

# Sacramento Chapter of the American Guild of Organists Newsletter

June 2020

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## Dean's Message

Dear Colleagues,

This is going to be our largest newsletter ever as it has several additions. First the Center for Disease Control's Interim Guidance for Communities of Faith, then at the end you will find the thirteen-page Covid-19 Places for Worship guidelines issued by Governor Newsom whilst I compiled this newsletter.

You can find these on the internet and the CDC link is below. This gives you a chance to read it and perhaps forward it to your pastor or church leaders. There is lots of confusion about reopening so these two documents will help in your preparations to that end.

We do have other things in this newsletter for you to enjoy. Our Membership Profile features David Link of Trinity Episcopal Cathedral. Mark Jameson has given us his first in the series about the Organ in Miniature Works of Art. There is a job opening at Trinity Cathedral and a melodeon available in Portola.

Our regular CD and Book Reviews will appear next month as this newsletter is overloaded with content.

We are still working on the site, date, and time of our next board meeting. We have yet to make decisions for the next season and in what venues. As well as our headliner concert for the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament. Like other arts organizations, we are waiting to see what can be done. The State and Federal guidelines published here will help us to that end.

In the June Newsletter we will begin talking about renewing our membership (probably in July). As our chapter has opted out of OnCard, which the North Valley chapter was using, all of our renewals are handled by our lovely and

efficient treasurer Adrienne Leach (you can reach her at this email: [aleach6@netzero.com](mailto:aleach6@netzero.com))

She will contact you via (good-old-fashion) mail when we begin our renewal campaign. The North Valley members won't be able to renew again via OnCard, you will need to call AGO direct or contact Adrienne - as we are currently an opt-out chapter, OnCard no longer provides you a link to renew online.

If any of our incoming North Valley chapter members have a question or concern about this or any other item, please feel free to contact me any time either by email: [rpsidhu@comcast.net](mailto:rpsidhu@comcast.net) or via phone: (916) 765-6562.

Plus, I should say, we are currently working to add the North Valley chapter members into our directory. We have a list of members that we need to determine if they are current or not. If you know your dues are current, or even if your coming up for renewal, please contact either Adrienne or I so we can make sure your listed in our Membership Roster.

As part of our upcoming renewal campaign, I will ask for volunteers to match my own \$75 contribution over our renewal to the headliner concert we plan to feature at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Sacramento. For the moment, we have plans to have Notre Dames' titular organist Olivier Latry in April 2021. This may change to 2022 or a further date as things are not yet settled for travel and large venues are not open for concerts.

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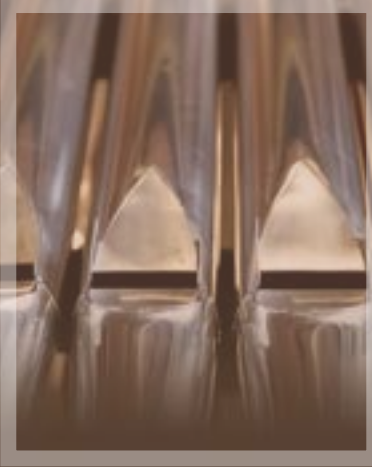
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## Dean's Message (cont)



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I thank you very much for your patience with us as we determine what will happen for our next season.

And I announce that our MemberCare program for the pandemic has ended, we kept in close contact with our members and now we are going to shift our focus to the on-line "Happy Hour" hosted by Dr. Gjerde.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the MemberCare program and to the growing numbers who are joining our Happy Hour get together.

Even though we are in flux, and we've yet to finish our plans, remember to promote the organ and support each other as colleagues.

*Ron*

## Membership Profile



Canon for Music at Trinity Cathedral in Sacramento since 1984, David Link studied at Sacramento City College and the Royal School of Church Music in England. His organ tutors included James Lang in Sacramento and Christopher

Herrick, Alan Wicks, and Peter Hurford in London. He also studied choral conducting with Paul Hillier at the University of California at Davis, and twice participated in master classes with the legendary conductor Sir David Willcocks.

David was recognized by Outstanding Young Men in America in 1986 and received the Trinity Cathedral "Dean's Award" in 1998. He was also honored by a resolution from the California State Assembly in 2010. His many contributions to the Cathedral and in the Diocese were recognized in January of 2001, when Bishop Jerry Lamb made him an "Honorary Canon" of the Cathedral and Diocese of Northern California. Though once referred to as "The Jimi Hendrix of the pipe organ," he has never actually set fire to a musical instrument and was featured in a story "Rock Star Organist" in Sacramento's Inside magazine in November 2016.

David founded the Cathedral Music Series and Annual Diocesan Choir Festival and has taken the Trinity Cathedral Choir on five pilgrimages to England, singing in the great Cathedrals including Canterbury, York Minster and Westminster Abbey. He is a Past-Dean of the Sacramento Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, a long-time member of the Association of Anglican Church Musicians and is a Fellow of the Guild of Musicians and Singers.

David and wife Sharene enjoy a busy life in Sacramento. He enjoys wine tasting, road cycling, and grandparenting, and the summer months find him hiking and backpacking in the High Sierra and Northwest Cascades. During his sabbatical in 2004, he climbed to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro, at 19,340', the tallest mountain in Africa, and one of the world's "Seven Summits."

