

# RE-ENTERING WELL TIP SHEETS

A COMPANION TO THE BWC GUIDELINES FOR RE-ENTERING WELL

---



---

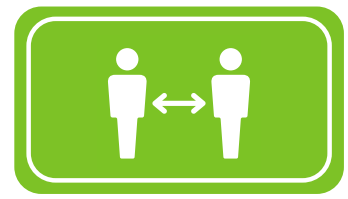
VISIT **BWCUMC.ORG/RE-ENTRY** FOR MORE GUIDANCE ON  
DOING MINISTRY SAFELY DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

SOCIAL DISTANCING AT CHURCH	3
ENFORCING NECESSARY HEALTH POLICIES	5
TRACKING ATTENDANCE	7
GREETERS, USHERS, AND COMMUNION STEWARDS	8
WORSHIPPING OUTDOORS	10
MUSICIANS	11
CELEBRATING COMMUNION	13
PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE	14
OFFERING AND COLLECTIONS	16
COFFEE HOUR AND FELLOWSHIP TIME	18
NURSERY AND SUNDAY SCHOOL	20

# SOCIAL DISTANCING AT CHURCH TIP SHEET



*People must maintain six feet of social distancing, not only once inside, but also from the time they leave their cars, enter the worship space, and exit the space to return to their vehicles.”*  
(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 4)

## Why?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stresses that the primary rule for interrupting the spread of the coronavirus is to consistently practice social distancing of six feet or more between people at all times. The primary tasks of the Re-entering Well Task Force are preparing the congregation for this significant change in behavior at church and ensuring that measures are in place to monitor and reinforce the practice of social distancing.

## When?

Throughout Phases 1, 2, and 3, social distancing must be observed anytime people enter a church facility.

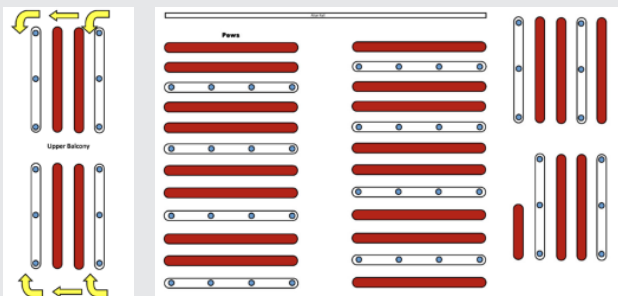
## Implementation Checklist

- ☐ Church facilities should be set up to ensure people can easily maintain social distancing from the time they enter church property until they leave.
- ☐ Parking lots should be modified so that only every other or every third parking space is available. This may be accomplished by strategically blocking the spaces with cones or by marking closed spaces with chalk or tape.
- ☐ Post clearly visible signs outside your church doors asking people to continue practicing social distancing both inside and outside the church.
- ☐ Consider using every other or every third pew for family seating.
  - ☐ Rope or tape Tape or rope-off pews as necessary. See the model, below.
- ☐ At the completion of worship each Sunday, instruct congregants to exit by rows instead of all at once. Maintain six-feet of social distancing and have ushers on-hand to ensure that there is no “bottle-necking” at any exit.
- ☐ Limit church bathroom use to the number of people who can simultaneously be in the space while maintaining social distancing.
  - ☐ Make sure signs are clearly visible outside the bathrooms to encourage this practice.
  - ☐ Mark off six-foot distances on the floor outside the bathrooms where people may line up.
  - ☐ Larger bathrooms may accommodate more than one person.
    - ☐ Record the number of urinals/stalls and sinks in each bathroom and calculate how many people can simultaneously use the bathroom while maintaining social distancing. Post that information on the bathroom door.
  - ☐ Create bathroom spacing by “closing” every other urinal or stall and sink by taping stall doors and placing “closed” signs on sinks or urinals.

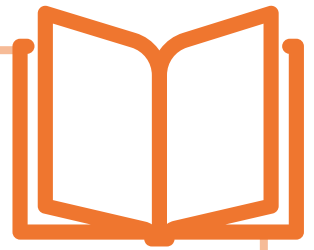
Here is a schematic Wesley UMC in Morgantown created to see how many could safely gather in their 350 seat sanctuary. They found that they can only seat 60 people at a time with 6 feet of social distancing requirements.

Pews are 19' long  
Balcony Pews are 15' long  
Can only sit in every 3rd pew to maintain 6 foot distancing  
~36 people-main sanctuary  
~12 people-upper and lower balconies  
~60 individuals max  
Families together reduce seating in pews from 4 to 3 and 3 to 2 groupings respectively

Ushers direct people to seating and direct people to leave.  
One way in and out.



## Additional Resources



- Interim Guidance for Administrators and Leaders of Community- and Faith-Based Organizations to Plan, Prepare, and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19):

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html)

# ENFORCING NECESSARY HEALTH POLICIES TIP SHEET



*Leaders, identified and equipped by the task force, must take responsibility for enforcing necessary policies to create a safe space for people who come into our church buildings to worship.”*  
(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 4)

## Why?

While it may sound a bit dramatic, the cost of not observing social distancing and other precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 may literally be life or death. In recent weeks, news reports have circulated of churches ignoring social distancing protocols resulting in numerous people getting sick; some of them died. Some countries have recorded a high percentage of cases that can be traced back to faith community gatherings.

