Return to Worship Guidelines

- Our guidelines are based on:
  - The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and state and local health department recommended guidelines for houses of worship
  - Established interventions and modifications to prepare for facility re-occupancy
  - An understanding that the congregation must follow the established guidelines to avoid potential transmission and exposure to COVID-19
  - Our congregation’s desire and expectations for a safe environment for their worship experience
Key Principles

- **Focused On:**
  - Social and Physical Distancing
  - Cleaning and Disinfection
  - Face Coverings and Face Masks
  - Personal Hygiene
  - Health Monitoring
  - Communication
Social and Physical Distancing: Sanctuaries and Other Worship/Teaching Locations

- Worship services will be in the Dorchester and Kenwood sanctuaries, the banquet hall, and The Family Center gymnasium.
- Seating capacity will be reduced in our sanctuaries. Once capacity is reached the ushers will direct towards the next available location.
- Follow the seating guidance and direction of the ushers
- The colored dots on the back of each pew are positioned every 6 ft. Sit in the open row facing the dots and position yourself as close as possible to the dot
- Members of the same household can be seated together. All others in the congregation must remain at 6 ft. apart from each other.
- The pew row in front of you and behind you will be empty to establish social distancing.
- If possible limit your movement during service.
Social and Physical Distancing: Elevators, Corridors, Lobbies, Stairs and Restrooms

- Where a face cover or mask when using the elevators and walking though corridors and lobbies
- Use the stairs if you are able. Elevators may be shutdown, and those in operation will be limited to one or two people thus increasing wait times.
- Follow signage designating the direction of foot traffic. In the absence of signage, stay to the right of any corridor or stairway when others are passing. Maintain 6ft. of social distancing
- You may find some doors open in restrooms to avoid frequent touching of the door and handles.
- Certain restroom sinks and stalls will be taped off to maintain social distancing and to reduce occupancy.
- Drinking fountains will be disabled during this period of our return
Physical Contact Reductions

- Members and visitors must refrain from any physical greeting, including hugging, kissing, and hand shaking.
- During the lifting of tithes and offerings the traditional passing of the basket by each member of the congregation will not occur. Ushers will utilize the un-occupied pew aisle to walk and collect the offering in a touch free manner. Text-to-Give and online giving remains the electronic opportunity to give.
- The Hospitality Ministry will continue greeting our members from a safe social distance and will refrain from handshaking.
- The book store will remain closed during this period of COVID-19.
- The church van will not be in service until further notice.
- The Sanctuary Choir will not minister in song during this phase of our return to worship. The Praise Team will minister from a social distance.
Physical Contact Reductions (cont.)

- At the end of all services an alter call will be made and the doors of the church will be open to baptism. The Baptism Ministry will direct those who have given their lives to Christ towards the alter and prayer room in a touch-free and socially distant manner. Candidates for baptism will receive water baptism at a later reserved date and time.

- Banquet Hall food service is not available.

- Programs, classes, special events, and children’s activities that require on-site meeting rooms and event space are postponed during this period.

- Limit all group gathering that inhibits flow of foot traffic and social distancing.

- The Pastor may adjust service start times, reduce the length of services, or increase the number of services to accommodate service capacity reductions.
Face Coverings (Face Masks)

- Entry into the building requires that you wear a face covering or mask, and worn at all times in all areas of the church regardless of social distancing.
- Anyone who has difficulty breathing, is unable to remove the face covering or mask without assistance, or feels they cannot wear it within the building should remain home at this time.
- Briefly lowering or adjusting your face covering or mask for a breath of fresh air is acceptable. It must remain on during talking/singing.
- Upon noticing that a member or visitor of the congregation is not wearing a face covering or mask, an usher will humbly provide a reminder of the requirement and may offer a replacement if necessary. Blatant and aggressive refusal to adhere to this church requirement may result in Internal Security asking that you remove yourself from service.
Cleaning and Disinfection & Ventilation Systems

- All high traffic areas and frequently touched objects such as lobbies, elevator buttons, handrails, doorknobs, restrooms, pews, baptism pools, and carpeting will be cleaned and disinfected frequently.

- Each sanctuary and location used for conducting services will be disinfected after each service ends with an extra concentrated focus on the pew’s seat, back frame, and arm along with any chairs used.

- All of our disinfectants are EPA-registered and approved to use in our church environment to kill germs and viruses such as Coronavirus.

- Our ventilation systems have been assessed for proper operation by a qualified HVAC contractor. Building rooftops units allow for outside air to be introduced in the system. Entrance doors also aid in fresh air circulation and some will remain open periodically.
Personal Hygiene

- Practice handwashing and respiratory etiquette (covering your nose and mouth when sneezing and coughing)

- Do not attend service if you are sick, limit touching of shared surfaces to reduce the spread of the virus.

- Hand sanitizer and wipes will be made available for the use of everyone throughout the church campus. It is expected that members and visitors will utilize the hand sanitizer stations upon entering the building and during other opportunities for use.
Health Monitoring

- A wide range of symptoms have been reported among people diagnosed with COVID-19, and symptoms typically appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Symptoms include but are not limited to:
  - A persistent cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Chills
  - Sore Throat
  - Fever temperature greater than 100.4 F

- Members and visitors should stay home and not come to church if they are showing symptoms of COVID-19. Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying lung, heart, immune system and other medical issues are at an elevated risk and should not attend service.

- To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the risk of exposure, a designated team will conduct individual temperature screening as members, visitors, and staff enter into the church building.
Health Monitoring (con’t)

- Should an elevated temperature be detected, one additional screening will be taken by the medical ministry staff after a 5 minute cool down period between the initial and second screening. If the second screening is below 100.4° F the person will be allowed entry into the building.

- Anyone confirmed with an elevated fever temperature above 100.4° F or who is experiencing coughing or shortness of breath will be denied access and asked to return home.

- That person should monitor his or her symptoms at home and reach out to a health care professional for discussion on his or her condition.

- (*) The presence of an elevated temperature above 100.4 is not considered by the church to be evidence that the person screened is positive for COVID-19.
Communications

- Updates to the Apostolic Church of God Return to Worship Guidelines will remain dynamic and under review. The conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic will be monitored through CDC, state, and local health department agencies communication portals. Check the church website at www.acog-chicago and our other social media platforms for any current information affecting our worship services and church operational status.

- Church COVID-19 administrative leaders will fully cooperate with any inquires issued by the City of Chicago and the local health department concerning our campus operations and congregational services during this pandemic period. Should the church be informed that someone in attendance has formally reported a diagnosis of a confirmed case of COVID-19, the name of the individual will not be shared with the congregation or the public during any follow-up communication procedures.

- For more information or to confirm service times contact ACOG administrative office at 773-667-1500.