

# PHASED REGATHERING PLAN

In response to the question, “When will our church reopen?”, we have a simple response: *We never closed*. It might seem like a subtle distinction, but it’s important. Because we believe that the church is defined by its people - not its property - our churches have continued to meet, to be open, and to *be the church* during the stay at home orders necessitated by this year’s coronavirus pandemic. And so, our plan is not to reopen, but to re-gather in person for services but continue to be distributed and deployed within our communities in an effort to continue being people helping people find and follow Jesus.

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## OUR REGATHERING PLAN IS COMPRISED OF THREE MAIN PHASES:

- » **Phase 1:** Home Churches: Gatherings of Family
- » **Phase 2:** Neighborhood Churches: Gatherings of Dozens
- » **Phase 2.5:** Pop-Up Churches: Outdoor Gatherings of Dozens or Hundreds
- » **Phase 3:** Community Churches: Gatherings of Hundreds

We entered into Phase 1 in mid-March and remain in that phase at the present time. Please note that the phases listed here do not correspond to the reopening phases detailed by San Diego County or the State of California. Going forward, we are not yet able to put specific dates to when the next two phases will be implemented, but the broad outline of each of the phases is as follows:

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## PHASE 1

### Home Churches: Gatherings of Family (*Current Phase, started in March*)

This first phase of our strategy has been characterized by online-only services and growth group meetings. Out of an abundance of care for vulnerable members of our community and with respect for the wisdom and advice offered by public health authorities, we have transitioned all of our services and gatherings to online-only formats, restricted on-site staffing, and temporarily suspended operations for our weekday preschool. Our services, growth groups, support groups, and even our growth track offerings have all been offered in formats for individuals and family members to experience in the privacy of their homes, reflecting the value of “church at home”. We will continue in this phase until such a time as public health authorities allow for gatherings of small groups of people.

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## PHASE 2

### Neighborhood Churches: Gatherings of Dozens

In the second phase of our strategy, we will adopt a hybrid of online services and smaller-format, in person gatherings. Church members will be invited to host “neighborhood churches” in their homes, apartments, backyards, and patios, where groups of between ten and thirty (depending

on public health guidelines) can gather to share in the experience of the online service, an acoustic service with live, in-person teaching, or a hybrid of the two. In this phase, church members are encouraged to invite friends and neighbors to join them for these smaller-format gatherings, which will offer either the online service or a live service with acoustic worship and live teaching, followed by a short interactive discussion.

We will continue in this phase until we are able to gather in person at our various campuses and locations and offer full kids and students programs with all of the components of the weekend worship experience that our community has come to expect from us.

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## **PHASE 2.5**

### **Pop-Up Churches: Outdoor Gatherings of Dozens or Hundreds**

Between the second and third phases of our strategy, we will initiate a series of outdoor and socially distanced gatherings that will meet on a periodic basis and feature live teaching and live worship. These gatherings serve in a sort of “bridge” function, between the smaller and more intimate environment of a neighborhood church and the larger gatherings with full offerings of age-appropriate kids and students programs. Pop-Up Churches are announced a few days in advance of each event and offer an outdoor environment with members and attenders wearing masks for the comfort and safety of everyone in attendance. This phase will continue until full age-appropriate programs and indoor worship experiences are safe and appropriate for everyone.

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## **PHASE 3**

### **Community Churches: Gatherings of Hundreds**

In the final phase of our regathering strategy, we will return to large format gatherings for weekend services, offer full in-person kids and students programs, and resume all of our on-campus groups, gatherings, events, and programs. We accept and embrace that we may need to modify some of our practices and behaviors while adopting new practices to ensure safety for our guests. In general, this phase will resemble a “return to normal”, in which the rhythms and patterns of our church return in many ways to their pre-coronavirus state; however, we fully understand that a “new normal” of how we experience public gatherings may evolve over time.



	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 2.5	PHASE 3
<b>Phase description</b>	Home Churches / Gatherings of Family (Current / During stay at home orders)	Neighborhood Churches / Gatherings of Dozens	Pop-Up Churches: Outdoor Gatherings of Dozens or Hundreds	Community Churches / Gatherings of Hundreds
<b>Overview</b>	All programs and services offered in online-only format.	Hybrid of online-services and backyard/home gatherings within limits of public health guidelines (assuming group limits of somewhere between 10 and 30). On a weekly basis, groups/gatherings can choose to watch online service together or employ live format (acoustic worship / live teacher). Live worship and teaching provided by trained staff and volunteer teams. Following service, groups will participate in a 3-question discussion group.	Live outdoor gatherings announced on a periodic, event-by-event basis. Attendees are socially distanced and wear masks.	Return to weekly in-person gatherings on campus with full kids and students programs.
<b>Social distancing</b>	Strict	Moderate / as determined by County and/or California public health authorities.	Moderate. Families sit together with appropriate social distancing between different family groups.	Moderate / as determined by San Diego and/or California public health authorities.
<b>Vulnerable populations</b>	Stay at home	Stay at home	Stay at home	Discretionary
<b>Max group/crowd size</b>	No group gatherings	10-30 (as determined by public health authorities)	As appropriate for outdoor venue	No size limit
<b>Worship services</b>	Online only services	Online services Neighborhood Churches *Larger outdoor worship gatherings on a periodic basis as allowable on campus or at rented outdoor facility.	Online services / Neighborhood churches /Live outdoor worship and teaching	Online services Neighborhood Churches On Campus services offered live in multiple auditoriums for multiple seating options.
<b>Growth groups Support groups Seminars</b>	Online only	Online or in person, depending on group/leader preference and in compliance with public health guidelines.	Online and outdoors (with appropriate social distancing)	Online and in person
<b>Kids programs (Birth-elementary)</b>	Online only (weekly Kids United service & zoom calls with ministry leaders)	Online only (weekly Kids United service & zoom calls with ministry leaders)	Online only (weekly Kids United service & zoom calls with ministry leaders)	All age-based programs open back up on campus during weekend services
<b>Students programs (Jr high &amp; high school)</b>	Online only (weekly United Students service & zoom growth groups)	Online only for United Students service Growth Groups may gather in person in homes/backyards if guidelines permit.	Online only for United Students service Growth Groups may gather in person in homes/backyards if guidelines permit.	All programs for Jr. high & High School students resume as live, in-person gatherings

\*The phases of our regathering plan are not correlated to the reopening phases detailed by San Diego County or the State of California.