It is essential to understand why it is important for participants to obey the following wellbeing protocols:

- Stay home if you or someone you are in contact with feels sick or has a temperature (to prevent the spread of the virus);
- Maintain six feet apart from others not in your immediate family (to prevent the airborne spread of the virus among those who are symptom free);
- Wear a facemask at all times when away from home (to protect others);
- Do not touch your face (to prevent the virus from entering your body); and
- Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after using the toilet, and use hand-sanitizer to clean hands after exiting using the restroom or after touching other common surfaces (to kill the virus).

## When?

Planning should begin now so that once in-person gatherings are deemed safe, your church is prepared.

## Who?

Pastors and church leaders should model protocols at all times and speak often about the guidelines to help positively influence behaviors of participants. They should also help the entire gathering understand that we are our sibling's keeper and demonstrate this by helping one another follow all health guidelines.

The Re-Entering Well Task Force should identify and train a team of people, "wellbeing guides," who will ensure that social distancing and other prevention measures are being observed during gatherings. Please note that pastors will not be able to focus on this in addition to their other responsibilities on Sunday mornings and gatherings where they are responsible for teaching or leading.

Ushers and greeters will need to be trained and paired with wellbeing guides who are able to manage potential confrontations with people who do not adhere to the health safety guidelines.

## Implementation Checklist

- ☐ Select the right persons for this task. The wellbeing guides need to be:
  - ☐ Willing to be in position during the gathering to ensure adherence to the policy outside and inside of the building;
  - ☐ A non-anxious presence;
  - ☐ Calm and reassuring when addressing participants, aware that some people may have anxieties about being in public settings at this time. These anxieties may present themselves in unexpected ways; and
  - ☐ Reliable and willing to answer questions people might have.

## Implementation Checklist (Cont.)

- ☐ Develop a training session to:
  - ☐ Review this Tip Sheet
  - ☐ Create clear talking points that enforce the fact that we are in this together as we seek to create a safe space for all. Role playing and scenario planning should be a significant part of the training. For example:
    - ☐ If someone is leaving their car or standing outside the church without a facemask say something like: "May I get you a mask? One of the ways we show our love and care for one another is requiring everyone to wear one."
    - ☐ If someone refuses to wear a mask one might say: "I understand that masks are uncomfortable but they are required for everyone's safety. If you are uncomfortable wearing a mask, please join us virtually. Thanks for understanding."
    - ☐ If someone is getting closer than six feet: "One of the most difficult things for me is to remember not to get too close to people. We put the tape on the ground floors and pews and in the seats as a visual reminder. Thanks for helping us keep that protocol in place."
    - ☐ Talk with your team about other possible scenarios and create scripts. Be sure to explore worst case scenarios.
  - ☐ Communicate strategic locations for wellbeing guides to be stationed during gatherings and schedule guides in pairs for mutual support.
- ☐ Consider developing a mechanism whereby wellbeing guides can call for backup if overseeing a large property or if the congregation is likely to be resistant.

Wellbeing guides will play a key leadership role in helping a church do re-entry well. They will also provide leadership that ensures that blame and stigma related to the diagnosis of COVID-19 are avoided within the congregation. Knowing and sharing honest and factual information will enhance success in this role.

## Additional Resources

- "Standing Too Close. Not Covering Coughs. If Someone Is Violating Social Distancing Rules, What Do You Do?"

<https://time.com/5819816/coronavirus-social-distancing/>



# TRACKING ATTENDANCE TIP SHEET



*Develop a method to track attendance at in-person worship and other gatherings. This is especially important in case someone develops COVID-19 and contact tracing is required.”  
(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 4)*

## Why?

Church leaders must keep track of every person attending in-person worship or other meetings so that if anyone at a gathering later tests positive for COVID-19, those who were present may be notified of a potential exposure. It is also a good tool for practice for maintaining contact staying in better relationship with people so you can follow-up with people when you haven't seen them in several consecutive weeks.

## When?

Planning and recruitment for attendance tracking will be an essential task in Phase 1 so that re-entering the building for in-person gatherings is possible in Phases 2 or 3. Additional volunteers to assist with this task may also be recruited during Phase 1. *The church's task force will follow local and state directives to determine when the threat of the virus has sufficiently passed and attendance monitoring is no longer required.*

