



***New York Conference
Church Re-Opening Guidelines
(as of 7/6/20)***

After your region has entered phase 4,
the following are general guidelines that are
recommended for our churches.

1. Clean/disinfect facilities before and after church services. See CDC guidelines for best practices. Close off sections of the facility not needed to make cleaning/disinfection easier.
2. The CDC and the State of New York require face masks, for ages 3 and up, in public spaces, when you cannot maintain six feet of space between one another.

Any time individuals come within 6 ft. of another person who does not reside in the same residence (i.e., roommate), acceptable face coverings must be worn.
https://www.governor.ny.gov/sites/governor.ny.gov/files/atoms/files/Higher_Education_Summary_Guidelines.pdf

Practice social distancing, keeping 6' between parishioners unless of the same household. Leave every other pew empty to facilitate this. Speakers/Teachers should maintain a minimum twelve-foot distance from parishioners.

3. Face masks or coverings are to be used when entering and exiting the building. Once seated it is up to the individual's discretion whether or not they want to wear the face mask while seated. If congregational singing is allowed a face covering should be used. Consider having a stock of facemasks for visitors.
4. Hand sanitizer is to be made available in different areas in the facility. It's a good practice to ask congregants to use hand sanitizer as they enter the facility.
5. Remind parishioners and noticeably post in the church:

*“Our church is open because what we share here is **‘Essential’** to the well-being of our members and community. However, be advised that there is no 100% way, even when following recommended guidelines, that we can guarantee a person's safety. If you do not feel well or have pre-existing conditions that make you especially vulnerable to Covid-19, we encourage you to stay home and join our worship online.”*



6. We encourage churches that, due to the restrictions regarding social distancing and face coverings, the worship time should follow a simple format.
 - Sabbath school and divine service should be no longer than two hours.
 - Use an 'offering box' to collect tithes and offerings. Encourage use of the 'Adventist Giving app'.
7. Church capacity should not exceed 33% of occupancy. (State mandated as of 6/7/20)
If groups are larger, create a 2nd service.
8. Refrain from handshaking or hugging.
9. Use prepackaged items for communion

**For members with pre-existing conditions or still concerned about the virus, encourage them to join the church via the internet.
Another option is to have services outdoors.**

Service Suggestions:

- **Church Service:** Whenever possible have worship services outdoors.
- **Bulletins:** No printed church bulletins, we recommend using a monitor or some other electronic form of informing members of the service outline.
- **Sabbath School:** We encourage the resumption of Sabbath School classes, with proper precautions.
- **Hymnal use:** Consider displaying songs on PowerPoint or Keynote, instead of using the hymnal.
- **Potluck:** We recommend cancelling for the time being and review in the early fall. (September -October) For churches choosing to have potlucks be aware that this can be a source of contamination due to the fact that many hands are involved in the process of cooking, handling and serving.

Options on how to handle this include:

- Eat your own prepared food - Having dedicated food servers
- Cancel potluck and review in 60 days - Eat the meal outdoors

(See www.cdc.gov and www.forward.ny.gov for more information)

New York Conference Admin Team



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