

## **PHASE 3 POLICY FOR ZACHARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Below are the guidelines and rationale for how we will welcome persons back to in-person worship and other gatherings during Phase 3.

### **A. PHASE 3 RESOURCES UTILIZED IN DECISION MAKING**

**We are committed to practicing ways of gathering that will “do no harm” and will “watch over one another with love”.**

Our primary sources of guidance for reopening in each Phase come from The Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, the Louisiana Governor’s Office, Louisiana State Fire Marshal, CDC, and the U.S. President’s Office.

### **B. PHASE 3 WORSHIP**

**As per the State Fire Marshal’s orders for Phase 3: “Places of Worship must adhere to strict mitigation standards to prevent the spread of COVID-19.”**

**Among many other practices and safeguards mandated in Phase 3, churches are allowed to host 75% of available occupancy in addition to maintaining 6 ft between individuals or families and avoiding assigned seating within 6 feet from the center of the main aisle to allow for circulation and egress.**

- For the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall, this is approximately 90 people in a service at one time. (This number includes worship leaders; ushers; greeters, and other volunteers.)

**The following guidelines are expected to be fully met by all who attend worship. If persons are unable or unwilling to comply, we ask that they refrain from attending worship until that time when guidelines may be less restrictive.**

- If you have had a fever or any other symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in the past 14 days, such as cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell you should not attend.
- If you or anyone in your household has been diagnosed with or has had symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in the past 14 days or if you or anyone in your household has come into contact with anyone who may have COVID-19 you should not attend.
- The CDC Guidelines also recommend that those with underlying health concerns and those 65+ years old should avoid group gatherings and worship from home. We trust that each family will make its own faithful decision considering your individual situation.
- If you are unsure about your situation, see [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) for information to help you decide whether you should attend.

- Maintain physical distance of 6 ft between individuals/family units
- Wear a face covering/mask at all times
  - Worshippers should bring their own face coverings/masks; however, disposable and cloth masks will be available.
  - School-aged children will be expected to wear a face covering. For children younger than preschool age, we understand the complexities of having them adhere, but we do ask that families make the attempt to utilize a face covering on their children above 4 years old
- Use hand sanitizer upon entrance and after touching anything in the space
- Your name will be recorded by a volunteer and a picture taken of the room when all are seated so that, in case of an outbreak, we will have record of who attended and who you were seated next to. In the event of exposure all who attend will be notified.
- Temperature will be taken by touchless thermometers so everyone can feel safe. All staff and worship volunteers will be checked prior to worship.
- You will be welcomed by Greeters outside and will wait in designated areas 6 feet apart until you can be seated by an Usher
- You will be seated by an Usher, beginning at the front and working to the back of the room, to ensure social distancing (So don't expect to sit in your normal seat!)
- No physical contact - no hugs, no handshakes, or high fives
- Utilize restrooms with the capacity of 1-2 people at a time (depends on restroom location)
- No distribution of printed materials
- An offering box will be available at the entrance of each building for tithes & offering
- Nursery will be available for children 4 years and younger.
- No coffee or donuts will be served to avoid clusters of people gathering and possible exposure.
- A reservation system will be utilized for both services to safely meet maximum occupancy and to anticipate guests. Visit the church's websites to register.
- Both Sunday worship services will continue to be live streamed so they can be viewed online.
- Communion will be offered on first Sundays, but self-contained elements in disposable containers will be given to you when you enter and the elements will be consumed at your seat.

### **C. PHASE 3 SINGING**

**As many professionals have determined, congregational singing is shown to be an activity that advances the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Many studies have determined that it is the number one cause of spreading the virus in church settings.**

Until reliable information comes to light that shows congregational singing is safe, we will only allow congregational singing with masks on. During the hymns/praise songs, the congregation will be invited to participate by humming, whispering, softly singing, or just swaying. These are all appropriate ways to worship. Online viewers can sing as loud as they want at home!

The Chancel Choir will not sing, due to social distancing. Worship singers will sing behind plexiglass barriers and remain at a safe distance from the congregation.

### **D. PHASE 3 ZUMC GROUPS/CLASSES GATHERING INDOORS ON CAMPUS**

**Classes and Groups of ZUMC may return to gathering indoors as long as they adhere to Phase 3 guidelines. As many existing groups will not be able to meet in their usual spaces due to capacity restrictions, reservations must be made by contacting the church office ahead of time so that set up and cleaning arrangements to be made.**

- Refrain from attending a class or group meeting if feeling unwell, if fever has been present, and/or if you have been knowingly exposed to someone with COVID-19
- Sunday School Classes must RSVP online so that classrooms can be assigned and prepared based on the number attending.
- We have limited rooms that allow groups to spread out to meet the 6 ft spacing, so arrangements must be made ahead of time for weekday meetings by calling the church office.
- Maintain physical distance of 6 ft between family units/individuals. Chairs and seating arrangements will be spaced out to maintain recommended social distancing.
- Follow the occupancy guidelines of 75% room capacity with social distancing
- All participants over age 4 must wear a face mask/covering at all times
- Use hand sanitizer upon entrance to the space and after touching anything in the space
- Attendance should be recorded by the group leader; a picture taken of the room when all are seated
- For those staying for Sunday School following 9 AM worship, please go directly to your classroom to avoid congregating in congested areas.
- For those attending Pathway Worship at 11 AM, please go to the Fellowship Hall for the service to avoid congregating in congested areas.

- Utilize restrooms with the capacity of 1-2 people at a time (depends on restroom location)
- No physical contact - no hugs, no handshakes, or high fives
- Nursery will be available on Sunday mornings
- No communal food and drink served or brought in
- Remember, if you are not ready or able to come back yet, you shouldn't feel any pressure or obligation to be on campus. Online worship will continue, and classes can meet online as well.

### **E. PHASE 3 ZUMC GROUPS GATHERING OUTDOORS ON CAMPUS**

**Exterior spaces may be used and enjoyed by groups. Reservations for on-campus meetings must be made by contacting the Church Office.**

- Refrain from attending a group meeting if feeling unwell, if fever has been present, and/or if you have been knowingly exposed to someone with COVID-19
- Maintain physical distance of 6 ft between family units/individuals
- Wear a face covering/mask at all times
- Your name recorded by the group leader
- Sanitize hands
- Utilize restrooms with the capacity of 1-2 people at a time (depends on restroom location)
- No physical contact - no hugs, no handshakes, or high fives

### **F. PHASE 3 ZUMC GROUPS/CLASSES GATHERING OFF-CAMPUS**

The expectation is that groups gathering off campus will follow the guidelines set forth for group meetings on campus, as they are an extension/representation of ZUMC.

### **G. PHASE 3 OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS/GROUPS**

Organizations and groups not officially part of ZUMC will be permitted to gather at our campus as long as they adhere to the same Phase 3 restrictions and guidelines.

## **H. PHASE 3 OFFICE ACCESS**

**Until a new Church Secretary is hired, the Church Office will be open from 9:00am until 1:00pm Monday-Wednesday & Friday. The Pastor and Staff will be available and accessible throughout the week by appointment.**

- All visitors must remain at least 6 ft from staff persons and others while on campus
- All visitors must wear a face covering/mask while on campus to protect our staff, volunteers, and each other
- Staff members will adhere to proper social-distancing and sanitation guidelines while working