## Implementation Checklist

- ☐ Assess whether or not your congregation can use an app for check-in. If everyone who attends your church brings a cell phone with them, this approach is possible. If not, different methodology is required. Regardless of approach it needs to be tailored to your context and uphold all protocols.
- ☐ It is essential that the tools (whether they be pen and paper, cell phones, or electronic tablets) be handled by only one person or be sanitized between uses by someone with gloves on.
- ☐ Research the best methods available (whether electronic or by-hand) to record attendance and contact information when people begin to gather in Phases 2 and/or 3. Here are some examples:
  - ☐ Prepare in advance an alphabetized list of all church members and their contact information to streamline the process for checking off names. Be sure the date of the gathering is also captured.
  - ☐ Establish a welcome station for visitors with clear signage that enables up to two people to complete information cards while maintaining six feet of distance between them. The attendance monitor will guide the process. Completed information cards are placed in a designated container. After each guest leaves the station the greeter wipes down the tablet, table pen, and any other touched surfaces.
  - ☐ If you incorporate a RSVP process for everyone planning to attend a gathering, those who RSVP will constitute the master list for recording actual attendance.
  - ☐ Train attendance monitors to capture the names, phone numbers and/or email addresses of attendees.
    - ☐ Attendance monitors will agree to be present before doors open for the gathering.
    - ☐ Attendance monitors will be stationed near the entrance(s). It is essential to maintain social distancing.
    - ☐ Monitors should be instructed in the “why” of tracking attendance and be able to assure people that the information is being gathered as a precaution to ensure the safety and well-being of all who are gathered. Information It will not be used for any other purpose and will not be shared with anyone other than health officials as needed. Task force members need to ensure that this understanding is clear and is consistently communicated. maintained.
  - ☐ While the risk of spreading the virus is reduced in outdoor worship settings, attendance recording is still encouraged. Attendance information should be kept in the church office in a place known to the pastor and task force members.
  - ☐ Pens, tablets, clipboards, and other items should be wiped down after every use.

# GREETERS, USHERS, AND COMMUNION STEWARDS TIP SHEET



*The risk for greeters, ushers, and Communion stewards is high as most of their tasks do not allow for appropriate social distancing involve and/or handling items that multiple people touch and do not allow for required social distancing.”  
(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 4)*

## Why?

As churches take steps to ensure people's safety and wellbeing, managing expectations will be a vital part of reopening buildings and gathering well. Greeters, ushers and Communion stewards play an essential role in setting expectations and providing warm hospitality in the midst of this anxious time.

## When?

Developing plans and training greeters, ushers, and Communion stewards will be an integral part of Phase 1 as congregations prepare to meet in-person in Phases 2 or 3. In addition to training people and imagining what will be required and training people, Phase 1 and the early parts of Phase 2 provide an opportunity to assess the building and create clear, informative signage for the safe return of people. to the church building.

## Implementation Checklist

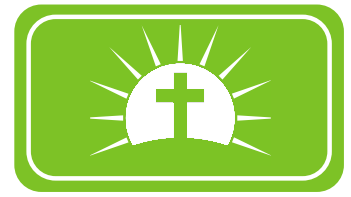
- ☐ Establish set routes for entering and exiting the building and sanctuary. If possible, entrances and exits should be one-way only.
- ☐ Clearly mark or tape-off pews that are closed for social distancing.
- ☐ Post clearly visible signs to inform parishioners of the new traffic flow. Orderly ways of entering and exiting the sanctuary and pews will increase safety and assist people in comfortably finding their place within the worship space.
- ☐ Recruit and train greeters, ushers, and Communion stewards who are not vulnerable to the virus. Training to include:
  - ☐ An understanding of how this coronavirus COVID-19 is transmitted and why it is important for everyone to adopt the following wellbeing protocols:
    - ☐ Stay home if you or someone you are in contact with feels sick or has a temperature (to prevent the spread of the virus);
    - ☐ Maintain six feet apart from others not in your immediate family (to prevent the airborne spread of the virus among those who are symptom free);
    - ☐ Wear a facemask at all times when away from home (to protect others);
    - ☐ Do not touch your face, mouth, or eyes (to prevent the virus from entering your body); and
    - ☐ Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after using the toilet and use hand-sanitizer to clean hands after exiting the restroom or after touching other common surfaces (to kill the virus).
  - ☐ Teach greeters, ushers, and Communion stewards how to wear masks properly:
    - ☐ Cover both nose and mouth and secure a close fit around the face.
    - ☐ Put masks on before leaving vehicles.
    - ☐ Once in the building, they should wash their hands, put on gloves, assemble needed supplies, wipe down surfaces they have touched, remove gloves, and then sanitize or wash hands.
  - ☐ Learn about the wellbeing guides and how they will be partnering with greeters and ushers. (See “Enforcing Necessary Health Policies Tip Sheet” for details.)



## Implementation Checklist (Cont.)

- ☐ Review the purpose of their service: to make people feel welcomed, seen, supported and safe. With purpose and the health guidelines in mind, walk through the best replacement behaviors for your church. Here are some examples:
  - ☐ **Instead of** reaching out to offer a welcome in the form of a handshake, elbow bump or hug, **we will** (wave, bow slightly, or \_\_\_\_\_) and say ("Welcome! It is great to see you!")
  - ☐ **Instead of** handing out bulletins, **we will** (project on wall/screen; email content; place bulletins on the seats with sanitized hands and masks on prior to people arriving; provide a recycling bin for people to use after worship while maintaining social distancing)
  - ☐ **Instead of** escorting people to their seat, **we will** (take positions around the sanctuary to direct people from a safe distance)
  - ☐ **Instead of** distributing Communion elements in baskets or trays, or having people come forward to the Communion rail, **we will** follow the Communion Tip Sheet.
  - ☐ **Instead of** passing an offering plate or having people process to place their offering in a basket, **we will** follow the Offering Tip Sheet. (Continue to ask people to give electronically to reduce the amount of paper that others must touch. We will guide others to place their offering in designated secure boxes in the sanctuary.)
- ☐ Given the new traffic patterns, think about where you will need to be positioned in the space to allow for proper sightlines, flow, and distancing. For many, this will mean standing back from doorways.
- ☐ Determine how/who will wipe down door handles on a regular basis as people enter and exit the sanctuary.
- ☐ Assist the congregation in making sure they have easy access to hand sanitizer, tissues, and, if someone has forgotten to bring one, a mask. The church's Re-entry Task Force should set up and publicize a procedure to assist with the distribution and disposal of these items.
- ☐ While general health guideline signage will be provided, consider additional signage that will help participants feel comfortable and supported in new traffic patterns and behaviors. Keep the information brief and readable at a glance. If the church office does not have the equipment to make signs, investigate having them professionally printed.

