

Before We Gather

Application to reopen for in-person worship

(please fill out a separate form for each of your churches)

Pastor _____

Name of Church _____

Church Address _____

Number of regular attendees _____

Occupancy capacity of building _____

Introduction

In harmony with the phased approach for returning to in-person worship and for the safety of all of our members, the following steps are to be taken to prepare your facility(s) and your people. Please email your completed application to reopen@scc-sda.org

Be aware, your application will not be approved if you have not met all of the following requirements.

Preparing the Congregation

It is important to have a specific plan to educate church members, including church leaders and staff, as to the “new normal” of worship in the coronavirus era. It should be made very clear that returning to in-person worship *does not mean a return to business as usual*.

To ensure safety and preserve the health of our membership, including our most vulnerable members, some worship practices will be suspended until further notice, others will be modified, and new practices will be instituted that may be inconvenient, or uncomfortable at first.

Requirements

All worshippers are required to wear face coverings at all times while in the church building.

Congregational singing will be suspended until further notice.

Large Choir singing will be suspended until further notice.

Small group and praise team singing must follow guidelines already given

Church bulletins and hymn books will not be used

Preparing the Facility

1. Clean and sanitize facility(s) after each usage; please check off the cleaning and sanitizing your church has done/will continue to do:

-- deep cleaned all carpets and rugs

-- floors, pews/chairs, trash receptacles, etc.

-- Microphones cleaned and sanitized according to specific guidelines (see below)

-- all high-touch surfaces: countertops, doorknobs, light switches, remote controls, A/V board, etc.

-- all restrooms, as high risk areas, have been meticulously cleaned following the specific guidelines provided (see below)

-- children's ministry rooms and spaces

2. Equip and Organize

-- supply closets equipped for ongoing cleaning and disinfecting

-- disinfectants and other hazardous materials stored out of reach of children

-- plastic linings in all trash cans

-- soap (no bar soap), paper towels, and hot water in each rest room

-- signs posted to remind worshippers to wash hands and practice social distancing

-- all water fountains closed off (consider providing bottled water)

-- organized for one-way entrances and exits

-- sanctuary, classrooms, other meeting spaces prepared for social distancing

- pews marked and chairs arranged for 6-foot spacing
- floors marked for social distancing in waiting areas

-- unnecessary physical objects removed to reduce potential infections

- welcome tables, desks
- plants and flowerpots, etc.
- soft and porous materials, such as area rugs, seating

Safeguarding Members and Visitors

-- have person(s) assigned to greet worshippers and ensure they are properly outfitted with face coverings

-- supply of face coverings on hand to distribute as needed

-- hand sanitizer (60% alcohol) available in multiple areas: specify how many _____, and in what areas of the church _____

-- person(s) are assigned to take attendance in case it is needed for contact tracing (including phone numbers, other contact information)

-- person(s) assigned to monitor building and parking lot to ensure social distancing

-- person(s) assigned to monitor rest rooms for social distancing and proper hand washing

-- prepared to collect offerings without passing collection plates (consider placing collection boxes in multiple areas)

-- committed to limiting worship attendance to ensure social distancing (some churches may need to have more than one service; please indicate number of services planned)

-- committed to ensuring that musicians and worship leaders are practicing social distancing

specify how social distancing will be accomplished by musicians

-- organized for orderly dismissal from worship to ensure social distancing

-- committed to continuing on-line service or other alternative worship options

How Duties are Assigned

Please provide the names of the persons assigned to the following duties.

Use the back of this page or add pages if necessary:

- Cleaning and sanitizing

Names

- Equipping and Organizing

Names

- Safeguarding Members and Visitors

Names

- Keeping Church Informed

[new knowledge and information about the coronavirus pandemic]

Names

Important Additional Requirements and Notes

1. Members who are showing any flu symptoms should stay at home

2. Any members who have travelled internationally, been on a cruise ship, or been in a domestic hotspot in the last 14-days should stay at home at least 14 days, post event, before attending worship

3. Staff, officers on duty, and worship leaders should be required to sign a mandatory checklist before worship begins. Direct anyone who cannot affirm every item below to leave immediately and seek medical care

I have not been in close contact with anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19

I have not had any of the following symptoms for the last 48-hours

- fever, coughing, shortness of breath, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, vomiting, or diarrhea

I have had a temperature check today (not to exceed 100.4 degrees)

4. If it is discovered that a past worshipper has tested positive for COVID-19, all attendees should be notified and encouraged to be tested. Worship services should be suspended immediately, and further guidance sought from the conference office. Suggestions for resuming worship may include:

- having all worshippers tested who were present at the service
- performing additional cleaning of your facility(s)
- revisiting your safety protocols

5. Use EPA-approved items for cleaning and sanitizing

<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>