*Please send your member profile, picture (not required)  
and short bio of yourself with organ experience to  
[rpsidhu@comcast.net](mailto:rpsidhu@comcast.net)*

## Available: Melodeon with bellows material for repair

I'm trying to find a home for a vintage melodeon that has been in my family for generations. I moved from Plumas County to Seattle last year and left the instrument in the hands of a local craftsman to attempt



repair of the bellows. He was unable to obtain proper guidance for the repair, has now fallen ill, and is forced to abandon the project. I'm looking for a proper home for this bit of history where its potential can be restored and enjoyed. It is fully functional save for the leaky

bellows. The only price I am asking of the new owners is providing a good home with ample TLC. The melodeon is in Portola CA an hour from Reno.

It does play - save for the reed in one of the higher keys and the leaky bellows, it plays nicely as long as you keep pumping enough to match the leaks. Those keys BTW, are ivory. Family legend has it that the melodeon came 'round the horn way back in the day. Again, the price is "free to a good home", FOB Portola, but of course delivery arrangements are negotiable. A piece of new bellows material is included.

Bill Tantau - 707-280-2744  
Vashon, WA



Mark Jameson at the console of the Hunter organ in the Swiss Church, London

I know you enjoyed the 14th installment of Mark Jameson's "the Organ in Miniature Works of Art". We are excited to republish the first part of this interesting article.

You can learn about their Club and join by visiting: <https://organclub.org/>

You may also write to Mr. Jameson about joining: [markmdjameson@btinternet.com](mailto:markmdjameson@btinternet.com)

### THE ORGAN IN MINIATURE WORKS OF ART:

#### THE POSTAGE STAMP:

##### Part 1: Introduction, Liechtenstein & UK

Great Britain invented postage stamps in 1840; however, it was not until the Wembley British Empire Exhibition in 1924 that anything other than the regular issue was available in the UK.

On the 13th May 2008, the Royal Mail UK issued a set of postage stamps, and several other related items, to celebrate UK Cathedrals. I have been a collector since 1954. I was more than pleased to see an issue that combined three of my main interests in one hit – stamps, buildings, and organs.

The first stamp ever to include an organ pipe in its design was in 1938 in Liechtenstein initially as a mini-sheet, and again in 1939 as an individual stamp. It was in celebration of a stamp exhibition and the composer Rheinberger was the subject:



This has, as far as I can ascertain, remained the only Liechtenstein issue with an organ pipe included.

The first organ case to appear on a stamp was in 1946 – this was an Austrian one – but as Austria has issued others, I will cover it in another article.

Returning to the UK, special issue sets were a rarity until 1957 and it then took until 1965 before St Paul's Cathedral was featured as part of the 25th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain – the top value stamp at 1shilling 3pence [8p in today's money]. St Paul's has continued to be featured regularly.

UK currency prior to 1971 was 12 pence[d] making one shilling [shown 1/-, shillings/pence], 20 shillings made £1. This was replaced by the current system of 100pence [p] equaling one £1.

Since then the UK has issued the following stamps featuring churches:

**1966:** 900th Anniversary of Westminster Abbey – two stamps

The 3d issue was a photo on a blue background whilst the 2/6 was a line drawing of the fan vaulting in the abbey.

**1969:** British Architecture Series

This was the first issue in this series with the now familiar embossed head of the Queen. The buildings were all presented as exterior views, colour tinted to reflect the stamp values, and also had an architectural detail feature – the cathedrals were Durham, York, St Giles Edinburgh and Canterbury [each 5d [2p]], St Paul's London [9d/3.5p] and Liverpool Metropolitan [1/6 -7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>p].

**1972:** British Architecture Series

These were the first in decimal currency, and featured 5 church towers in Essex, Northamptonshire, Norfolk, Lincolnshire, and Somerset.

**1973:** 400th Anniversary of Inigo Jones – the east end of St Paul's, Convent Garden appeared as a line drawing on a 3p stamp.

**Christmas 1974** featured nativity designs using roof bosses.

**1975** was European Architectural Heritage Year and the 10p stamp showed the exterior of St. George's Chapel Windsor.

**1980:** International Stamp exhibition stamp at 50p had a montage of London buildings – including the dome of St Paul's and west end of Westminster Abbey.

**Christmas 1989:** 800th Anniversary of Ely was featured in 5 line-drawings of various parts of the cathedral.

For the **Millennium** there were issues monthly, but it was not until the 11th issue on 7th November 2000 that projects of "Spirit & Faith" featured including new

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floodlighting at St Peter & St Paul Overstowey and the Chapter House roof at York.

**2006:** in a series of regional issues at 1st class rate a block of 10 included a night-time aerial view of St Paul's Cathedral and a daytime view of the tower at Chipping Campden in Gloucestershire.

To return to the **2008** issue, I start with the scan of the stamps - I have written permission of the Royal Mail to print their designs and I also thank Norphil for the UK scans. The stamps were withdrawn from sale by the Royal Mail at the start of May 2009 but can be obtained from Norphil and other stamp dealers.



**MINIATURE SHEET - St Paul's Cathedral 2 1st class and 2 81p stamps; cost £2.34 when issued, £2.40 from April 2009.**

As Organ Club's original emblem is the north organ case, this sheet I believe should be a must for any OC member. I have used stamps from this sheet on post to overseas members, and many UK members will have had post from me using the 50p and 56p single stamps as either part or whole cost of posting Journals and other information.

Miniature sheets are now far more common, but this is the ONLY mini sheet issued in the world with mixed values and showing two pipe organs. The 4 stamps have the top pair at the 1st class rate, whilst the bottom pair is at 81p rate. The bottom left is the best one as the Willis on Wheels and North Case form most of the stamp.

