

## **Church Phased Reopen Policy**

**NSUMC**

**Updated: 06.10.20**

*The following guidelines will be in place until stated otherwise by church leadership. We believe these policies will continually evolve based on the virus and public policy advice. We will be monitoring this closely and update these policies on a regular basis and keep you posted as revisions occur.*

***If you are coughing, sneezing, or sick, please stay home!***

### **SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES (SDG)**

Until Phase 5 is reached, the following guidelines need to be followed at all in-person church functions:

- No handshaking or hugging of any kind.
- At a minimum, 6-feet is maintained between all persons at all times unless individuals live in the same household.
- Everyone wears face-masks at all times, except for speakers and musicians who will be positioned at an increased distance away from the congregation for additional safety.
- If you are over 65 years-old and/or in a high-risk category, use your best judgement of how much to participate in each phase.

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*Based on the policies/advice of government officials and public health experts, it is possible that the church will need to move back-and-forth between the following guidelines until a breakthrough is achieved related to COVID-19.*

### **PHASES ONE THROUGH THREE**

- ZOOM worship only.
- All small groups and committees meet via ZOOM.
- Church office is closed, except for one person handling weekly essential functions.
- Graveside-only funerals. No weddings.
- Clergy offer telephone-only pastoral care.
- Church building is not available to space sharing organizations.

### **PHASE FOUR** - Gatherings of 50 or fewer are permitted.

- Move to outdoor worship while following the below guidelines:
  - Everyone works together to maintain SDG, and politely mentions to others who aren't following the guidelines the necessity of doing so.
  - A live ZOOM option will still exist for those who wish to worship with us remotely. In addition, the ZOOM broadcast will be recorded and distributed by early afternoon.

- In the event of heavy rain or other inclement weather, move to indoor worship. Tents will be setup outside if light rain is predicted. The decision of whether to meet outside or inside will be made by Saturday at 4 PM and the church notified via email.
- No nursery care is offered; families worship together.
- Children's Sunday School will be offered while following SDG.
- No hospitality is offered.
- Music is limited to instrumentalists and mic'd soloists/duets.
- Bulletins and single-serve communion cups will be offered by ushers wearing gloves.
- People may socialize after worship while still outside and continuing to follow SDG.
- Small group and committee meetings continue to meet via ZOOM or may consider an outdoor meeting if following social distancing guidelines.
- Church office remains closed to the general public. If a church member has business at the church that needs to be conducted in-person, Marjorie Kemp should be contacted and an appointment scheduled (847-835-1227 or [mkemp@northshoreumc.com](mailto:mkemp@northshoreumc.com)).
- Clergy offer telephone and in-person pastoral care in an outdoor environment. No hospital or rehabilitation facility visits.
- Weddings and funerals can be conducted outside as long as fewer than 50 people.
- Church building remains unavailable for space sharing organizations.

**PHASE 4.5** - Gatherings of 50 or fewer are permitted and cases are continuing decline in our area, but we haven't quite reached Phase Five.

- Move to indoor worship while following the below guidelines:
  - Everyone works together to maintain SDG, and politely mentions to others who aren't following the guidelines the necessity of doing so.
  - A live ZOOM option will still exist for those who wish to worship with us remotely. In addition, the ZOOM broadcast will be recorded and distributed by early afternoon.
  - Fans are turned on high and windows are opened.
  - Families sit 2 pews a part. One family per pew.
  - No nursery care is offered; families worship together.
  - Children's Sunday School will be offered while following SDG.
  - Music is limited to instrumentalists and mic'd soloists/duets.
  - Bulletins and single-serve communion cups will be offered by ushers wearing gloves.
  - Ushers direct people to enter and leave sanctuary one family at a time.
  - No hospitality is offered.
  - The congregation is asked to socialize outside, even if inclement weather is occurring.
  - Sanctuary and bathrooms are cleaned both before and immediately after worship by janitorial staff.
- Church office is open to the public within the usual operating hours of 9-noon, M-F.
- Wedding and funerals can be offered in the sanctuary as long as 50 persons or fewer.
- Church committees are encouraged to continue holding meetings via ZOOM when possible.
- Clergy still cannot visit people in hospitals or rehabilitation centers; however, pastoral care can be offered at the church or via phone.

- Space sharing organizations can use the building as long as groups are at or below 50. Janitorial staff will need to clean the space used both before and after the event.

**PHASE FIVE** - All operations return to normal once the following two criteria are met: a vaccine is discovered and a treatment for those who become ill is readily available.

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#### **APPENDIX: CHURCH SAFETY PROCEDURES**

- All bathrooms should be limited to single-occupant use. When a two-person bathroom is occupied, the occupant should lock the door.
- Money-counters must wash hands thoroughly after handling money and should never touch their faces while counting.
- Staff may work in their offices. Meetings will occur while following SDG guidelines. When outside of individual offices, staff members must wear masks while inside the building.