



MORAVIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA, SOUTHERN PROVINCE

Provincial Elders' Conference

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August 6, 2020

To: Pastors, Fellowship Coordinators, Church Boards
From: Provincial Elders' Conference
Re: Reminder of Health and Safety Precautions for Church Offices and Gatherings

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose a significant threat in the areas where the congregations of the Southern Province are located. In many places the trends that the White House identified in April as benchmarks for moving through the various phases of “re-opening” are not moving in a positive direction.

In North Carolina, Governor Roy Cooper has extended Phase 2, “Safer at Home” of the reopening plan until September 11. In a public briefing yesterday, the NC Department of Health and Human Services shared that, while progress has been made and many indicators are stable, efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 need to remain in place. The PEC will continue to monitor the situation during these next weeks.

Many of us are weary of the demands and hardships the presence of corona virus have placed on our communities, our personal lives, and of the limits to our being able to enjoy the normal range of church activities, especially larger group gatherings for worship and fellowship.

Protecting the safety and well-being of our families, church friends, neighbors those that we serve and the wider community remain a priority, and part of our Christian witness.

Until September 11, or until North Carolina enters Phase 3 of reopening, the Provincial Elders' Conference continues to strongly encourage the following:

- When leaving home, remember the [Three Ws](#):
 - Wear a cloth face covering
 - Wait six feet apart. Avoid close contact.
 - Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer.
- Those over the age of 65, those with underlying health conditions, and those with weakened immune systems remain at home as much as possible.
- Indoor worship services, or gatherings of worship leaders to facilitate various on-line worship alternatives or other program offerings be limited to no more than 10 people. Everyone involved should observe the “*Recommendations to Promote Social Distancing and Reduce Transmission.*” (See below).
- Outdoor worship services, or other outdoor gatherings be held only after necessary planning, preparation and communication to ensure everyone’s health and safety. Everyone involved should observe the “*Recommendations to Promote Social Distancing and Reduce Transmission.*” (See below).
- Church offices (including Provincial Offices) should not be open to visitors.
- Church staff should continue to work from home as much as possible. Other than paid staff or volunteer staff with specific essential responsibilities, members should not be inside church facilities.

The Rev. David Guthrie, President ▪ The Rev. Dr. Nola Knouse, Vice President ▪ Mrs. Peggy Carter ▪ The Rev. Jeff Coppage
Mr. Tommy Cole ▪ Mr. Keith Kapp ▪ The Rev. Judy Knopf ▪ The Rev. Dr. David Marcus, Jr. Assistant to the President

- If Church staff work in the church facilities, the [Interim Guidance for Businesses and Organizations](#) should be followed.
- Church meetings (boards, committees, Bible studies, fellowships, etc.) continue to utilize technology to meet remotely.

Congregations and fellowship may continue planning for the time when it will be possible to resume large group gatherings for worship and fellowship. We invite you to use the guidelines and suggestions provided in previous memos. However, the lifting or expiration of any orders set by civil and public health authorities does not mean an immediate return to the full level and variety of activities prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. Return to “normal” will be a phased process. Careful planning and preparation will be needed.

During these days the following prayers, from *Intercessions in at Time of Crisis* (Moravian Book of Worship) remain meaningful:

God of mercy, God of comfort, we come before you in this time of difficulty, mindful of human frailty and need, confused and struggling to find meaning in the face of suffering.

We are grateful that even as we share in the joy of Christ Jesus, we can also share abundantly in comfort in the midst of suffering.

For all who are in danger, trouble or anguish.

We ask the presence and strength of your Spirit.

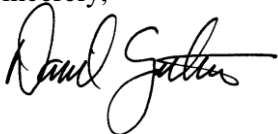
Be the support of all who give their strength, their skill, and their stamina in a ministry of mercy.

Open our hearts in generosity that we may be partners in their commitment to bring relief.

We pray for those who are suffering and can make no sense of tragedy.

Help them to turn to the One who embraces us in our lives – even Jesus Christ, who lived and suffered among us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Guthrie". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David Guthrie

From the NC Governor's Executive Order No. 141

Recommendations to Promote Social Distancing and Reduce Transmission

When people are outside their homes, they are strongly encouraged to take the following Recommendations to Promote Social Distancing and Reduce Transmission:

1. Maintain at least six (6) feet social distancing from other individuals, with the exception of family or household members.
2. Wear a cloth Face Covering when leaving home and wear it inside all public settings such as grocery stores, pharmacies, or other retail or public-serving businesses. A Face Covering should also be worn outdoors when you cannot maintain at least six (6) feet distancing from other people with the exception of family or household members. These coverings function to protect other people more than the wearer.
3. Carry hand sanitizer with you when leaving home, and use it frequently.
4. Wash hands using soap and water for at least twenty (20) seconds as frequently as possible.
5. Regularly clean high-touch surfaces such as steering wheels, wallets, and phones.
6. Stay at home if sick.