The history of this building is well known, and it has already featured on three previous stamp issues. The Grand organ was started in 1694 by the German Bernard Smith - the case stood across the Quire at that time. By 1721 it had gained pedals. In 1872 Willis provided a new organ but retaining earlier pipework and the Wren case work was split to each side of the Quire. The north side is clearly seen and just a corner of the south side. Willis

made frequent alterations and additions until Noel Mander completely rebuilt it in 1977. Pipework now extends to the areas behind the choir stalls, in the north east quarter dome, and at the west end of the Nave [a 1977 addition]. The systems were updated in 1992 and recently Manders have again restored the organ. Also visible in the view is the very famous "Willis-on-wheels" built in 1881.



### 1ST class - LICHFIELD CATHEDRAL

This is the only medieval English cathedral with three spires and was begun in 1195. Philip Scriven is the Organist & our member Cathy Lamb is Assistant Organist & Assistant Director of Music. The organ was last restored in 2000 by Harrison & Harrison 4/82. The Club visited here in 2005 and an article about this organ appeared in Journal 2009-1.

### 48p BELFAST CATHEDRAL of St Anne [Anglican]

After the foundation stone of St Anne's was laid in 1899, it was built around a parish church which remained in use until the cathedral was complete - only a window now survives of the old church. A 100-metre stainless steel spire was added in 2007. The organ is a 1907/1975 4m/p Harrison and Harrison, not visible in the view. The Club was here in 1991.

### 50p GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL

The Club was here in 2002. The organ dates back to 1666 [by Thomas Harris]; rebuilt in 1831 by Bishop, 1847 & 1889 Willis, Harrison & Harrison in 1920, Hill Norman and Beard in 1973 and most recently by Nicholson in 1999. The building dates back to the 11th Century and one window has c14th glass featuring golf.

### 56p ST DAVIDS

Situated at the most western point of Wales in lovely surroundings this building was begun in 1181, damaged by a serious earthquake a century later and wrecked during

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## Mark Jameson Article (cont.)

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the Civil War, restoration still continues. The Organ originates as a Willis in 1883; it was rebuilt in 1953 when it received a case by Alban Caroe; further work was done in 1980, 1986 and 1989. Between 1998 and 2000 it was totally rebuilt with a new case by Harrison & Harrison. The Club was last here in 1982.

### 72p WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL

This building began in 1895 on the site of an old prison and is a Romanesque style building. I was taken there in 1958 by my schoolmaster to play the organs before much of marble interior now present was installed. There are two organs here – the photo is taken from the west gallery with a 1922 4m Willis behind. Look carefully and you can see the cases of the east end 1910 Lewis. Both organs can be played from the east end. The Club was here in 1995.

### 81p ST MAGNUS, ORKNEY

Begun in 1137, its Norman architecture is attributed to the builders of Durham Cathedral. The organ was encased in 1926 and replaced in 1971 and is not visible.

Apart from the stamps, Royal Mail have issued postcards, special multi-items sheets, a press sheet of the St Paul's mini sheet as a maxi one at nearly £50 and a metal disc featuring Wren. Recently the Gloucester stamp has been

released as a limited-edition of 2400 stamps made from silver at £24.42 plus postage – to me it is not a stamp and I shall not afford it!

There is only one organ that features on a “definitive” issue [that is to say a normal as distinct from special issue] – and that is a Russian one, more anon. I have located more than 150 stamps featuring organ cases, parts of cases, pipes, pipes as a design item, composers with pipes, geological features called “organ pipes” and not least, some stamps that are quirky, humorous, and deadly serious. Some of that will feature in the next article.

Mdj5/09 Royal Mails own scan for this mini sheet:



## Job Opening

Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in Sacramento, California, is seeking a new Director of Cathedral Choristers

(Children's choir). The Director of Cathedral Choristers is a part-time employee of Trinity Cathedral under the supervision of the Canon for Music.

The purpose of the Cathedral Choristers is to enhance the spiritual growth of children at the Cathedral, through musical and liturgical education and singing, and to provide the opportunity to experience leadership in Cathedral worship.

To support the Cathedral's mission statement “Trinity Cathedral is a growing community making disciples who love and serve Christ and His world.”

It is desired that the new Choristers Director will implement the excellent “Voice for Life” chorister program, designed by the Royal School of Church Music.

Interested candidates are warmly invited to contact David Link, Canon for Music.

[sierracanon@gmail.com](mailto:sierracanon@gmail.com) or 916-930-8024



## Need an AGO Organist to play at your service?

We are compiling a list of all AGO substitute organists to be published here for churches to have for quick reference when they need an organist.

### Substitute list

Lars Gjerde  
Email: [lars@larsgjerde.com](mailto:lars@larsgjerde.com)  
Phone: (585) 200-8903

Randy Wurschmidt  
Email: [rwurschmidt@yahoo.com](mailto:rwurschmidt@yahoo.com)  
Phone: (260) 452-9751

*Do you want to appear on this list? If so, please email your preferred contact information to: [rpsidhu@comcast.net](mailto:rpsidhu@comcast.net) and you too can be listed here.*

# CDC Interim Guidance for Communities of Faith

## Interim Guidance for Communities of Faith

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) - 7 mins read



CDC offers the following general considerations to help communities of faith discern how best to practice their beliefs while keeping their staff and congregations safe. Millions of Americans embrace worship as an essential part of life. For many faith traditions, gathering together for worship is at the heart of what it means to be a community of faith. But as Americans are now aware, gatherings present a risk for increasing spread of COVID-19 during this Public Health Emergency. CDC offers these suggestions for faith communities to consider and accept, reject, or modify, consistent with their own faith traditions, in the course of preparing to reconvene for in-person gatherings while still working to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

This guidance is not intended to infringe on rights protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or any other federal law, including the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 (RFRA). The federal government may not prescribe standards for interactions of faith communities in houses of worship, and in accordance with the First Amendment, no faith community should be asked to adopt any mitigation strategies that are more stringent than the mitigation strategies asked of similarly situated entities or activities.

