

# Metropolitan SDA Church In-person Services Re-opening Plan

*Approved, June 8, 2020*

## HYGIENE & SAFETY:

1. **Vulnerable Attendees:** We will encourage those among us that are more vulnerable to please stay home for now. This would include but not be limited to, those above the age of 65, those with underlying medical conditions, those with co-morbidities (other on-going illnesses), those who have compromised immune systems, and those who have been sick within the last 14 days.
2. **High Contact Surfaces:** We will clean and disinfect between worship services or other selected events and high-contact areas regularly (doorknobs, tables, chairs, light switches, bathrooms, pews, microphones, etc.) and assure members and guests that proper steps are being taken for their health and safety.
3. **Hand Sanitizer:** We will place hand sanitizer in high-contact locations (i.e., bathroom, entry, exit). Everyone will be asked to use hand sanitizer upon entering the building.
4. **Material Distribution:** We will avoid the distribution of sermon or Sabbath School handouts and materials. Anything that needs distributing will be done so on tables near the front and rear entrances.
5. **Fellowship Meals:** We will suspend fellowship meals and potlucks for the time being. The deaconesses are working on plans for how to safely resume fellowship meals. All future meals are likely to be served instead of self-serve.
6. **Mother's Room:** We will remove everything nonessential from the room to limit surfaces for potential cross-contamination. We will conduct a thorough cleaning and sanitization in-between uses.
7. **Airflow:** We will prop open church doors to enhance air circulation and to minimize touching doors and doorknobs. As for sanctuary doors, we will ask greeting attendants to open the doors for folks as they enter during services.
8. **Face Coverings:** We will ask all attendees to wear a face covering unless they are leading out in Sabbath School or the worship service. Those with medical inability to wear a mask will not be forced to do so, but others who are able to wear a covering and refuse to do so will kindly be asked to attend at a later date. The church will have a limited number of face coverings on hand for those who do not have them, but they are intended as a back-up measure and not a primary source.
9. **Signage & Posters:** We will place appropriate signage informing staff, members, and guests not to enter if to the best of their knowledge, information and belief that during the last 14 days, neither they nor any members of their household have been exposed to, diagnosed with or quarantined as a result of Covid-19 or have experienced a fever, cough, shortness of breath or other cold or flu-like symptoms. We will also provide signage reminding attendees of best hygiene practices based on CDC guidelines.
10. **Greeting One Another:** We will ask all attendees to please refrain from shaking of hands and hugging until the curve flattens and it is safe to do so.
11. **Water Fountains:** Cups and trash receptacles will be made available at the water fountains and signs will ask people to not drink directly from the fountains.

## SABBATH SCHOOL:

1. **Adult Sabbath School Classes:** For the first two weeks of services, we will only offer an adult Sabbath School class in the sanctuary utilizing the current format of a two-person dialogue. This is **Phase 1**. If things seem to be safe in the following weeks, we will move to re-open the Fellowship Hall class and Christian Connections, but we feel that Classroom 6 is too small to allow for adequate social distancing and will remain closed for **Phase 2**. As things continue to improve, we will also re-open Classroom 6 as well for the final **Phase 3**. Regarding the Sanctuary class, discussions are under way to see how best to live stream Sabbath School on an on-going basis as the usual and former format is not conducive to streaming.
2. **Children's Sabbath School Classes:** For the first two weeks (**Phase 1**), there will be no children's classes as we see how well the church family responds to the re-opening structure. There is great concern that children would not respect the need for safety measures and could inadvertently become spread agents. After the initial two weeks,

our Sabbath School superintendent will work with the teachers of each class to begin having classes for the children with adequate social distancing. During this **Phase 2** rollout, the Cradle Roll class and the Kindergarten class may need to attempt to meet outdoors as weather permits. **Phase 3** will see all classes reopen with regular formats but with the added measures of making sure things are regularly disinfected and kept clean.

3. **Materials:** All Sabbath school materials will be distributed in a way that minimizes touches.

#### **WORSHIP SERVICE:**

1. **Seating:** We will determine and provide ample areas for seating that enables attendees, family units, or other groupings within the sanctuary to maintain approximate six-foot distancing. Seating capacity will be determined by the number of attendees that can be seated in the church, while maintaining approximate six-foot distancing for all seated attendees and family units. We will have every other pew corded off and unavailable for seating and will have overflow seating ready in the fellowship hall and youth chapel.
2. **Bulletins:** We will place bulletins on tables for attendees to obtain in order to minimize physical contact and exposure. We highly encourage the use of the online bulletin.
3. **A/V Equipment:** We will avoid passing or sharing microphones on the stage and regularly disinfect microphones, pianos, sound equipment, devices, etc.
4. **Tithes & Offerings:** We will provide offering boxes for tithes and offerings and the Lamb's offering on the table with the bulletins instead of passing offering plates.
5. **Dismissal:** We will dismiss church services in a manner that supports social distancing. We will not shake hands with the pastor or invited speakers at the end of the service. We will also ask attendees to not gather and visit in the church foyer. Everyone will be asked to please make their way outside and visit there.
6. **Streaming:** As before all of this began, we will continue to provide online services for members at home and guests who may be watching.
7. **Children's Story:** As we provide a children's story during the worship service, we will not ask the kids to gather offering or come to the front for phase 1 of our plan.
8. **Singing & Special Music:** We will suspend having song services for the time being until we see the curve flatten a bit more and we will only have instrumental or pre-recorded special music for the first two weeks of services.
9. **Communion Services:** During **Phase 1** will not have foot washing services. We will only partake of the emblems that will come in prepacked, sealed containers that each attendee will open for themselves. During **Phase 2** we will evaluate things and may begin adding back foot washing services, and **Phase 3** will see us return to normal communion services, but prepacked communion emblems will be made available for those who prefer it.
10. **Phased Rollout:** As we reach the above-mentioned **Phase 3** of Sabbath School, we will also return to normal seating and services for the worship time. As we evaluate things moving forward, we may add singing back during **Phase 2**.