

Current State: Phase 3 extension

As faithful disciples of Jesus Christ in the midst of our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we remain committed to our biblical mandate to “love our neighbors as ourselves” and our Wesleyan call to “Do no harm. Do all the good we can. Follow the ordinances (stay in love) with God.” In doing so, we seek ways to engage faithfully in worship, study, and ministry while ensuring the health and safety of our members and communities.

With [Governor Cooper’s extension of Phase 3](#) along with the implementation of additional measures necessary to protect public health, the Bishop and Cabinet make the following recommendations:

<p>General Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each church should have a Safety or Transition Team making decisions regarding worship, study, and ministry during the pandemic. • Please exercise caution and safety above all else. “Do no harm.” “Love your neighbor as yourself.” • This Guide for Faith Leaders by DHHS Secretary, Dr. Mandy Cohen provides helpful information. • Stay aware of current COVID-19 cases in your zip code: Covid-19 Dashboard • Dr. Christopher Ohl, M.D., an infectious disease expert with Wake Forest Baptist Health shares COVID-19 updates on Thursdays at 10:00am on Wake Health’s Facebook page • Please continue to practice the 3 W’s: Wear your mask; Wash your hands; Wait 6 feet apart. • Please continue to be patient in reopening church buildings for indoor ministries.
<p>Worship</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We recommend that you continue to limit attendance at indoor worship services (including all worship leaders and tech assistants) to 30% capacity or 100 congregants, whichever is less. Masks and social distancing should be mandatory. No congregational or full-choir singing is strongly recommended. • If you offer indoor worship, continue online or conference call options for vulnerable persons for whom it is not safe to come to the church building. • Continue hosting online, drive-in, or outdoor worship services while following CDC, NCDHHS (state), and local guidelines, including handwashing, wearing masks, and observing physical distancing rules as appropriate.
<p>Children & Youth</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 10 maximum with social distancing and masks for any indoor groups. • Outside children and youth activities are an option. • Consider creative online, mailed or no-touch drop-off children and youth activity options to keep children and youth engaged, making sure to honor the On-Line Safety section of the Safe Sanctuaries Policy.
<p>Mission & Outreach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All outreach to vulnerable populations (food distribution ministries, homeless, etc.) should be done with appropriate physical distance and sanitation practices, including no sit-down meals until public gatherings are safe.
<p>Church Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working remotely or on a staggered schedule is recommended. • If staff (paid or unpaid) work on-site, you must use the guidelines for size of gatherings, social distancing, masks, gloves, etc. Their presence on-site should be done with minimal overlap. We recommend a daily health-screening and temperature check for on-site staff and volunteers. (Legal and Liability Issues)

<p>Disciple Formation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups should meet online as much as possible. • Indoor meetings should be 10 or less and must follow Safe Sanctuaries policies and all CDC Guidelines for physical distancing. Only prepackaged food should be served or shared during these gatherings.
<p>Leadership Teams & Committees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groups should meet online as much as possible. • Indoor meetings should be 10 or less and must follow Safe Sanctuaries policies and all CDC Guidelines for physical distancing. Only prepackaged food should be served or shared during these gatherings.
<p>Funerals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use same guidelines as for WORSHIP • Discourage reception or greeting line. • No bulletins. • No congregational singing. • Online streaming of service for others to participate virtually is encouraged.
<p>Weddings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use same guidelines as for WORSHIP • Consider an outdoor reception or greeting of guests of no more than 50 persons. <u>Seated</u> indoor receptions should be limited to the lesser of 100 people or 30% of the stated fire capacity. (No standing indoor receptions or buffet lines.) • No bulletins. • No congregational singing. • Online streaming of service for others to participate virtually is encouraged.
<p>Advent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We encourage careful planning of Advent activities, emphasizing the safety of all. • Be creative and willing to think “outside the box” for ways that you can wait together patiently for the Advent of Christ this year, as well as reach out with Christian love and compassion to those who are lonely and in need. • Acknowledge the loss of our traditional in-person and table-based rituals. • Use this Adventus Guide as an individual, in small groups, or with your family. • Trust that our essential mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ can still be accomplished with hope, peace, joy, and love.

For further information on recommended safety measures for indoor worship, please refer to pages 4ff in the [Guidelines for In-Person Worship & Ministry during Covid-19](#) and to this [Toolkit](#) from the NCDHHS.