In addition, we note that while many types of gatherings are important for civic and economic well-being, religious worship has particularly profound significance to communities and individuals, including as a right protected by the First Amendment. State and local authorities are reminded to take this vital right into account when establishing their own re-opening plans.

### Scaling Up Operations

- Establish and maintain communication with local and State authorities to determine current mitigation levels in your community.
- Provide protections for staff and congregants at higher risk for severe

illness from COVID-19. Offer options for staff at higher risk for severe illness (including older adults and people of all ages with certain underlying medical conditions) that limit their exposure risk. Offer options for congregants at higher risk of severe illness that limit their exposure risk (e.g., remote participation in services).

- Consistent with applicable federal and State laws and regulations, put in place policies that protect the privacy and confidentiality of people at higher risk for severe illness regarding underlying medical conditions.
- Encourage any organizations that share or use the facilities to also follow these considerations as applicable.
- If your community provides social services in the facility as part of its mission, consult CDC's information for schools and businesses and workplaces, as relevant, for helpful information.

### Safety Actions

#### **Promote healthy hygiene practices**

- Encourage staff and congregants to maintain good hand hygiene, washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Have adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for those who can safely use hand sanitizer), tissues, and no-touch trash cans.
- Encourage staff and congregants to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of their elbow. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hands washed.
- Whenever soap and water are not readily available, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol can be used.
- Consider posting signs on how to stop the spread of COVID-19 and how to promote everyday protective measures, such as washing hands, covering coughs and sneezes, and properly wearing a face covering.

# CDC Interim Guidance for Communities of Faith

## Interim Guidance for Communities of Faith

### ***Cloth face coverings***

- Encourage use of cloth face coverings among staff and congregants. Face coverings are most essential when social distancing is difficult. Note: Cloth face coverings should not be placed on children younger than 2 years old, anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, and anyone who is incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the cloth face covering without assistance. Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.

### ***Intensify cleaning, disinfection, and ventilation***

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily and shared objects in between uses.

- Develop a schedule of increased, routine cleaning and disinfection.

- Avoid use of items that are not easily cleaned, sanitized, or disinfected.

- Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep them away from children.

- Cleaning products should not be used near children, and staff should ensure that there is adequate ventilation when using these products to prevent children or themselves from inhaling toxic fumes.

- Ensure that ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, etc. Do not open windows and doors if they pose a safety risk to children using the facility.

- If your faith community offers multiple services, consider scheduling services far enough apart to allow time for cleaning and disinfecting high-touch surfaces between services. Take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (for example, drinking fountains, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown to minimize the risk of Legionnaires' disease and other diseases associated with water.

### ***Promote social distancing***

- Take steps to limit the size of gatherings in accordance with the guidance and directives of state and local authorities and subject to the protections of the First Amendment and any other applicable federal law.

- Promote social distancing at services and other gatherings, ensuring that clergy, staff, choir, volunteers and attendees at the services follow social distancing, as circumstances and faith traditions allow, to lessen their risk.

- Consider holding services and gatherings in a large, well-ventilated area or outdoors, as circumstances and faith traditions allow.

- Consider appropriate mitigation measures, including taking steps to limit the size of gatherings maintaining social distancing, at other gatherings such as funerals, weddings,

religious education classes, youth events, support groups and any other programming, where consistent with the faith tradition.

- Provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or walkways and signs on walls, to ensure that staff and children remain at least 6 feet apart in lines and at other times (e.g. guides for creating "one-way routes" in hallways).

### ***Take steps to minimize community sharing of worship materials and other items***

- Consistent with the community's faith tradition, consider temporarily limiting the sharing of frequently touched objects, such as worship aids, prayer rugs, prayer books, hymnals, religious texts and other bulletins, books, or other items

- passed or shared among congregants, and encouraging congregants to bring their own such items, if possible, or photocopying or projecting prayers, songs, and texts using electronic means.

- Modify the methods used to receive financial contributions. Consider a stationary collection box, the main, or electronic methods of collection regular financial contributions instead of shared collection trays or baskets.

- Consider whether physical contact (e.g., shaking hands, hugging, or kissing) can be limited among members of the faith community.

- If food is offered at any event, consider pre-packaged options, and avoid buffet or family-style meals if possible.

### ***Nursery/Childcare***

- If a nursery or childcare will be provided during services and events, refer to CDC's information on preventing the spread of COVID-19 in childcare settings and adapt as needed for your setting.

- If holding summer day camps, refer to CDC's information on youth and summer camps and adapt as needed.

### ***Staffing and Training***

- Train all clergy and staff in the above safety actions. Consider conducting the training virtually, or, if in-person, ensure that social distancing is maintained.

## **Monitoring and Preparing**

### ***Check for signs and symptoms***

- Encourage staff or congregants who are sick or who have had close contact with a person with COVID-19 to stay home. Share CDC's criteria for staying home with staff and congregants so that they know how to care for themselves and others. Consider posting signs at entrances with this information.

### ***Plan for when a staff member or congregant becomes sick***

- Identify an area to separate anyone who exhibits symptoms of COVID-19 during hours of operation, and ensure that children are not left without adult supervision.

