

To: Pastors & Congregations

Re: Information about reopening of our churches

As you know, a task force is meeting to review and help determine a strategy for re-entry into our church facilities. At present, Bishop McCloud has given instructions to begin preparing our church congregations and our facilities again for reopening soon. While the exact date has not been officially set, we can expect it within a few weeks. Therefore, please be sure the following things are in place and well understood by everyone.

All persons who gather inside for worship should be vaccinated.

Those who remain unvaccinated should join by virtual means. Small children should remain with their families and not roam about. Families who are already around each other may sit together. If anyone is ill for any reason, they should not attend in person. Announce this so that everyone is aware of the expectation! Please continue to encourage all persons to get fully vaccinated.

THIS IS CONSIDERED BY THE CDC, THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, MEDICAL EXPERTS, AND OUR 3RD DISTRICT HEALTH COMMISSION IS THE 1ST LINE OF DEFENSE. See: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov))

2. Everyone gathering inside should still wear a mask. Please provide disposable masks in case someone shows up without one. Maintain social distances. (6 feet surrounding)

3. Make hand sanitizers available. Remove pew bibles and hymn books so that contact spread of germs and viruses can be avoided.

4. CLEAN MICROPHONES AND PODIUMS BETWEEN USERS! This can be done with Clorox wipes. Remind each other!

5. Re-sanitize facilities before we officially re-start.

6. Clean your facilities between weekly gatherings. Keep the restrooms cleaned between users.

7. Schedule worships to last no longer than 1 hour. Leave immediately afterward. Do not gather inside for conversation or make physical contact (hugging, kissing, etc.). Go outside.

8. Limit other kinds of meetings and group gatherings to virtual processes. The less we gather, the lower the risks.

This may all sound repetitive, but managing our behavior is the greatest challenge when we gather in-person groups. So, it is worth repeating and reminding each other.

Bishop McCloud has already stated that in inclement weather, we may now gather no more than 35 people inside the building for worship regardless of facility size. So, please govern yourselves accordingly! My advice is to follow ALL of the above protocols and precautions anyway. Don't take chances.

Here is everything in a nutshell:

- Clean/Sanitize facilities
- **ONLY** vaccinated should gather in limited numbers (35) for 1 hour (until we hear otherwise)
- Unvaccinated may join virtually
- If you are sick, stay home
- Wear a mask inside (even if vaccinated)
- Socially distance (families in households may sit together)
- Leave the building immediately after worship
- Clean facilities before returning

Pastors, please continue to access [CovidActNow.org](https://covidactnow.org) for the most recent updates on the viral spread and vaccination status for your areas. While things are getting better, there is still much to do in combating this disease that causes sickness and death, not to mention the undue stress on medical staff and hospitals.

Everyone's help is needed.

God bless and stay safe,

