

Starting on August 23rd, The Oaks will move from meeting outdoors to meeting indoors. This marks our transition into Phase 3 of our COVID-19 ReGathering plan. This 4 phase plan corresponds to The State of Ohio COVID-19 County Monitoring System with each county level triggering a church phase.

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The Oaks ReGathered: Phase 3 FAQ

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Why move inside?

As thankful as we are to have the ability to meet outdoors and online, we recognize that the Sunday experience isn't quite the same. Weather has made our in-person gatherings outside unpredictable and, at times, unpleasant. Ultimately, we see our long-term home indoors and we're going to need to slowly and safely transition our way back inside.

Transitioning indoors will test us as it may feel like the safety protocols of meeting inside are actually greater than when we were outdoors (truthfully, they are), but remember that this won't be forever. One day, after Jesus has lifted these burdens from us, we'll look back at them as simply speed bumps in the road. *In the world ye shall have tribulation: **but be of good cheer**; I have overcome the world (Jn 16:33).*

When should I stay home?

Please stay home if:

1. You are not feeling well (or have recently tested positive for COVID-19). Per CDC guidelines, this means staying home if:
 - You have an elevated temperature (100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or above).
 - You exhibit signs of illness (coughing, shortness of breath, sneezing).
 - You have had close contact with a person who has symptoms like dry cough, chest tightness, and/or fever.
2. You've recently been in close contact with someone who is experiencing the above symptoms (or has recently tested positive for COVID-19).
3. You cannot, for whatever reason, adhere to the safety protocols within this FAQ.
4. You are not, for whatever reason, comfortable "socializing" in medium-to-large groups (see [What if I'm not ready to come back?](#)).

How will we be practicing social distancing?

Given the importance of social distancing in the prevention of COVID-19, we will be implementing a handful of changes to our normal indoor services. Please know that all of these are designed to allow us to meet indoors while maximizing safety. We will encourage social distancing by...

- Limiting the number of people in our Sanctuary to less than 50% of max capacity (~90 worshippers per service).
- Arranging seating within the Sanctuary to allow family units to maintain 6 feet of separation.
- Offering two services with spaced start times (9:00 & 11:00) allowing for reduced cross traffic between services.
- Requiring individuals and families to register to attend a service (with some overflow built into our capacity).
- Having servants ready to assist with seating.

Why do I need to register?

Understanding the number of people coming to our services will help us prepare to have a great service while maintaining social distancing requirements. In the unlikely event of a sickness, registration will also help us with contact tracing and limiting exposure. Basically, it helps us prepare to serve you to the best of our ability and it helps keep everyone safe.

What can I expect when I show up?

When you arrive, you'll be greeted by an outdoors welcome table. You'll have an opportunity to sanitize your hands, grab communion, a mask, and/or a kids packet..

We realize that this will create a bottleneck. It's semi-intentional to have the bottleneck outdoors instead of inside. Please maintain good distance from other individuals/groups as you wait or feel free to wait in your car. It'd be smart to arrive 15 minutes earlier than usual, especially the first weeks while we work out the kinks.

Do I need to wear a mask?

Yes. As we move indoors, we will be asking all those who attend to serve their brothers and sisters in Christ by wearing a mask or face covering. If you don't have a mask, we will have them available at the entrance. Face coverings should not be placed on young children under the age of 2 or on anyone who has trouble breathing, is incapacitated, or is otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

But I really don't want to wear a mask... do I have to?

Yeah. None of us *want* to wear a mask and we're not trying to make any kind of political or social statement by wearing them. We simply want to demonstrate sacrificial love towards each other and obedience to the state mandate. If that is a deal-breaker, you are welcome to join us via livestream as we wait for circumstances to change and future guidance from the state.

Will you serve communion?

Yes. Though, for the time being, we will continue using prepackaged communion cups (handed out at the entrance).

Will there be classrooms available for children's ministry?

No, at this time we ask that families keep their children with them at all times. We will have Oaks Kids packets available. The prayer room and the changing room will open for parental needs.

We know not having children's ministry available is hard on both parents and children! Thank you for your patience. We hope to be able to offer children's ministry soon in Phase 4 of our ReGathering plan.

Will the lobby be open? Where do I get my caffeine fix?

BYOB! To keep social distancing in place, we'll be keeping traffic in the lobby to a minimum. You're welcome to catch up with friends and have conversations outdoors... but, even outdoors, it's smart to use recommended social distancing practices.

What if I need to use the restroom?

The restrooms in the lobby will be open to one person at a time and will have a sanitation team in place.

How will we be dismissed?

To avoid a traffic jam in the lobby please make your way outside the building in an orderly fashion as soon as service ends. There will not be any room in the lobby to gather. Once outside, you are welcome to socialize, but remember your social distancing etiquette!

What if I'm not ready to come back?

We understand. The decision to interact with a group of people while in a pandemic, even under the best of circumstances, is not one that should be taken lightly. Please know that you are not seen as weak or fearful if you choose to stay home. Our livestream services will continue to be available. We encourage you to continue to watch and reach out to us with ways we can care for you.