## CDC Interim Guidance for Communities of Faith Interim Guidance for Communities of Faith

- Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who becomes sick at the facility to their home or a healthcare facility.
- Notify local health officials if a person diagnosed with COVID-19 has been in the facility and communicate with staff and congregants about potential exposure while maintaining confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)external icon or other applicable laws and in accordance with religious practices.
- Advise those with exposure to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms, and follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.
- Close off areas used by the sick person and do not use the area until after cleaning and disinfection. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.
- Advise staff and congregants with symptoms of COVID-19 or who have tested positive for COVID-19 not to return to the facility until they have met CDC's criteria to discontinue home isolation.

### **Maintain healthy operations**

- Implement flexible sick leave and related flexible policies and practices for staff (e.g., allow work from home, if feasible), and provide requested reasonable accommodation absent undue hardship to individuals with disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)external icon or other applicable laws and in accordance with religious practices.
- Monitor absenteeism and create a roster of trained back-up staff.
- Designate a staff person to be responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. Staff, clergy, volunteers, and congregants should know who this person is and how to contact them if they become sick or are around others diagnosed with COVID-19. This person should also be aware of state or local regulatory agency policies related to group gatherings.

- As volunteers often perform important duties (e.g., greeters, ushers, childcare), consider similar monitoring, planning, and training for them. Consider that volunteer and staffing may need to increase to implement cleaning and safety protocols and to accommodate additional services with reduced attendance.
- Communicate clearly with staff and congregants about actions being taken to protect their health.

### **Signs and Messages**

- Post signs in highly visible locations (e.g., entrances, restrooms, gathering halls/community rooms/gyms) that promote everyday protective measures pdf icon and describe how to stop the spread pdf icon of germs (such as by properly washing hands and properly wearing a cloth face covering image icon).
- Include messages (for example, videos) about behaviors that prevent the spread of COVID-19 when communicating with staff and congregants (such as in emails and on community websites and social media accounts).
- Find freely available CDC print and digital resources on CDC's communications resources main page.

### **Closing**

- Check state and local external icon health department notices daily about transmission in the community and adjust operations.
- In the event a person diagnosed with COVID-19 is determined to have been in the building and poses a risk to the community, it is strongly suggested to dismiss attendees, then properly clean and disinfect the area and the building where the individual was present before resuming activities.

This document may be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/faith-based.html>





# COVID-19 INDUSTRY GUIDANCE: Places of Worship and Providers of Religious Services and Cultural Ceremonies

May 25, 2020

[covid19.ca.gov](https://www.covid19.ca.gov)



## OVERVIEW

On March 19, 2020, the State Public Health Officer and Director of the California Department of Public Health issued an order requiring most Californians to stay at home to disrupt the spread of COVID-19 among the population.

The impact of COVID-19 on the health of Californians is not yet fully known. Reported illness ranges from very mild (some people have no symptoms) to severe illness that may result in death. Certain groups, including people aged 65 or older and those with serious underlying medical conditions, such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, are at higher risk of hospitalization and serious complications. Transmission is most likely when people are in close contact with an infected person, even if that person does not have any symptoms or has not yet developed symptoms.

Precise information about the number and rates of COVID-19 by industry or occupational groups, including among critical infrastructure workers, is not available at this time. There have been multiple outbreaks in a range of workplaces, indicating that workers are at risk of acquiring or transmitting COVID-19 infection. Examples of these workplaces include places of worship, long-term care facilities, prisons, food production, warehouses, meat processing plants, and grocery stores.

As stay-at-home orders are modified, it is essential that all possible steps be taken to ensure the safety of workers and the public.

Key prevention practices include:

- ✓ physical distancing to the maximum extent possible,
- ✓ use of face coverings by employees and volunteers (where respiratory protection is not required) and congregants/visitors,
- ✓ frequent handwashing and regular cleaning and disinfection,
- ✓ training employees and volunteers on these and other elements of the COVID-19 prevention plan.

In addition, it will be critical to have in place appropriate processes to identify new cases of illness in workplaces and, when they are identified, to intervene quickly and work with public health authorities to halt the spread of the virus.

## PURPOSE

This document provides guidance for places of worship and providers of religious services and cultural ceremonies (referred to collectively as “places of worship”) to support a safe, clean environment for employees, interns and trainees, volunteers, scholars, and all other types of workers (referred to collectively as “staff”) as well as congregants, worshippers, visitors, etc. (referred to collectively as “visitors” or “congregants”).

This guidance does not obligate places of worship to resume in-person activity. Further, it is strongly recommended that places of worship continue to facilitate remote services and other related activities for those who are vulnerable to COVID19 including older adults and those with co-morbidities.

Even with adherence to physical distancing, convening in a congregational setting of multiple different households to practice a personal faith carries a relatively higher risk for widespread transmission of the COVID-19 virus, and may result in increased rates of infection, hospitalization, and death, especially among more vulnerable populations. In particular, activities such as singing and group recitation negate the risk-reduction achieved through six feet of physical distancing.

\*Places of worship must therefore limit attendance to 25% of building capacity or a maximum of 100 attendees, whichever is lower. This limitation will be in effect for the first 21-days of a county public health department's approval of religious services and cultural ceremonies activities at places of worship within their jurisdictions.

Upon 21-days, the California Department of Public Health, in consultation with county Departments of Public Health, will review and assess the impact of these imposed limits on public health and provide further direction as part of a phased-in restoration of activities in places of worship.