# WORSHIPPING OUTDOORS TIP SHEET



*The church campus must be prepared to ensure that people may adequately comply with social distancing from the time they enter the property until they leave.”  
(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 5)*

## Why?

Some government leaders have said that if a congregation meets for in-person gatherings, outdoor services are “strongly encouraged.” Churches adopting this approach must be able to safeguard those who attend.

## When?

Outdoor services may begin if area government directives allow for public worship. However, churches must be willing and able to follow all the safety and wellness protocols prescribed for indoor worship.

## Implementation Checklist

- ☐ Review all of the social distancing and other restrictions outlined in the BWC Re-entering Well Guidelines to assure that each of these guidelines will be followed outside.
- ☐ Check to see if your insurance policy has any guidelines or requirements.
- ☐ If churches choose to hold “drive-in worship,” do the following:
  - ☐ Coordinate with local law enforcement or emergency management agencies to ensure compliance with their rules and ordinances.
  - ☐ Organize and train volunteers to direct parking.
  - ☐ Utilize cones, signage, or volunteers to direct attendees to use every other parking spot.
  - ☐ All volunteers, staff and clergy must follow social distancing.
  - ☐ People should remain in their cars. Anyone outside of a vehicle must wear a mask and remain six feet away from any person not in their immediate family.
  - ☐ Utilize cones, signage, or volunteers to block access to playground facilities and other large fields where people may tend to congregate.
  - ☐ Nothing should be exchanged between participants and volunteers. Offerings should not be collected.
  - ☐ A good sound system is essential for outdoor worship. Consider an FM radio format that broadcasts from a stage to attendee’s car radios. Test the audio system thoroughly to ensure it will operate as expected.
- ☐ Outdoor worship during Phase 1 does not include use of restrooms. In the event of a personal need that cannot be handled by departing the parking area and returning home, signal a volunteer for guidance. In the event of a medical emergency, please refer to the *Providing Medical Assistance Tip Sheet*.
- ☐ If weather forces the termination of the outdoor service, it is not permissible to simply move the service inside.

## Additional Resources

- Safely Host a Drive-in Worship Service by Brotherhood Mutual  
<https://www.brotherhoodmutual.com/resources/safety-library/risk-management-articles/risk-management-basics/coronavirus-drivein/>



# MUSICIANS TIP SHEET



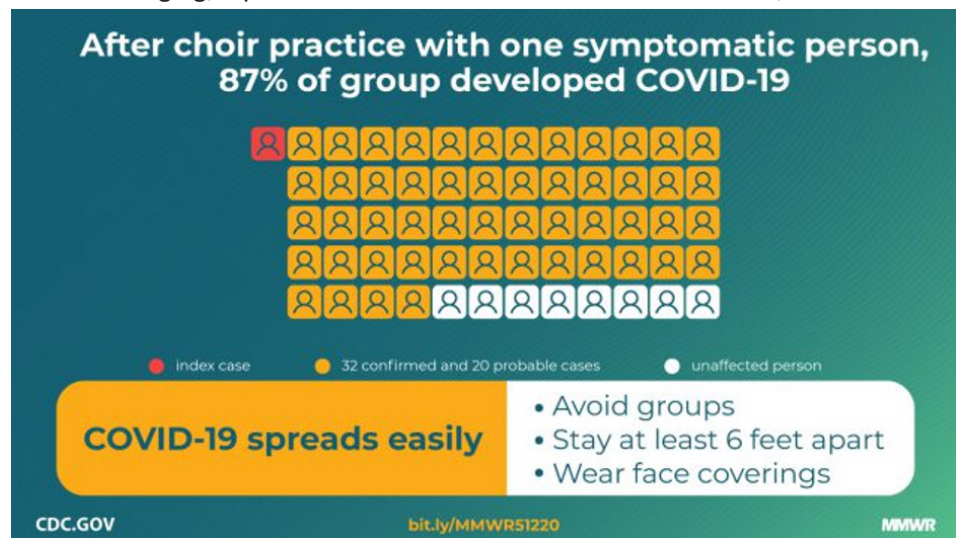
*The risk for droplet transmission is high for choirs and musicians playing brass and woodwind instruments. The current best advice is no choirs or congregational singing at in-person worship. With singing and specific instruments, droplets can be projected farther than six feet and remain suspended in the air longer.”*  
(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 4)

## Why?

The risk for droplet transmission is high for choirs, soloists, and musicians playing brass and/or woodwind instruments. Upon review of the science of singing, reports of choirs that have transmitted the virus, and known difficulties and health risks of singing with a mask, we concluded that we must rethink music production as we prepare to re-enter our spaces for worship.

