

Oklahoma Pastors,

We commend you for your efforts to continue to pastor people of our state during these uncertain times. You are a critical piece in helping us stay focused on the hope and future of tomorrow. Thank you for your understanding and flexibility as we all continue to learn and navigate decisions as things become more clear for us all.

As we look forward to and prepare for the opportunity to gather in larger groups once again, we recognize that not every church is the same. The diversity of geographical location, number of congregants, property size, budget and technical abilities create unique challenges and opportunities for every church.

As a result, we recognize there may be a variety of opinions on the best path forward to reopen churches. While there may not be a one size fits all approach, the following are recommendations to help churches think about the best way forward, while keeping their church safe and doing their best to honor government authorities.

We recommend each church leadership team prayerfully gain clarity for their church before making any major decision.

Phase 1: (Dates TBD)

No more than 10 people gathered in a room. Where possible, consider encouraging “house church” gatherings where two families can join together in their homes to watch a service while connecting in a more meaningful way with one another.

Consider using any small group structure you already have in place. To further facilitate groups, if your church property has capacity, consider opening your church for groups to meet while maintaining social distancing guidelines.

Phase 2: (Dates TBD)

50% attendance based on occupancy rate of sanctuary/meeting room.

Phase 3: (Dates TBD)

Full attendance with continued social distancing (at least 6' stand/sit between each person)

Some people must stay away from Church because of much higher risk for infection and very severe illness and death if they get infected. Specifically that includes these high risk individuals:

- Anyone with a temperature of 99.6 or above.
- Anyone with ANY respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath)
- Anyone 60 years of age or older
- All overweight individuals with a BMI over 35 (can find calculators on the internet)
- Anyone with any type of diabetes
- Anyone with any lung disease, including asthma, emphysema, chronic bronchitis or COPD

- Anyone with heart disease, including congestive heart failure or a history of coronary bypass surgery or stents.
- Anyone with cancer
- Anyone with autoimmune disease, or on medication that can affect the immune system
- Anyone with an organ transplant or on immunosuppressant medications

Additional considerations:

- Sanitation stations - masks, gloves and hand sanitizer available throughout building
- Disinfect common areas/ Sanitize bathrooms throughout the church service
- Limit the # of toys available in childrens' rooms. Divide classrooms into smaller groups.
- Sanitize toys/door knobs throughout the church service
- Eliminate any situations of multiple touch points (self serve coffee/check-in stations/offering buckets)
- Suspend altar ministry
- Steam clean and/or disinfect all seating before doors open
- Masks should be worn by everyone in indoor group setting
- Hand sanitizer should be available every person upon entry to the facility and used frequently.
- Hand shakes and hugs should be avoided.
- Spacing of sitting arrangements should be made to separate individuals from each other, ideally 6 feet.
- The more fresh air moved through the facility the better.
- All equipment, furniture, door handles/knobs, containers, etc. must be wiped down before and after each event.
- Any money exchanged should be treated as possibly infected – using gloves is a reasonable idea for the responsible individuals.