**NOTE:** This guidance is not intended for food preparation and service, delivery of items to those in need, childcare and daycare services, school and educational activities, in-home caregiving, counseling, office work, and other activities that places and organizations of worship may provide. Organizations that perform these activities must follow applicable guidance on the [COVID-19 Resilience Roadmap website](#).

The guidance is not intended to revoke or repeal any employee rights, either statutory, regulatory or collectively bargained, and is not exhaustive, as it does not include county health orders, nor is it a substitute for any existing safety and health-related regulatory requirements such as those of Cal/OSHA.<sup>1</sup> Stay current on changes to public health guidance and state/local orders, as the COVID-19 situation continues. Cal/OSHA has more safety and health guidance on their Cal/OSHA Guidance on Requirements to Protect Workers from Coronavirus [webpage](#). The CDC has additional guidance [for community- and faith-based organizations](#).



## Workplace Specific Plan

- Establish a written, workplace-specific COVID-19 prevention plan at every location, perform a comprehensive risk assessment of all work areas, and designate a person at each workplace to implement the plan.
- Identify contact information for the local health department where the workplace is located for communicating information about COVID-19 outbreaks among staff and congregants/visitors.
- Train and communicate with staff and employee representatives on the plan.
- Regularly evaluate workplaces for compliance with the plan and document and correct deficiencies identified.
- Investigate any COVID-19 illness and determine if any work-related factors could have contributed to risk of infection. Update the plan as needed to prevent further cases.
- Identify close contacts (within six feet for 15 minutes or more) of an infected staff member and take steps to isolate COVID-19 positive staff and close contacts.
- Adhere to the guidelines below. Failure to do so could result in workplace illnesses that may cause operations to be temporarily closed or limited.



## Topics for Employee and Volunteer Training

- Information on [COVID-19](#), how to prevent it from spreading, and which underlying health conditions may make individuals more susceptible to contracting the virus.
- Self-screening at home, including temperature and/or symptom checks using [CDC guidelines](#).
- The importance of not coming to work or participating in activities if staff have symptoms of COVID-19 as [described by the CDC](#), such as a frequent cough, fever, difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, recent loss of taste or smell, or if they or someone they live with have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

- To seek medical attention if their symptoms become severe, including persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, or bluish lips or face. Updates and further details are available on [CDC's webpage](#).
- The importance of frequent handwashing with soap and water, including scrubbing with soap for 20 seconds (or using hand sanitizer with at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol when staff cannot get to a sink or handwashing station, per [CDC guidelines](#)).
- The importance of physical distancing, both at work and off work time (see Physical Distancing section below).
- Proper use of face coverings, including:
  - Face coverings do not protect the wearer and are not personal protective equipment (PPE).
  - Face coverings can help protect people near the wearer, but do not replace the need for physical distancing and frequent handwashing.
  - Face coverings must cover the nose and mouth.
  - Employees should wash or sanitize hands before and after using or adjusting face coverings.
  - Avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth.
  - Face coverings should be washed after each shift.
- Ensure all types of staff including temporary, contract, and volunteer workers are also properly trained in COVID-19 prevention policies and have necessary PPE. Discuss these responsibilities ahead of time with organizations supplying temporary, contract, and/or volunteer staff.
- Information on employer or government-sponsored leave benefits the employee may be entitled to receive that would make it financially easier to stay at home. See additional information on [government programs supporting sick leave and worker's compensation for COVID-19](#), including employee's sick leave rights under the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) and employee's rights to workers' compensation benefits and presumption of the work-relatedness of COVID-19 pursuant to the Governor's [Executive Order N-62-20](#).



## Individual Control Measures and Screening

- Provide temperature and/or symptom screenings for all staff at the beginning of their shift. Make sure the temperature/symptom screener avoids close contact with staff to the extent possible. Both screeners and staff should wear face coverings for the screening.
- If requiring self-screening at home, which is an appropriate alternative to providing it at the establishment, ensure that screening was performed prior to the worker and/or volunteer leaving the home for their shift and follows [CDC guidelines](#), as described in the Topics for Employee Training section above.
- Encourage staff and congregants/visitors who are sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, or who have family members who are ill, to stay home.
- Employers should provide and ensure workers and volunteers use all required protective equipment, including eye protection and gloves, where necessary.
- Places of worship should consider where disposable gloves use may be helpful to supplement frequent handwashing or use of hand sanitizer; examples are for staff who are screening others for symptoms or handling commonly touched items. All workers and volunteers should wear gloves when handling items contaminated by body fluids.
- Face coverings are strongly recommended when staff are in the vicinity of others. Workers and volunteers should have face coverings available and wear them when at all facilities, in offices, when making home visits as part of providing services, or in a vehicle during work-related travel with others. Face coverings must not be shared. Places of worship are generally encouraged to provide face coverings but must provide them when required by employer rules or these guidelines.
- Staff, volunteers, etc. should not enter the home or visit someone who as tested positive for, exhibited symptoms of, or has been in contact with someone infected with COVID-19 for an appropriate waiting period as [described by CDC guidelines](#).
- Places of worship must take reasonable measures, including posting signage in strategic and highly-visible locations, to remind congregants/visitors that they should use face coverings and practice physical distancing whenever possible. Babies and children under age two should not wear face coverings, in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).