## When?

While each local church will go through its own discernment and planning process to decide when to resume in-person worship, most churches have a plan for music while they are conducting worship virtually. We are still learning about the implications for singing in public. While the data is still being analyzed, the current understanding is that until there is a vaccine, there is no safe public singing. That means the prohibition on public singing may extend past Phase 3 and virtual music production may be necessary longer than initially thought.



## Virtual Music-Making Considerations

Some considerations for those who are assembling or are thinking of assembling to create music virtually:

- ☐ Guidelines for numbers of people in the sanctuary are determined by local and state governmental directives based on the status of COVID-19 cases in each jurisdiction. Within the BWC, this includes Maryland, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia. If a group follows the guidelines to safely meet in-person to record music for virtual worship, then decisions will need to be made about whether vocal musicians can perform while wearing a mask.
- ☐ A webinar of major singing organizations in the United States met the week of May 3 to discuss the future of singing while the coronavirus is still active. Here are some of the things that were mentioned about masks and singing: “No masks are currently safe for singing. N95 masks must be fit-tested first. They also decrease the singer’s oxygen levels due to rebreathing expired carbon dioxide and increasing levels (in the body). This is risky for people with asthma, COPD, and heart disease.”
- ☐ Humming, even with a mask, is not a viable alternative to singing normally; aerosolized particles are still released through the nostrils and around the edges of the mask. Vocalists commented that decreased oxygen levels could be the biggest problem with singing while wearing a mask. They also mentioned that when opening their mouths wider to achieve some pitches and vowels during rehearsals that their masks were pulled down off their noses and over their mouths, requiring readjustment during the performance.
- ☐ Consider asking people to record from their homes and then mix those recordings, creating a virtual choir.

## Cleaning Instruments Checklist

- ☐ Pianos and organs may be used in worship; however, they must be properly cleaned and sanitized after every use. When cleaning these instruments, please note:
  - ☐ Generally speaking, a soft disposable towel, using warm water and hand/dish soap is safe to use on virtually every finish, key, and case parts.
  - ☐ Always follow up with a dry soft disposable towel to remove any standing liquid.
  - ☐ Cleaning pianos is a gentle process not a scrubbing process. Pressing hard or vigorously scrubbing may lead to scratching or removing the finish.
  - ☐ If you use an alcohol-based disinfectant (do not use products containing bleach or citrus) put the disinfectant on the towel, not directly on the piano.
  - ☐ Never leave any liquids on the keys.
  - ☐ Case parts finishes vary greatly and can easily be damaged by disinfectant wipes and sprays. A soft disposable towel, using warm water and hand/dish soap is safe to use on virtually every finish, key, and case parts. Always follow up with a dry soft disposable towel to remove any standing liquid.
  - ☐ Remember to wash your hands after you have thrown away the towels.

## Additional Resources

- Resources for Choral Professionals during a Pandemic  
<https://acda.org/resources-for-choral-professionals-during-a-pandemic/>
- “What Do Science and Data Say About the Near-Term Future of Singing,” a webinar co-sponsored by experts in the field of choral singing  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFI3GsVzj6Q&feature=youtu.be>
- How to Create a Virtual Choir Video  
<https://midnightmusic.com.au/2020/03/dear-music-teachers-please-stop-asking-how-to-create-a-virtual-choir-video/>
- Droplets and Aerosols in the Transmission of SARS-CoV-2, an article from the New England Journal of Medicine  
[https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2009324?query=featured\\_coronavirus](https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2009324?query=featured_coronavirus)
- Visualizing Speech-Generated Oral Fluid Droplets with Laser Light Scattering, an article from the New England Journal of Medicine  
[https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2007800?query=featured\\_coronavirus](https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc2007800?query=featured_coronavirus)
- Singing, the Church and the COVID-19: A Caution for Moving Forward in Our Current Pandemic  
<https://www.drheathernelson.com/singingandcovid19>
- High SARS-CoV-2 Attack Rate Following Exposure at a Choir Practice — Skagit County, Washington, March 2020  
<https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/mm6919e6.htm>



# CELEBRATING COMMUNION

# TIP SHEET



*Some experts believe Communion is too risky to attempt at Phase 2 and should only be considered at Phase 3. If your team decides to provide Communion, a number of guidelines must be followed.”*  
(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 5)

## Why?

The Sacrament of Holy Communion is one of two sacraments in The United Methodist Church. (Baptism is the other sacrament.) Preserving the sanctity of this holy ritual while celebrating it during a time of pandemic may be a challenge, but it is one worthy of earnest consideration.

## When?

Churches have been asked to refrain from virtual Communion during Phase 1. The alternative is to offer a Love Feast, a United Methodist ritual that was practiced by early Methodists when itinerant pastors could not be present to bless the bread and wine. When gathered in person in Phases 2 and 3, a number of guidelines should be followed to reduce the risk of transmitting the virus.

## Implementation Checklist

- ☐ Purchase prepackaged Communion elements. A box of 250 currently sells for \$52.99 at Cokesbury.
- ☐ They look something like the photo to the right:
  - ☐ Place kits on seats or pews before people arrive.
  - ☐ People placing kits on the seats/pews must wear gloves and masks while distributing the elements.
  - ☐ Provide extra prepackaged Communion elements on a separate table so people may take one without touching others' packages (e.g., kits placed 12 inches apart); position the table in such a way that social distancing is maintained.
  - ☐ Either ask people to take their waste with them or provide waste receptacles at the end of each occupied pew so that used Communion elements may be discarded immediately. No one other than the user should be touching the used cups.
- ☐ Some people may feel vulnerable and choose not to adjust or remove their facemasks in order to consume the elements; invite them to take the blessed Communion elements home with them and partake there after thoroughly washing the elements container and their hands.



