

## FAQs – Reopening 2021

### UPDATE: 8/13/21

With cases of COVID-19 rising locally from increased circulation of the highly transmissible Delta variant, the Contra Costa County Health Department recommends that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, wear masks indoors in public places. This is an extra precautionary measure for those who are fully vaccinated and an added layer of protection for those who are unvaccinated.

**Masks must be worn when indoors at Unity. Masking outdoors is optional. Please wear your mask properly – over your nose and under your chin.**

**UNITY OF WALNUT CREEK IS STAYING UP TO DATE WITH THE EVER-EVOLVING GUIDELINES. PLEASE CONTINUE TO VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR NEW INFORMATION AT [www.unityofwalnutcreek.org](http://www.unityofwalnutcreek.org).**

### 1. **What is UWC doing to stay safe during our reopening and reuniting process?**

We are closely following government and health recommendations by listening to guidance and counsel from our Reopening Committee advisors. (The advisors of the Reopening Committee have kept up to date with the changing government and health guidelines since the start of the pandemic.) In addition, we are:

- a. Staying in prayer and faith with the Divine as we encourage all members to do.
- b. Aligning with the “cleanliness is next to Godliness” credo and:
  - Having our facilities professionally cleaned,
  - Sanitizing the bathrooms and other common areas, and
  - Cleaning and disinfecting high touch surfaces regularly.
- c. Creating signage to inform and instruct attendees of policies.
- d. Training staff and volunteers on safety protocols.
- e. Communicating with our members.

### 2. **What are the phases of reopening at UWC?**

Unity is following a steady, phased approach to opening our campus for events and gatherings.

**PHASE 1 - Sunday Services.** In bringing back the Sunday services we have taken these progressive steps:

- 1) We hosted onsite, outdoor 9:30 am Sunday services while continuing to livestream our 11:30am services. The first outdoor 9:30am Sunday service for 70 attendees was held on Sunday, May 9 -- Mother's Day. The Children's Program also moved from Zoom to outdoors at 11:30am on May 9.
- 2) On June 20 and 27, we invited a physically distanced group back into the sanctuary during the Sunday service livestream at 11:30am while maintaining the outdoor service on the lawn at 9:30am.
- 3) Starting July 4, we offered both Sunday Services in the Sanctuary with no physical distance or registration requirements. Live music was also brought back into the Sanctuary.
- 4) Ongoing, a shaded, outdoor seating option has been made available for both the 9:30am and 11:30am services on the patio. Often at 9:30am it is cool enough in the summer to open the sliding doors -- this offers the ability to see as well as hear the service. Usually, at 11:30am on the patio, you can hear the service, but not see it as well as the glass doors are closed due to warm temperature inside. When the weather cools, we may be able to keep the doors open for both services.

**PHASE 2 - Small Groups & Classes** are in process of returning onsite.

- 1) Small groups and classes were invited to return to campus with the option to mask indoors or meet outside with optional masking.
- 2) Several groups returned the week of July 26 with some offering hybrid attendance -- Zoom as well as in person.

**PHASE 3 – Rentals** have not yet started.

In the last phase, we will allow outside groups to rent our facility again.

### 3. **How long will UWC be in these reopening phases?**

We don't have a single date defined for a 'complete reopening' because we are adhering to changing governmental safety requirements and making our best decisions for all members. We appreciate your feedback and input and will send communication and requests for input from members via email and/or Unity Connects. Keep an eye out to stay up-to-date and participate by sharing your suggestions and ideas.

**4. When will things be back to “normal?”**

This will depend on the overall improvement of conditions surrounding COVID including how vaccination rates are proceeding, how the Delta and other variants are affecting infection rates, and how recommended safety guidelines change.

**5. How are staff preparing?**

Staff members are being trained and continuously updated with information and details researched by the Reopening Committee. Staff members are creating processes and checklists of activities to prepare for different types of onsite events and attendee groups.

**6. How are volunteers being prepared? And how can I help?**

Volunteers are required to attend training before resuming their onsite volunteer role. Please contact the office at 925-937-2191 or [office@unityofwalnutcreek.org](mailto:office@unityofwalnutcreek.org) if you have more questions about your particular volunteer role or if you would like to volunteer. We welcome your help, especially in these areas: Audio-Visual, Youth & Family Ministry, Usher/Greeters and Website maintenance.

**7. Who is able to attend services, classes and events hosted at Unity of Walnut Creek?**

Whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, you are welcome to attend any in-person events, classes or services held at Unity of Walnut Creek. Please read below for more information before attending. Unity is taking a thoughtful and considered approach to reopening the 1871 Geary Road campus to our members and guests. The guidelines we choose to follow are for everyone’s safety.