- Use social media, website, texts, email, newsletters, etc., to communicate the steps being taken to protect congregants/visitors and staff so that they are familiar with the policies (including to stay home if experiencing symptoms or are at increased risk of becoming sick, face coverings, physical distancing, handwashing and/or sanitizing, and cough etiquette), before arriving at the facility. Staff and volunteers are strongly encouraged to remind congregants/visitors of these practices with announcements during services or on welcoming guests.
- Congregants/visitors should be screened for temperature and/or symptoms upon arrival to places of worship and asked to use hand sanitizer and to wear face coverings.



## Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols

- Perform thorough cleaning of high traffic areas such as lobbies, halls, chapels, meeting rooms, offices, libraries, and study areas and areas of ingress and egress including stairways, stairwells, handrails, and elevator controls. Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces including doorknobs, toilets, handwashing facilities, pulpits and podiums, donation boxes or plates, altars, and pews and seating areas.
- Establish frequent cleaning and disinfection of personal work areas such as desks and cubicles and supply the necessary cleaning products. Provide time for workers to implement cleaning practices during their shift. Cleaning assignments should be assigned during working hours as part of the staff's job duties.
- Discourage sharing items used in worship and services (such as prayer books, cushions, prayer rugs, etc.) whenever possible and provide single-use or digital copies or ask congregants/visitors to bring personal items instead. Avoid sharing work equipment and supplies, such as phones, office equipment, computers, etc., wherever possible. Never share PPE.
- Where such items must be shared, disinfect between shifts or uses, whichever is more frequent, including the following: shared office equipment (copiers, fax machines, printers, telephones, keyboards, staplers, etc.) and items in shared worship items, etc., with a cleaner appropriate for the surface.
- Ensure that sanitary facilities stay operational and stocked at all times and provide additional soap, paper towels, and hand sanitizer when needed. Consider more frequently cleaning and disinfecting handwashing facilities that are used more often. Use signage to reinforce handwashing.

- Disinfect microphones and stands, music stands, instruments and other items on pulpits and podiums between each use. Consult equipment manufacturers to determine appropriate disinfection steps, particularly for soft, porous surfaces such as foam mufflers.
- Consider using disposable seat covers for congregants/visitors, particularly on porous surfaces or where a facility has multiple daily services. Discard and replace seat covers between each use. Provide disposable or washable covers on pillows used as seating on floors and change/wash them after each use.
- Install hand sanitizer dispensers, touchless whenever possible, at entrances and contact areas such as meeting rooms, lobbies, and elevator landings.
- When choosing cleaning chemicals, establishments should use products approved for use against COVID-19 on the [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)-approved](#) list and follow product instructions. Use disinfectants labeled to be effective against emerging viral pathogens, diluted household bleach solutions (5 tablespoons per gallon of water), or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol that are appropriate for the surface. Provide staff training on manufacturer's directions and Cal/OSHA requirements for safe use. Workers and volunteers using cleaners or disinfectants should wear gloves or other protective equipment as required by the product instructions.
- Wash religious garments and linens after each service or event, at the highest water setting possible. Ask congregants/visitors to bring their own storage bags for personal garments and shoes. Staff, congregants, and visitors should wear gloves when handling others' dirty linens, shoes, etc.
- Discontinue passing offering plates and similar items that move between people. Use alternative giving options such as secure drop boxes that do not require opening/closing and can be cleaned and disinfected. Consider implementing digital systems that allow congregants/visitors to make touch-free offerings.
- Mark walking paths between spaces designated for congregants/visitors to sit/kneel so that people do not walk where someone may touch their head to the floor.
- During meetings and services, introduce fresh outside air, for example by opening doors/windows (weather permitting) and operating ventilation systems.
- Consider installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other



modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in worship areas, offices, and other spaces.



## Physical Distancing Guidelines

- Places of worship should continue to provide services through alternative methods (such as via internet live and/or recorded streaming, telephone, drive-in, etc.) whenever possible.
- Consider holding in-person meetings and providing in-person services outside whenever possible.
- Implement measures to ensure physical distancing of at least six feet between workers, staff, congregants/visitors, etc. This can include use of physical partitions or visual cues (e.g., floor or pew markings or signs to indicate where people should sit and stand). Reconfigure seating and standing areas to maintain physical distancing of six feet or more between congregants/visitors from different households. Consider limiting seating to alternate rows. Members of the same household may be seated together but should maintain at least six feet of distance from other households.
- Consider dedicating staff to help people maintain distances during activities.
- Shorten services to limit the length of time congregants/visitors spend at facilities whenever possible. This could include limiting speeches, asking congregants/visitors to put on garments at home before arrival, etc.
- Close places of worship for visitation outside of scheduled services, meetings, etc., whenever possible.
- Consider implementing a reservation system to limit the number of congregants/visitors attending facilities at a time. This can include the use of digital platforms or other types of tools.
- Encourage congregants/visitors to meet with the same group, particularly when services meet frequently and/or require a certain number of people to be present. This can reduce the spread of transmission by minimizing the number of different individuals who come into close contact with each other.
- Consider offering additional meeting times (per day or per week) so that fewer guests attend meetings and services at one time. Clean meeting areas between each use as described in this guidance.