## Additional Resources

- BWC Resources on Celebrating Love Feasts:  
<https://www.bwcumc.org/article/celebrating-love-feasts/>
- To buy prepackaged Communion elements, visit Cokesbury online:  
<https://www.cokesbury.com/081407011578-fellowship-cup-communion-wafer-juice-250-pack>
- Watch a video on how to use prepackaged Communion elements:  
<https://youtu.be/uAsKFnASxTU>



# PROVIDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

# TIP SHEET



*Though you will be communicating to people that they should stay home if they feel sick or if someone at home is sick, identify a separate space that can be used to attend to separate someone who becomes ill during a gathering and until they can safely depart and return home. In the event of any medical emergency, call 911 and administer first aid following updated guidelines.”*  
(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 5)

## Why?

Especially during the pandemic, we need to be prepared to respond faithfully and safely to emergency medical situations that might arise during our in-person gatherings. Bear in mind that all responses to illness, injury, and/or medical emergencies during Phases 2 and 3 must be done using masks and gloves and adhering to all guidelines and directives designed to reduce the transmission of this coronavirus.

## When?

Planning should begin now so that once in-person gatherings are deemed safe so your church is prepared to respond appropriately should someone have a non-COVID-19 medical illness or emergency during a gathering.

## Implementation Checklist

Congregations should think through emergency scenarios ahead of time to be prepared to respond quickly and safely. Among the preparations:

- ☐ Make a list of congregants who are CPR and first aid certified;
- ☐ Confirm that there are fully-supplied First Aid Kits in strategic locations in the church;
- ☐ If there are not enough CPR and first aid certified congregants to reasonably expect that at least two certified people may be present at each in-person gathering until all Phase 3 restrictions are lifted, identify a group of adults who are willing to become certified; consider contacting the Red Cross or American Heart Association to set up virtual training sessions through the church;
- ☐ Share this document with those who are CPR and first aid certified;
- ☐ Make certain that greeters and ushers are provided a list of congregants who are CPR and first aid certified; they will often be the ones who communicate an emergency;
- ☐ Talk through what to do if someone has a medical emergency during an in-person gathering; acknowledge the compassionate impulse to “run and help” and; identify the health-preserving safety reasons for limiting the number of people who respond to an acute illness or health emergency in Phases 2 and 3;
- ☐ Establish a space near the sanctuary where someone who becomes ill may be taken during in-person worship. Focus on a space that accommodates the person and those offering first aid and support; consider the nearest restroom, a classroom, a parlor, etc.;
- ☐ Consider having a wheelchair in the building to assist safe transport to the designated space.
- ☐ Discuss that a non-life-threatening event such as a bad fall with possibly broken bones or a head injury will preclude moving the individual to a designated space. In such cases, first aid and assistance will be administered in the sanctuary until an emergency response team responds to the 911 call.

Think about the people who will safely help the person experiencing a medical emergency get to the ground or a place where they might be cared for;

- ☐ Identify who will phone 911 and open entrances to facilitate EMT/ambulance team entry;



## Implementation Checklist (Cont.)

- ☐ Designate the people who will perform CPR as needed.
- ☐ If an adult's heart stops, you can still help by performing Hands-Only CPR. (The American Heart Association created guidelines for administering pandemic-specific CPR in April 2020).
  - ☐ Phone 911 and get the AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) if one is available.
  - ☐ Cover your mouth and nose with a face mask or scarf, cloth, etc.
  - ☐ Cover the person's mouth and nose with a face mask or cloth.
  - ☐ Perform hands-only CPR: Push hard and fast on the center of the chest at a rate of 100 to 120 compressions per minute. (Hint: think of the tune Row, Row, Row Your Boat at a fast pace with compressions on each beat.) Note: More than one person will be needed to administer compressions at this rate; rescuers should switch out as needed without limited major interruption to compressions.
  - ☐ Continue until an AED is made available and/or emergency medical personnel arrive on site.
- ☐ Establish who will direct assist surrounding congregants to step back and allow plenty of room to care for the person.



## Additional Resources

- American Red Cross: Staying Safe and Helping Others During COVID-19  
[www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/coronavirus-safety.html](https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/coronavirus-safety.html)
- American Red Cross: Steps for CPR  
<https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/cpr/performing-cpr/cpr-steps>



# OFFERING AND COLLECTIONS TIP SHEET



*Offerings should be collected in secure receptacles near entrances and exits. We advise continued encouragement of electronic offering. A safe method for counting the offering must be implemented including the use of disposable gloves and masks.”*

*(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 5)*

## Why?

As churches take steps to ensure people's safety and wellbeing, managing expectations will be a vital part of reopening buildings and gathering well. The giving of tithes and offering is an important spiritual discipline. Even when people are not physically together, or when social distancing adds complications, the act of giving nurtures disciples and churches should enable generosity.

