

## **Northern California Conference Church Reopening Guidance**

Our aim is to glorify God by being good stewards of our health, caring for our neighbors, and showing appropriate respect to state and local authorities. To those ends, our goal is to have no Covid-19 outbreak associated with a Northern California Conference church. We ask that you partner with us as we seek the protection of our churches and communities. We also recognize that reopening churches is a process with which none of us has experience, and as we gather more information guidelines may change accordingly.

The Northern California Conference expects that all churches, schools, and ministries should comply with the guidance of state and local authorities in responding to the COVID-19 virus. Whenever there is difference between the state and local guidance, we expect that the church will follow whichever is stricter. California has released its guidance for Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies. That document is linked below. Please study and follow the guidance that is contained in that document. Note that this is for 21 days and will be reviewed after that.

It is expected that if you have groups who use your facility, they will not begin using it again until you are using your facility. They will be expected to follow the same guidelines that you are following.

### **Written Plan**

We expect each church will develop a written plan which can be submitted to your church's NCC representative (see attached list). Do not reopen until you have received approval. Some counties may also require a written plan before opening. Check with your local county for their requirements. Please include the answers to the following questions in your plan:

- Who is your point person?
- What is your Pre-COVID occupancy limit?
- What is your COVID recovery occupancy limit? (25% or 100 whichever is less)
- Explanation of a social distancing plan
- Explanation of cleaning/sanitizing plan

### **Reopening will likely need to be a staged approach**

- It may start with worship only depending upon the ability to social distance in Sabbath School Rooms, etc.
- It will likely start simplified. No choirs or close together song leading to begin with, for example.
- No fellowship meals
- Prayer meeting, small group meetings, even Sabbath School may remain virtual for a time.
- Under all circumstances, make certain you are following the state and local guidelines.

### **Point People and Their Roles**

- Church Pastor
  - Pastor is responsible to the Conference for administering the reopening.
  - Pastor is to make sure that the church has a point person or a Church Safety Officer to lead during this time and that guidelines are being followed by those appointed to carry out the reopening.

- Point person or Church Safety Officer is responsible for the safety of the church and making sure that the various people are faithfully carrying out their responsibilities
- Head Deacon/Head Deaconess
  - Should arrange to have an offering collection that offers social distance and preventing multiple people touching the offering collection device.
  - Assist the pastor and point person or safety officer to set-up and maintain social distancing and other measures
- Parish Nurse (if you have one) can be a big asset during this time during planning and carrying out the plans
- Sabbath School teachers should make sure their ministry has social distance and that their area is cleaned after Sabbath School
- Head Greeter should make sure that there is someone to open doors to church—avoid having multiple people opening the door
- The above individuals may wish to function as a team to walk the building to do a risk assessment and develop a plan to address the needs.

### **Items to be considered**

- How to educate people on how to self-screen; sick people should not come to the church. There is a link below for self-screening.
- Sanitation of touch surfaces such as doorknobs, offering plates, bathroom fixtures, etc.
- Drinking fountains should be closed off.
- Kitchens are closed for now.
- Who might need mask and/or gloves to protect others (greeters, ushers, etc.)?
- Room capacities and social distancing including the bathrooms.
- Signage to remind of social distancing directions, instructions regarding use of items like doors, etc.

### **Services themselves**

- Plan to keep virtual options available. People may not be comfortable attending or maybe in vulnerable groups who should not attend.
- If you still have people struggling with technology, consider building a team of tech support people of your young adults or others who can assist.
- You may need multiple services to accommodate social distancing. That would require a plan as to who will attend which service. Pay attention to the limit of 25% or 100 whichever is less.
- Check with your local authorities to see if masks are required and provide them if necessary.
- Remember to social distance on the stage or platform.
- You may consider an offering drop box.
- Please see the State of California Guidance referenced below.

### **Resources, please review these documents carefully:**

- State Guidelines: [COVID-19 Website](#)
- Self-Screening: [CDC Document](#)
- Adventist Risk Management: [Church Reopening](#)
- Signage: [Health and Wellness Posters](#)

# Safety Standards Checklist

## Pre-Opening Protocols

- Read Northern California Conference Guidelines and follow them
- Check with the state and local authorities and comply with all requirements
- Submit re-opening plan to your NCC representative and receive approval before opening

## Social Distancing: Ensure >6 Feet Between Individuals

- Limit occupancy to 25 percent of the building's maximum permitted occupancy level as documented in its occupancy permit or 100 whichever is less. The occupant count shall include all persons inside the place of worship, including attendees, volunteers, and staff.
- Monitor the number of attendees entering the place of worship to ensure compliance with the maximum occupancy level.
- Attendees who are not part of the same immediate household must be seated at least 6 feet apart. Members of the same immediate household are permitted to sit together and less than 6 feet apart.
- If there is fixed seating, rows should be blocked off and kept empty to allow for sufficient distancing between rows.
- If feasible, arrange online sign-up for services in advance in order to monitor and limit the number of attendees.
- Place tape or other visual distancing markings on seating to delineate 6-foot separations and to post signage indicating the maximum number of persons permitted per row.
- Promote ventilation for enclosed spaces where possible. For example, consider opening windows and doors to allow airflow
- Take steps to encourage orderly entering and exiting of services in a manner that encourages social distancing

## Hygiene Protocols: Apply robust hygiene protocols

- Educate members in advance as much as possible on self-screening (CDC Guidelines)
- Close off Kitchen areas and drinking fountains
- Make masks and/or gloves available as needed
- Ensure that attendees have access to handwashing facilities, including soap and running water. Make alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol available, if possible.

