

Foothills Unitarian Church **Guidance for Gatherings**

These guidelines are intended to support staff members as well as group and team leaders within the Foothills Unitarian Church in making decisions about group gatherings in the next few months (through summer 2021). Sunday Worship gatherings will remain online only through this time.

General Guiding Understandings and Principles:

Vaccinations are highly effective, and a way to protect yourself, and others. We support vaccination for those who are able as soon as possible. Per the CDC, it is safe for vaccinated people to gather with other vaccinated people. However, we will not establish policy that would restrict anyone from gathering based on vaccination status.

Until infection rates for COVID are at a Level Green on the [COVID Act Now website](#), we will continue to maintain restrictions in gatherings, regardless of vaccination status or rates.

We strive to make every gathering of the church as accessible as possible, including to those who for safety or other reasons are unable to gather in person.

We are not yet prepared for “official” regular outdoor gatherings at the church campus until June at the earliest. This is both a matter of safety, as well as capacity. If the church seems like the best place for your gathering, please contact the main church line to let us know of your intent and we will let you know of any conflicts. We are not able to provide public bathroom access at this time.

Outdoor gatherings with masks are low risk for everyone, vaccinated or not. However, before moving to an in-person-only gathering, everyone in the group needs to be enthusiastically in support of this plan. Consider how meeting in person may be inaccessible for members of your group

due to safety, mobility, ability to hear, or other reasons. Default to choosing the most inclusive option for current and future members.

By the fall, we will be able to provide support for some “hybrid” gatherings of in-person and online where people are able to be together both online and in person at the same time; even then, this is a challenging way to gather as it is difficult to engage with both “audiences” at the same time. It is easier to have everyone either all online, or all in-person.

We seek to find a balance in our mental and physical health needs. After a year of missing being with each other in shared physical space, we know many of us need to find ways to gather safely as soon as possible. And, we want to ensure we continue to retain the same principles of safety that have protected us up until this point, and not rush ahead without taking appropriate precautions.

Outdoor Gathering Guidance:

Due to the high rates of vaccinations in [Larimer County](#), we believe that there are a number of ways that outdoor gatherings can now be held safely and inclusively. Here is our guidance for these gatherings:

- For any groups that include children/youth under the age of 16, everyone must wear a mask, over their nose, the whole time. Let’s normalize letting people know if their mask isn’t fully covering their nose/mouth.
- For groups with only those who are 16 and over, gathering outdoors without a mask is considered lower risk, but not without risk. As a result, each group can determine for themselves their comfort level with masks in this case.
- For any groups who seek to gather with more than 30 people at a time, we ask for consultation with staff to support planning and coordination to ensure distance (as well as bathrooms!) can be maintained.
- After all this time, we will naturally be inclined to want to hug, or

shake hands, or high five...before doing so, seek consent, and provide non-physical touch alternatives if there is not clear mutual consent. Any physical touching before full vaccination is considered a risk.

- Note that children are not generally good at social distancing. Parents will need to be entirely responsible for their children's compliance with distancing and if they are not able to maintain distance, leaving the gathering.
- Regarding bathroom use, keeping a window open will help decrease risk, as will providing wipes for each user to wipe down surfaces after their use. Provide good soap and towels and engage in robust hand hygiene.
- If you intend to engage in breathy activities, i.e. exercise, singing - space apart at least 6 feet.
- Generally it's easier if you skip eating/drinking together - as you can't wear masks while eating. If you decide to eat/drink as a part of your time, again make sure that everyone in the group is comfortable with this plan. Avoid alcohol or other substances, it makes it harder to keep making safe choices.
- Keep gatherings less than 3 hours.
- Wash your hands before and after.
- Don't touch your face.
- Please don't gather if you feel sick with any symptom, or if someone you've been in contact with is sick. **Please.**

Indoor Gathering Guidance:

- As of now, due to the high infection rates in Larimer County, we advise against any indoor gatherings. When infection rates reach Level Yellow (according to COVID Act Now ratings), we will initiate guidance for indoor gatherings.
- If a group has all consented to share vaccine status with one another, and have all been vaccinated, they can decide to meet indoors regardless of the infection rates level, following the CDC guidelines. We ask all groups to continue to be mindful of the principles outlined at the start of this document.

- Foothills staff members are authorized to meet indoors with one another if they have all been fully vaccinated, following the guidelines of the CDC. We are developing a plan and schedule for re-establishing office hours on site that will begin sometime during the summer.

Specific to Foothills Summer Children's Camps:

- Generally camps will take place outdoors and will follow the outdoor guidance above.
- As children are not vaccine-eligible, they will be required to wear masks at all times.
- In the case of sudden inclement mid-day weather, we will move camps indoors into small group gatherings with the following protocols:
 - Groups of no more than 10 per room in classrooms, and no more than 30 per room in sanctuary or social hall.
 - While indoors, children will be required to maintain social distancing of 6 feet, with a total space requirement of 36 square feet of space per child
 - In the event of full-day inclement weather, camp will be cancelled for the day, with only back-up childcare provided for up to 10 children, using these same indoor protocols.

Selected Sources:

1. [Updated UUA Guidance for Gatherings](#) (Updated April 2021)
2. [State of Colorado's Guidance for Houses of Worship](#) (Updated April 2021)
3. [CDC Guidance for COVID](#)
4. [Larimer County data regarding COVID and Vaccination rates](#)
5. [A Year Into the Pandemic: An article on outdoor transmission from the Washington Post](#)

Updated April 21, 2021