## When?

During Phase 1, church leaders should nurture the practice of online giving. Tithing from a distance is a practice that should be encouraged on a regular basis, even after the pandemic, because it helps people be better stewards of their money. During Phase 1, the pastor and church finance leaders should create procedures for collecting tithes and offerings when in-person worship resumes in Phases 2 or 3.

## Implementation Checklist

- ☐ Because passing collection plates is not safe during this time, the Re-entering Well Task Force and church financial leaders should select a location or two in the sanctuary where financial gifts may be deposited. The location and the receptacle should be secure.
- ☐ Recruit and train trusted volunteers to ensure that the receptacle does not get moved or money removed.
- ☐ Training of these volunteers should include:
  - ☐ An understanding of how this coronavirus COVID-19 is transmitted and why it is important for everyone to adopt the following wellbeing protocols:
    - ☐ Stay home if you or someone you are in contact with feels sick or has a temperature (to prevent the spread of the virus);
    - ☐ Maintain a six-feet separation from others not in your immediate family (to prevent the airborne spread of the virus among those who are symptom free);
    - ☐ Wear a facemask at all times when away from home (to protect others);
    - ☐ Do not touch your face, mouth, or eyes (to prevent the virus from entering your body); and
    - ☐ Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds after using the toilet and use hand-sanitizer to clean hands after exiting the restroom or after touching other common surfaces (to kill the virus).
  - ☐ Teach offering/collection stewards how to wear masks properly:
    - ☐ Cover both nose and mouth and secure a close fit around the face.
    - ☐ Put masks on before leaving vehicles.
    - ☐ Once in the building, they should wash their hands, put on gloves, assemble needed supplies, wipe down surfaces they have touched, remove gloves and then sanitize or wash hands.
  - ☐ Learn about Wellbeing Guides and how they will be partnering with volunteers. (See “Enforcing Necessary Health Policies Tip Sheet” for details.)
- ☐ Time during worship may be set apart to announce the location of offering receptacles, to encourage people to give, and to thank God for the many blessings we have received. If your church is able to receive offerings or second-mile giving via text or mobile device, create a script with the information and share that information as well.
- ☐ Select a room for counting the offering that is large enough for counters to spread out and allow more than six feet between each person present.



## Implementation Checklist (Cont.)

- ☐ Select a room for counting the offering that is large enough for counters to spread out and allow more than six feet between each person present.
- ☐ Select and train counters; see training instructions above. In addition, counters should adhere to the following:
  - ☐ At least two counters should collect the money immediately following the service.
  - ☐ All counters, and anyone else who comes in contact with the money, should wear disposable gloves before touching the money.
  - ☐ Masks should continue to be worn and social distancing maintained.
  - ☐ Counters should practice safe glove removal and avoid touching anything with the gloves after counting the money.
  - ☐ Counters should wipe down door handles as they leave the counting room and then wash their hands.
- ☐ The person opening any mailed-in checks to the church should follow the same procedures as the counters.



## Additional Resources

- Collecting Tithes from a Distance, a BWC collection of resources  
<https://www.bwcumc.org/article/collecting-tithes-from-a-distance/>



# COFFEE HOUR AND FELLOWSHIP TIME TIP SHEET



*Social/coffee hours should be resumed no earlier than Phase 3. At that phase, food should be served wearing gloves and using utensils rather than offering open table buffets.”  
(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 5)*

## Why?

It is in relationship with others and time spent together that Christians grow in love for one another and for God. A time of fellowship before or after worship encourages these relationships. However, if being physically close poses a threat of serious illness, we must respect and love people enough to find other ways of engaging with one another.

## When?

One truth has become abundantly clear during the pandemic: the church is not a building. During this time of online congregational gathering, people have discovered the importance of engaging virtually. This intentional engagement should deepen during Phases 1 and 2 as creative measures are adopted and sustained. Coffee hours may resume in Phase 3 if your meeting space allows for a safe flow of people in compliance with local and state guidelines.

## Virtual Fellowship Implementation Ideas

- ☐ Before and/or after virtual worship, set aside 20 to 30 minutes for people to “chat” and share with one another. You may even consider having a virtual coffee hour after service.
- ☐ During the week, set aside time before and after online Bible studies, virtual classes, or other gatherings as opportunities for people to interact.
- ☐ Start an informal ministry of hospitality and care, inviting people to send emailse-mails, mail cards, call, or in some other way reach out to others in the congregation. Be especially mindful of those who may live alone or have shared challenges they are facing.
- ☐ Invite Sunday School teachers to correspond with their students, offering words of hope and encouragement.
- ☐ Reinstate the old-fashioned telephone prayer list that can be tailored to match the technology habits of people in your congregation.
- ☐ Ask people what they need and create opportunities for others in the church to meet those needs.

