



September 26, 2020

Pastor,

Good morning, I hope that your Saturday is off to a great start and that you're anticipating how God is going to work in and through your congregation this weekend!

I'm writing to you because on **Friday afternoon Governor DeSantis announced that he was lifting the Phase 2 restrictions on restaurants and businesses and moving the Florida economy to Phase 3 of its reopening.**

You may be wondering what this means for churches?

While Governor DeSantis has not issued any directives specifically related to churches throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, local health officials have given some guidance and the CDC has offered helpful resources for local congregations in slowing the spread of COVID within their communities.

While each local church leadership team has freedom to determine the precautions they put in place, I'd encourage you that continued precautions should be taken in keeping with the [CDC's Guidelines for Communities of Faith](#).

Some of the highlights of these guidelines include:

- Promoting healthy hygiene practices (hand washing and sanitization)
- Encouraging the vulnerable and those who are feeling ill to worship from home
- Ensuring social distancing of at least 6 feet between households in worship seating
- Encouraging mask wearing whenever social distancing cannot be ensured
- Limiting the use of bulletins, offering plates, hymnals and other commonly shared objects
- Having a plan for how you will handle potential exposures that take place

One question that has come up a few times recently is, **"What do we do if someone in our congregation tests positive for COVID, do we need to close for 2 weeks?"**

The answer to this question depends on how many people were exposed. **At a minimum, all individuals who have been exposed (had close contact of less than 6 feet for more than 15 minutes) should**

quarantine for 14 days. The decision about closing the building should be made by each local church's leadership team.

Know that Steph and I are praying for you as you serve, lead and proclaim the gospel of Christ this weekend

Grace and peace in abundance,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dale Schaeffer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rev. Dale W. Schaeffer || District Superintendent