

GUIDELINES FOR GROUPS TO START GATHERING

“We recognize that some of you may be nervous about meeting at all—and that’s okay, you don’t have to—and others of you may feel like any sort of meeting restrictions are unnecessary. We’ve adopted these guidelines because we want to preserve our witness for Jesus to our communities by following our local, state, and national leaders, and because we want to show our care for others as we return to physical gatherings. None of us would want to be responsible for an outbreak that could devastate lives.

- A. Illness – Group members should stay home if they or anyone in their household is sick.
- B. Location – Select a gathering place where you can safely distance. Meeting outside is encouraged when possible.
- C. Masks – We are asking group members to wear masks, especially in the time people are arriving and socializing. Once group members are safely distanced, masks may be removed at the discretion of the leader and participants.
- D. Food – We are big proponents of food at small group gatherings, but during this season we are recommending that groups not eat together. If you do choose to eat, encourage members to bring their own beverage and snack.
- E. Greetings – As much as some will miss hugging or shaking hands with other group members, for now it is wise to avoid physical contact.
- F. Cleaning – The host should be prepared to clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched both before and after group (Door handles, chairs, restrooms, etc.).
- G. Virtual Option – Not everyone will feel comfortable attending in person at first. Consider setting up a computer in your meeting area so group members can join in via videoconference.
- H. Childcare – Due to the challenge of having young children practice distancing, at this time we are asking groups not bring children to meetings.
- I. High Risk Individuals – Those who are 65+ or who have serious underlying health conditions are strongly encouraged to join an online small group rather than an in-person one. Groups comprised largely of high-risk individuals are encouraged to continue meeting virtually.
- J. Group Size – Groups of more than 10 people that choose to meet in person should divide the group up and meet in different places or at different times.”