## Implementation for In-person Coffee/Social Hour Checklist

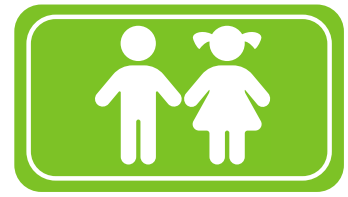
- ☐ If you are gathering in-person during Phase 2, you may need to find creative ways to remind folks about adherence to the six-foot rule for distancing. One approach is to tape six-foot lengths on your floors as a visual reminder of the required distance between people. You may also consider encouraging people to fellowship outside of the building as weather allows.
- ☐ The Re-Entering Well Task Force should consider the layout of the space where coffee hour will be held.
  - ☐ Create a space in which it is easy for people to sit or stand at least six feet from one another. Note how many people can be included in this configuration of the room. If it is not possible to provide this space, consider alternative plans for fellowship or creatively inviting smaller groups to participate.
  - ☐ Using furniture and other objects, design the room so that it helps people intuitively understand how they should move through the space. Consider having one path into the room, and another out.
  - ☐ Post clearly visible signs both outside and inside the designated room asking people to continue practicing social distancing.
- ☐ Food should be served wearing gloves and using utensils rather than offering open table buffets.
- ☐ Order ample supplies of hand sanitizer, paper towels, napkins, etc., and have them readily available.
- ☐ Thoroughly clean the entire space after every event. That includes all items and surfaces such as tables, chairs, serving trays, bowls, and utensils.



## Additional Resources

- “How to gather with friends while social distancing,” according to meeting expert Priya Parker, author of *The Art of Gathering*  
<https://www.vox.com/the-goods/2020/3/19/21183551/coronavirus-social-distancing-strategies-tips>
- “How to Be Together Apart in the Time of Coronavirus,” New York Times,  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/opinion/internet-coronavirus-social-distancing.html>
- “Ways to help older neighbors and relatives in isolation (and how they can help you),” Washington Post  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/05/06/seniors-isolation-quarantine-help-how-to/?utm\\_campaign=wp\\_the\\_optimist&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=newsletter&wpisrc=nl\\_optimist](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/05/06/seniors-isolation-quarantine-help-how-to/?utm_campaign=wp_the_optimist&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&wpisrc=nl_optimist)

# NURSERY AND SUNDAY SCHOOL TIP SHEET



*The risk for transmitting the virus is high in church nurseries and Sunday School.  
Plan for children to be in worship with their families at this time.”  
(BWC Guidelines for Re-entering Well, p. 4)*

## Why?

The safety and wellbeing of young people is paramount. While the symptoms of COVID-19 seem somewhat similar in children and adults, children with confirmed COVID-19 have generally shown milder symptoms such as fever, runny nose, and cough. As we gain more experience with the disease, there is emerging evidence that some children may become very ill with symptoms not previously associated with COVID-19. Due to the need for physical closeness and touch in the care of young children, every measure should be taken to prevent them from being in danger of exposure to the coronavirus COVID-19 or exposing others such as Sunday School and nursery volunteers.

## When?

In order to avoid placing infants, children, and youth at risk, the nursery and Sunday School programs should not be restarted/reinstituted during Phase 2. Young people should sit with their immediate families during worship. When Phase 3 begins to unfold, churches should follow CDC and other guidelines for children's safety. We do not yet have those guidelines.

## Implementation Checklist

- ☐ Sunday School teachers and others should promote all of the virtual resources the church has available for children. Church leaders should continue to be intentional about the spiritual lives of the church's children.
- ☐ Poll parents and/or experiment with ways to connect virtually with children during Phases 1 and 2.
- ☐ Consider partnering with area congregations to share virtual ministry resources for children.
- ☐ Notify parents to keep young children with them at all times and to accompany their children to the restroom to ensure appropriate social distancing.
  - ☐ You may wish to consider creating a sign with this information.
- ☐ Inform parents that they are responsible to ensure that their children are wearing masks and to clean their children's hands as per guidelines. It is recommended that children under age 2 wear no mask as suffocation is possible because of the potential to suffocate.
- ☐ Children's sermons may still be delivered; however, children should not be invited to gather with the pastor during this time.
- ☐ Invite a Christian educator or a skilled congregant with the appropriate gifts to serve as a resource to parents regarding the spiritual and emotional issues facing young people.
- ☐ Children's ministries are often family ministries. Ask parents to stay home with children who are not well.

## Checklist for Re-Opening Sunday Schools and Nurseries

During Phase 3, some churches may choose to re-open nurseries and Sunday School, recognizing that this is a significant undertaking. One session of the Re-Entering Well Task Force should engage key Christian educators to make intentional plans for re-opening Sunday School and other programming for children following local guidelines.

- ☐ Plan training sessions for teachers and nursery workers to equip them for safely re-opening your nursery and Sunday School; that cover these topics/questions:
  - ☐ How will social distancing be observed, allowing at least six feet between each student?
  - ☐ How will social distancing guidelines be enforced? Do more adults need to be added in each classroom?
  - ☐ How may materials be used and shared in ways that do not risk transmission of the virus?
  - ☐ Ensure that a significant supply of hand-sanitizer is on-hand and remind or help students to wash their hands regularly.
- ☐ Develop a schedule for cleaning and disinfecting these spaces after each use.



## Additional Resources

- BWC List of Resources for Parents During COVID-19:  
<https://www.bwcumc.org/article/resources-for-parents-during-covid-19/>
- BWC List of Resources for Family and Children's Ministry During COVID-19  
<https://www.bwcumc.org/article/family-and-childrens-ministries-during-covid-19/>
- Example of a Routine for Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting  
<https://nrckids.org/files/appendix/AppendixK.pdf>
- Listing of EPA-approved cleaning products  
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>
- Schools and Child Care Programs, from the Centers for Disease Control  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>
- Guidance for Child Care Programs that Remain Open, from the Centers for Disease Control  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-childcare.html>