

# Phase One: Reopening Places of Worship

*Following these guidelines for faith-based organizations will help protect your community:*

## Avoid Spreading Germs

### **Communicate the importance of personal hygiene.**

Washing hands, not touching your face, and coughing or sneezing into a tissue or shirt sleeve are critically important. Provide tissues, no-touch trash cans, soap and water, and hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.



**Encourage congregants** to self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms and stay home if they have symptoms.

**Encourage everyone** to wear a face covering.

**Encourage everyone** to wash their hands as they enter.



### **Singing, chanting, call and response, and choirs,**

are activities that are more likely to distribute viral droplets into the air and transmit the virus to others. It is highly recommended that if you participate in these activities that all singers, leaders and congregants wear a mask.

**Encourage congregants** to use their own personal Bible from home, if necessary.

**Do not allow** people to place personal items in shared spaces, such as coat rooms.

### **Clean & disinfect frequently.**

Routinely clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces such as handrails, door handles, pews, chair arms, bathrooms and other shared spaces. Use an [EPA-registered disinfectant](#) or a bleach solution of 4 teaspoons bleach to one quart water.



**Increase ventilation** of outside air.

**In place of hymnals and Bibles,** consider using paper handouts containing portions of the liturgy, which can be taken home or disposed of after services.

**Remove items** that are commonly shared, such as bulletins, newsletters and hymnals.

Find more info at: [CDC Interim Guidance for Administrators and Leaders of Community and Faith-based Organizations](#) and [OSHA Guidance for Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)



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# Maintain Physical Distancing

## Limit the people

**attending a service** to maintain a 6 foot distance, or more, between family groups. You may need to block off one or two empty rows between groups.



**Modify communion practices** so that people maintain physical distance in line, and avoid receiving communion from a common tray or cup.

**Discourage sharing of food** or beverages after services.

**Modify the collection of offerings** by using a stationary box, mail, or other electronic methods instead of passing a tray or basket.

**Cancel non-essential gatherings**, such as fellowship gatherings, Sunday school and childcare during services.

**Add services** to help maintain physical distance while accommodating worshippers.

**Protect vulnerable members** by encouraging people over 65 or with chronic health concerns to stay home.

**Continue to provide live streaming services**, or other opportunities to worship from home.

**Discourage handshakes**, hugs, holding hands, or other practices that require close contact with others.



## Communicate with Staff & Congregants

**Assign a key person** to manage COVID-19 issues within your organization.

**Require employees to stay home if they are sick.** Leave policies should be flexible and non-punitive. They should also account for employees who must stay home with their children or sick family members.

**Post signs** in common areas to remind people of the steps you are taking to help keep them safe.

**Remind everyone** that actions we take today will protect us in the future.