**Operations: Include safety procedures in the operations**

- No communal gathering pre or post service (e.g., meet & greet times).
- Modify the means to collect the offerings to eliminate shared offering plates and baskets and to minimize contact. Consider setting up a no-touch method to collect contributions and encourage contributions through mail or electronic means.
- Modify communal rituals, like taking communion, so as to limit contact with others. If you are having communion distribute prepackaged communion supplies.

**Cleaning & Disinfecting: Incorporate robust hygiene protocols**

- The building shall be cleaned and disinfected between each service, including disinfection of heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, bathrooms, microphones, shared instruments).
- If you learn that an individual with COVID-19 attended a service or otherwise entered the place of worship, it shall conduct a deep cleaning and disinfecting consistent with the Centers for Disease Control guidance

## NCC Pastor Oversight List

Marc Woodson

Area of Focus: President/CEO

1. Keith Jacobson—Carmichael
2. \*Marvin Wray—Chico
3. Doug Batchelor—Granite Bay
4. Bob Mason—Lodi English Oaks
5. Tracy Baerg—Lodi Fairmont
6. Nate Furness—Napa Community
7. Steve Hamilton—Paradise
8. Gale Hendrick--Placerville
9. Mitch Williams—Pleasant Hill
10. \*Ernie Furness—Pacific Union College Church
11. Don Smith—Santa Rosa
12. Chris Buttery—Sacramento Central

Jose Marin

Area of Focus: Executive Secretary

1. Murray Miller—Anderson/Shasta Lakes
2. Steven Brownell—Hayfork/Weaverville/Whitmore/Mount Shasta
3. \*Dave Osborne—Palo Cedro
4. Robert Fisher—Redding
5. Mel Baga—Auburn
6. Kevin Doe—Colfax/Meadow Vista
7. Timothy Jo Judson—Foresthil/Georgetown/Shingle Springs
8. Walt Groff—Gracepoint
9. Jeff Richards—Grass Valley
10. \*Jim Wood—Brownsville/Dobbins/Gridley
11. Larre Kostenko—Golden Feather/Oroville

Ed Fargusson;

Area of Focus: Assistant to the President

1. Jon Terry—Antelope Hills/Rio Linda
2. Jon Cicle—Orangevale
3. \*Robert Ross—Rancho Cordova/Sacramento Southgate
4. Roman Tsyganiuk—Sacramento Slavic/Sacramento Ukrainian

5. Vince Saunders—Woodside
6. Sasa Andelkovic—Sacramento Yugoslavian/West Sacramento
7. Dan Garza—Woodland/Vacaville
8. Mason Philpot—Crescent City
9. Roger Williams—Eureka/Orleans
10. Dan Freedman—Fortuna/Miranda
11. \*Loretta Belton—El Sobrante Appian Way
12. Zach Reiber—Yuba City

Jim Lorenz

Area of Focus: Ministerial Director

1. Gabriel Gutierrez—Antioch
2. Ron Pickell—Life Adventist Church of Berkeley
3. Sean Kim—Fremont/Livermore
4. Melvyn Warfied—Grand Advent
5. Chuck Jensen—Hayward
6. Bruce Blum—Angels Camp/Manteca/Escalon
7. Jim Witcombe—Galt
8. Mike Kontes—Stockton Central
9. Tyler Kraft—Tracy
10. Rob Kearby—Magalia Upper Ridge
11. Matt McMearty—Angwin Village/Calistoga

Willie Johnson

Area of Focus: African American Ministries, Prison Ministries, Urban Ministries, Men's Ministries

1. All Pastors at African American Churches
2. Jovan Illiev—Sebastopol/SDA Abundant Life
3. David Resendes—Roseville
4. Gesford Thomas—Lincoln Amazing Grace/Olivehurst/Penn Valley

James Lim

Area of Focus: Asian Pacific Ministries, Community Services, Health Ministries

1. All Pastors at Asian Pacific Churches
2. Eleazar Famorcan—All Nations/American Canyon Fil-Am
3. Daniel Yim—Lockeford/San Andreas/Sutter Hill
4. Ulisese Mataafa—Citrus Heights/Sacramento Tongan

Roman Leal

Area of Focus: Hispanic Ministries, Evangelism

1. All Pastors at Hispanic Churches
2. Avi Mendoza—Camino/Camino Spanish

Eddie Heinrich

Area of Focus: Youth Ministries, Pathfinders, Young Adults

1. Ted Calkins—Clearlake/Middletown
2. Jimmy Painter—Cloverdale/Healdsburg
3. Caleb Henry—Covelo/Fort Bragg/Willits
4. Robert Henry—Lakeport/Upper Lake
5. Matt Matzela—Novato/Sonoma
6. Eric Williams—Ukiah

John Rasmussen

Area of Focus: Treasurer/CFO

1. John Mangan—Rio Lindo Adventist Academy Church
2. Josie Asencio—The Haven
3. Christ Estay—Fairfield Community
4. Robert Kurtz—St. Helena
5. Jonathan Henderson—Vallejo Central
6. George Hilton—Yountville

\*Indicates an Interim Pastor