- Discontinue large gatherings that encourage congregants/visitors to travel and break physical distances during activities, such as concerts, large holiday and life event celebrations and remembrances.
- Children should remain in the care of those in their household unit and not interact with children of other parties at any time while visiting facilities. Close play areas and discontinue activities and services for children where physical distancing of at least six feet cannot be maintained.
- Encourage congregants/visitors to physically distance themselves from others outside their household, avoid touching surfaces, and to leave the facility if they do not feel well.
- Consider limiting touching for religious and/or cultural purposes, such as holding hands, to members of the same household.
- Dedicate staff to direct guests to meeting rooms upon entry to places of worship rather than congregating in lobbies or common areas. Consider using ushers to help people find places to sit and stand that are at least six feet apart from other guests/household groups. Ask congregants/visitors to arrive and leave in a single group to minimize crossflow of people. Welcome and dismiss congregants/visitors from altars, podiums, meeting rooms, etc. in an orderly way to maintain physical distancing and minimize crossflow of traffic, to the extent possible.
- Prop or hold doors open during peak periods when congregants/visitors are entering and exiting facilities, if possible and in accordance with security and safety protocols.
- Close or restrict common areas, such as break rooms, kitchenettes, foyers, etc. where people are likely to congregate and interact. Consider installing barriers or increase physical distance between tables/seating when there is continued use of these areas.
- Turn off public drinking water fountains and place signs informing congregants/visitors they are inoperable.
- Remove from service or find low-community touch alternatives for communal/religious water containers such as fonts, sinks, and vessels. Empty and change water between uses. Where there is a possibility of contaminant splash, staff, congregants, visitors, etc., are strongly encouraged to use equipment to protect the eyes, nose, and mouth using a combination of face coverings, protective glasses, and/or face shields. Reusable protective equipment such as shields and glasses should be properly disinfected between uses.
- When washing is a required activity, modify practices whenever possible to limit splashing and the need to clean and disinfect washing facilities.

Encourage necessary washing to be performed at home prior to entering a facility, if possible.

- Reconfigure podiums and speaker areas, office spaces, meeting rooms, conference rooms, etc., to allow for at least six feet between people. Face coverings are strongly recommended at all times for congregants/visitors and staff, especially when physical distance of at least six feet is not possible.
- Establish directional hallways and passageways for foot traffic, if possible, and designate separate routes for entry and exit into meeting rooms, offices, etc., to help maintain physical distancing and lessen the instances of people closely passing each other.
- Limit the number of individuals riding in an elevator and ensure the use of face coverings. Post signage regarding these policies.
- Utilize practices, when feasible and necessary, to limit the number of staff and congregants/visitors in office, meeting spaces, etc., at one time. This may include scheduling (e.g. staggering start/end times), establishing alternating days for onsite reporting, returning to places of worship in phases, or continued use of telework when feasible.
- Consider offering workers and volunteers who request modified duties options that minimize their contact with congregants/visitors and other staff (e.g., office duties rather than working as an usher or managing administrative needs through telework).
- Stagger staff breaks, in compliance with wage and hour regulations, to maintain physical distancing protocols.
- Discontinue nonessential travel and encourage distance meetings via phone and internet.
- Close self-service item selection such as pamphlet displays and bookshelves and provide these items to congregants/visitors individually as necessary. Consider delivering items and information electronically.
- Consider limiting the number of people that use the restroom at one time to allow for physical distancing.
- Discourage staff, congregants, visitors, etc., from engaging in handshakes, hugs, and similar greetings that break physical distance. Take reasonable measures to remind people to wave or use other greetings.
- Reconfigure parking lots to limit congregation points and ensure proper separation (e.g., closing every other space). If performing drive-in

services, ensure vehicle windows and doors are closed if six feet of distance is not possible between vehicles.

- Continue to support non-in person attendance of services and other related activities by those who are vulnerable to COVID19 including older adults and those with co-morbidities.



## Considerations for Places of Worship

- Discontinue offering self-service food and beverages. Do not hold potlucks or similar family-style eating and drinking events that increase the risk of cross contamination. If food and beverages must be served, provide items in single-serve, disposable containers whenever possible. Employees or volunteers serving food should wash hands frequently and wear disposable gloves and face coverings.
- Strongly consider discontinuing singing, group recitation, and other practices and performances where there is increased likelihood for transmission from contaminated exhaled droplets. Modify practices such as limiting the number people reciting or singing, ensuring physical distancing greater than six feet between people, or opt to celebrate these practices outside with physical distancing, etc., if these practices cannot be discontinued.
- Consider modifying practices that are specific to particular faith traditions that might encourage the spread of COVID-19. Examples are discontinuing kissing of ritual objects, allowing rites to be performed by fewer people, avoiding the use of a common cup, offering communion in the hand instead of on the tongue, providing pre-packed communion items on chairs prior to service, etc., in accordance with [CDC guidelines](#).



## Considerations for Funerals

- Consider reduced visitor capacity and stagger visitation times at funerals, wakes, etc., if possible. Follow all cleaning and disinfection measures as described in this guidance. Whenever possible, remind visitors to maintain physical distance from each other, from staff and volunteers, and from the deceased.
- Consider modifying religious or cultural practices when washing or shrouding bodies of those who have died from COVID-19, in accordance with guidance from [CDPH](#) and the [CDC](#). If washing the body or shrouding are important religious or cultural practices, work with funeral home staff and families to reduce exposure as much as possible. All people

participating in these activities must wear disposable gloves and if there will be splashing of fluids, people must use additional protective equipment including protection for the eyes, nose, and mouth, such as face shields.

- Consult and comply with local guidance regarding limits on gathering sizes, travel, holding funerals for those who died from COVID-19, etc.
- Consider other recommendations and modifications of services related to places of worship outlined above, as applicable for funeral services.

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<sup>1</sup>Additional requirements must be considered for vulnerable populations. Places of worship must comply with all [Cal/OSHA](#) standards and be prepared to adhere to its guidance as well as guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and the [California Department of Public Health \(CDPH\)](#). Additionally, places of worship must be prepared to alter their operations as those guidelines change.