

Appendix A: Specific Guidance for Outdoor Worship

Outdoor worship, when possible, appears to be safer than worshipping inside. It also poses its own set of challenges even for congregations that have outdoor spaces to use (Hearing one another is perhaps the biggest of these challenges to be considered).

Regardless of the specific format, physical distancing guidelines must be maintained and there should be provision for worship for people who cannot, or do not wish to, gather physically at this time. Keep in mind that gathering outdoors does NOT mean that singing or Holy Communion may take place in Stage 2.

There will be other considerations with regard to outdoor worship. Churches with control of their own outdoor space might consider the example of [Domino Park in Brooklyn](#). With regard to keeping people safe in Stage 2 of COVID-19, congregations will need to consider:

- Proper signage and flow throughout the outdoor site
- How to mark out space to ensure physical distancing
- Access to bathrooms (along with all the accompanying Stage 2 requirements)
- Whether to provide seating or other accommodation for individuals with disabilities (if so, how to ensure seating is properly sanitized)
- Provision for changes in weather
- How to handle heat in later summer (Is water provided? How will it be distributed if necessary?)
- Who will be tasked with and empowered to help maintain physical distancing? Ushers? Others?

There are also some non-COVID-19 issues to consider:

- Amplification across a large space. There may be local ordinances in effect.
- Mosquitos, ticks, and other insects (West Nile and Lyme disease remind us that coronavirus isn't the only dangerous disease out there).

- We remind you that streaming of services, if previously provided, should still be taking place even when outdoor worship is held.

Not all of these issues will be relevant for every congregation. In general, we recommend that individual congregations consult with your local board of health and possibly your parks and recreation officials.