**8. What do I need to do to prepare for attending an in-person event, class or service?**

- a. Contra Costa Health Services has advised us that public gatherings may still present an increased possibility of contracting COVID, even if safety precautions are taken. We ask you to consider if you are prepared to participate if it may increase the risk for yourself and your family.
- b. If your doctor advises it, please consider getting a COVID vaccination.
- c. Educate yourself about COVID and best health hygiene practices, physical distancing and other related safety protocols and guidelines.
- d. Plan to bring a mask.
- e. Plan to bring hand sanitizer.

**9. What if I feel sick?**

Please stay home and check in with your doctor or an advice nurse regarding the symptoms you are experiencing. You may be directed to have a COVID test. Please wait to return to campus until you've received a negative test. If you test positive, you will be asked to quarantine for a period of time. Please see links below to learn more about COVID.

**10. What do I need to do while I am attending an in-person service?**

- a. Wear a mask at all times while inside and ensure that your mask fully covers your nose and mouth. Note: If you happen to forget your mask, we will have one available for you.
- b. Use hand sanitizer. We encourage you to bring your own and it is also available at the entrance to the Sanctuary and always outside the bookstore.
- c. Request a distance seat sign from an usher if you'd like to create more physical space around you.

**11. Will we be able to hug friends?**

In our excitement to be back together, we will want to greet one another. Please ask others before hugging or shaking hands in consideration of comfort levels. Namaste bows and elbow bumps work too! When in doubt, be more conservative in your greeting. Currently, we are not having a greet your neighbor time during the service and discourage handholding with non-household members during the Peace Song. We welcome you to socialize on the patio after service or visit our bookstore.

**12. Why is singing discouraged?**

We've learned from the head health officer in Contra Costa County that singing indoors is one of the most dangerous things we can do during COVID. Many of us love music and love singing. Let's focus on the good and celebrate that we have live music back and hum along for now.

**13. What if someone at the campus refuses to wear a mask when indoors? Who do I talk to and what do I do?**

You may gently remind the person of the precautions or communicate the situation to a volunteer or staff member. If you are not comfortable initiating a conversation, a volunteer or staff member will have a conversation with the person or people involved. Please wear your mask properly (over your nose and chin) and stay safe.

**14. Where do I find the most up-to-date information about the current status of services, classes and events?**

Please check the website for up-to-date information at [www.unityofwalnutcreek.org](http://www.unityofwalnutcreek.org) We will also be sending communication to members via email and/or Unity Connects.

**15. How are the county, state, and federal government, including CDC guidelines, involved in decision making?**

These organizations provided the foundation for our decisions, as they are based in science, and provide guidance for the safest scenarios for all involved.

**16. Why do I have to wear a mask?**

For safety purposes. COVID is transmitted through droplets in the air. We require everyone to wear a mask to prevent transmission, along with following healthy hygiene practices such as frequently washing hands and using hand sanitizer.

**17. Why do I have to follow mask protocols if I'm vaccinated?**

After prayerful consideration, Unity's Reopening Task Force and Board of Trustees agreed that treating our entire community as if no one has been vaccinated was the most inclusive approach to reunite in-person. There are people in our congregation who are not vaccinated for their own personal or health reasons and we respect their decision. We did not want to require that vaccination cards be shown. Our intent is to create a safe and inclusive space for all.

**18. What are some helpful internet links to help me educate myself on COVID precautions and guidelines?**

We recommend visiting the site below for local information:  
<https://www.contracosta.ca.gov/7766/COVID-19-Information>

**19. What are healthy hygienic practices?**

- a. Wearing a mask
- b. Frequent hand washing
- c. Keeping a 6-foot social distance from others
- d. Limiting contact with people based on vaccination guidelines

**20. Where do I get vaccinated and tested for COVID?**

We encourage you to talk with your doctor and to educate yourself about COVID. Below is information from the Contra Costa County Health Department. We also encourage you to research other reputable sites on the internet.

- a. Testing
  - a. <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/get-tested>
- b. Vaccinations
  - a. <https://www.coronavirus.cchealth.org/vaccine>

**21. Who do I talk with about specific questions? How do I get in touch with them?**

Feel free to contact UWC office or email:

- a. (925) 937-2191
- b. [office@unityofwalnutcreek.org](mailto:office@unityofwalnutcreek.org)

**22. What if I need support? Who can I talk with?**

Please call or email the UWC office. Prayer chaplains are also available for support.

- a. (925) 937-2191
- b. [office@unityofwalnutcreek.org](mailto:office@unityofwalnutcreek.org)
- c. <https://www.unityofwalnutcreek.org/prayer-request>