

## Coming Back Together: Health Plan for Safety

Thus, says the Lord: The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, the Lord appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore, I have continued my faithfulness to you. Again, I will build you, and you shall be built! Again, you shall take your tambourines, and go forth in the dance of the merry-makers. Jeremiah 31:2-4

Out of care and concern for the neighbor and those most vulnerable among us, Hutto Lutheran commits to follow the phases outlined below to return to in-person gatherings.

***This is a plan using the most current conditions and information. It will remain as such and leadership will amend this plan as needed.***

### In all phases:

#### **The Health Plan will be secondary to federal, state, county and city public health orders.**

**Texas:** July 2, 2020, Governor Greg Abbott issued Executive Order No. GA-29 relating to the use of face coverings during the COVID-19 disaster. "Every person in Texas shall wear a face covering over the nose and mouth when inside a commercial entity or building or space open to the public, or in an outdoor public space, wherever it is not feasible to maintain six feet of social distancing from another person not in the same household; *provided, however, that this face-covering requirement does not apply to the following:*

9. any person who is actively providing or obtaining access to religious worship, but wearing a face covering is strongly encouraged;

<https://open.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/EO-GA-29-use-of-face-coverings-during-COVID-19-IMAGE-07-02-2020.pdf>

Hutto currently has an order in place requiring all businesses to implement a health and safety policy that includes mandatory wear of face coverings when in an area or performing an activity which will necessarily involve close contact or proximity to coworkers or the public where six feet separation is not possible: <https://www.huttotx.gov/government/covid-19-info.php#:~:text=On%20July%201%2C%202020%2C%20an,or%20the%20public%20where%20six>

- Continue to strongly discourage vulnerable individuals or individuals who have traveled from attending any in-person gathering.
- Continue to strongly encourage 'stay home if sick'.
- Continue to promote healthy hygiene practices.

**Each phase must sustain their 14-day downward trend before progressing to the next phase:**

#### **Phase 1 - What we are currently (March - August 2020) doing.**

- Stay home. Stay safe.

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**Phase 2** begins when Williamson & Travis County COVID-19 daily reported percent positivity rate achieves and maintains a 14 days period downward trend of 19 - 10%.

- Worship continues to happen in an online only format.
- Ministry team meetings and bible study groups may resume in-person gathering following strict physical distancing protocols. No hugs or handshakes. Online option will be provided for those who choose not to gather in-person to attend meeting. Gathering may not be more than 10 individuals.
- Weddings and funerals with strict physical distancing protocols. No more than 10 in attendance and all must wear a face covering. Outdoor spaces only. The church council, working with Pastor Wegner will be responsible for complying with the State of Texas Minimum Standards of Health for Church Worship Attendees.
- No visits to hospitals or senior care facilities.
- No youth activities.
- Fellowship activities are still suspended.
- No use of the facilities for wedding receptions, memorial luncheons, family reunions or other rentals.
- Encourage church staff to work from home as much as possible.
- Stay in phone/online contact with members of your congregation and community.

**Phase 3** begins when Williamson & Travis County COVID-19 daily reported percent positivity rate achieves and maintains a 14 days period downward trend of 9 - 3%.

Worship resumes in-person with strict protocols and revised practices. The church council, working with Pastor Wegner will be responsible for complying with the State of Texas Minimum Standards of Health for Churches and Places of Worship and Church Worship Attendees. Current copy of the requirements can be found at <https://gov.texas.gov/organization/opentexas> i.e. Sharing of the peace, communion, wearing face coverings, alternative worship spaces.

- *On-line, live streaming worship still offered.*
- Ministry team meetings and bible study groups may resume in-person gathering following moderate physical distancing protocols. Online option will be provided for those who choose not to gather in-person to attend meeting.
- Weddings and funerals with moderate physical distancing protocols. The church council, working with Pastor Wegner will be responsible for complying with the State of Texas Minimum Standards of Health for Churches and Places of Worship and Church Worship Attendees. Current copy of the requirements can be found at <https://gov.texas.gov/organization/opentexas>
- Wedding receptions, memorial meals, family reunions and other use of the facilities where food is served must comply with the State of Texas Minimum Standards of Health for

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Restaurants. Current copy of these standards can be found at

<https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Restaurants.pdf>.

- No visits to hospitals or senior care facilities.
- Youth activities may resume taking into account good hygiene and alternative practices.
- Fellowship activities may resume with moderate physical distancing protocols.
- Encourage church staff to work from home as much as possible.
- Stay in phone/online contact with members of your congregation and community.

**Phase 4** begins when Williamson & Travis County COVID-19 daily reported percent positivity rate achieves and maintains a 14 days period downward trend of <3%.

Worship resumes in-person with moderate protocols and revised practices. The church council, working with Pastor Wegner will be responsible for complying with the State of Texas Minimum Standards of Health for Churches and Places of Worship and Church Worship Attendees. Current copy of the requirements can be found at <https://gov.texas.gov/organization/opentexas>. Sharing of the peace, communion, wearing face coverings, alternative worship spaces.

- *On-line, live streaming worship still offered.*
- Ministry team meetings and bible study groups may resume in-person gathering following moderate physical distancing protocols. *Online option will be provided for those who choose not to gather in-person to attend meeting.*
- Weddings and funerals with moderate physical distancing protocols. The church council, working with Pastor Wegner will be responsible for complying with the State of Texas Minimum Standards of Health for Churches and Places of Worship and Church Worship Attendees. Current copy of the requirements can be found at <https://gov.texas.gov/organization/opentexas>
- Wedding receptions, memorial meals, family reunions and other use of the facilities where food is served must comply with the State of Texas Minimum Standards of Health for Restaurants. Current copy of these standards can be found at <https://gov.texas.gov/uploads/files/organization/opentexas/OpenTexas-Checklist-Restaurants.pdf>.
- Visits to hospitals visits or senior care facilities may resume with extreme care and strict following of guidelines set by those establishments. Homebound communion may resume.
- Youth activities may resume.
- Fellowship activities may resume with moderate physical distancing protocols.
- Church staff may resume typical work without restriction.
- Stay in phone/online contact with members of your congregation and community.

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### Data Source:

**March 2020:** to assess periods of decline will be from The Texas Department of State Health Services. There by county graph of daily new cases includes a 7-day average trend line used to determine decline or increase.

<https://tabexternal.dshs.texas.gov/t/THD/views/COVIDExternalQC/COVIDTrends?%3AisGuestRedirectFromVizportal=y&%3Aembed=y>

**August 2020:** to assess % positivity days in decline, we will use public databases that regularly report this data.

Williamson County Public Dashboard

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ae30cf23f70b40fda5a4804e7601eee9>

Travis County Public Dashboard does not report positivity rate. Therefore, Covid Act Now will be used to determine daily positivity rate. [https://covidactnow.org/us/tx/county/travis\\_county/?s=957190](https://covidactnow.org/us/tx/county/travis_county/?s=957190)

### Strict physical distancing:

- Everyone must wear a face covering.
- 6 foot radius of distance must be adhered to.
- No more than 10 people gathered, aside from worship.
- No hugs or handshakes.

### Moderate physical distancing:

- Face coverings encouraged, unless required by public order.
- 6 foot radius of distance is encouraged.
- No more than 20 gathered, aside from worship.
- Hugs and handshakes are discouraged.

Plan created May 4, 2020.

Revised June 18, 2020.

Revised August 20, 2020.