available.
- Passing the Peace will happen with smiles and acknowledgement while remaining in place without physical contact.
- Our fellowship time will be outdoors for the first few weeks, until mid-October. We will not serve coffee, and all food will be prepackaged.

- Our cleaning service will continue to clean once a week, and ask people to join in a final cleaning and sprucing up of the church on Saturday, September 18.
- We will conduct contact tracing and disinfect should we get a positive case.
- We can use our bibles and hymnbooks. The risk of transmission is low enough week to week and attendees can access hand sanitizer on the way into the service.
- We don't expect to require vaccination.
- We will continue to monitor the rates of COVID in Boston and adjust protocols appropriately.

Members of our Children's Ministry Task Force are speaking with RCC families and will determine and communicate where and how our children will learn and worship from September 19 forward.

If you have questions about any of what we're planning, please feel free to call Pastor Jean 206-909-0448 or Steve 617-513-3332.

In addition to this important day when we will be in the sanctuary again, here are a couple of other important dates to get into your calendars:

- September 12: Social Justice Team Meeting
- September 18: Cleaning & Final Spruce-up Day
- September 25: Farmer's Market Community Table & PorchFest
- September 26: Commissioning of the Pastoral Search Committee

Our relationship with the community through the Food Pantry continues to be strong. We've worked with Rosemary to plan for our return to the Fellowship Hall in October sometime.

Work on the building continues with the help of many in the congregations. The next project is to paint the left side of the building, and touch-up the side porch.

We are learning to live in a new world. We are learning to be more inclusive. We are Roslindale Congregational Church, UCC.

Blessings,

Steve Mooney
Moderator

Sue Carroll
Sue Whitehead
Executive Council

Jean Vandergrift
Pastor