

## IN-PERSON WORSHIP OUTDOORS: A MESSAGE FROM THE REOPENING TASK FORCE 3/30/21

Due to the increasing rates of COVID-19 infection in our state, the Reopening Task Force has recommended offering in-person worship outdoors instead of inside the sanctuary in the coming weeks.

The Task Force monitors the weekly COVID-19 infection rates for four towns (Avon, Canton, Farmington, Simsbury). These four towns comprise the primary membership of SMLC. For the past two weeks, the COVID-19 infection rate for one or more of these towns has been in the “red zone” (15 positive cases or more per 100,000 per day). The benchmark determined by the Task Force and supported by the Council for worshipping in the sanctuary has been to have all four towns out of the “red zone.”

Given the volatile nature of infection rates, as well as the improving weather conditions, the Task Force recommends outdoor worship as the safest in-person option. Outdoor worship has the added advantage of accommodating greater numbers of people as well. The Reopening Task Force will continue to monitor the situation and will recommend resuming in-person indoor worship when it is deemed safe to do so.

Holy Week services will be offered on Zoom and outdoors. The schedule for Sunday services following Easter will be based on the schedule used last fall: 9am worship on Zoom, and 11am worship outdoors.

Please feel free to contact Council leadership, members of the Task Force, or the Pastors with any questions, concerns, or comments.