



# Seventh-day Adventist® Church

TEXAS CONFERENCE

## Texas Conference Statement Regarding Churches Reopening

The Texas Conference administration understands and sympathizes with our employees, members and communities during this current crisis of COVID-19. On June 29, 2020, we announced the strong recommendation to suspend all in-person worship services for our Texas Conference churches for at least the month of July to do our part to diminish community spread of COVID-19. As we monitor the latest information provided by medical experts, the numbers of positive cases in Texas, unfortunately for the most part, are not on a downward trajectory; and in fact, in some areas, are increasing with alarming rates. Thankfully, some selected areas of the state are showing signs of leveling, but we must remain vigilant.

As August approaches and discussions take place about children returning to school, many are worried about increase transmission and more reported positive cases. As of this recording, our education team is working on a plan to safely return to in-person school on August 18. The health and safety of our staff and students are of utmost importance as they create this plan.

With this in mind, the Texas conference administration understands the need to cautiously reopen its churches and encourages several factors to consider and apply:

- Churches that desire to reopen, must have local church board approval
- Follow local county governments guidelines for in-person gatherings
- Follow CDC and Texas Health officials' guidelines for places of worship, especially as it pertains to cleanliness and sanitation
- Keep attendance less than 50% capacity for building occupancy for in-person worship
- Continue online worship options for those not comfortable attending
- Refer to the Texas Conference Return to Church Guidelines for phases and updates ([texasadventist.org/returningtochurch](https://texasadventist.org/returningtochurch)).

We cannot stress enough the importance of protecting our employees, members and community.

We are admonished in scripture, "Blessed are those who have regard for the weak; the LORD delivers them in times of trouble." Psalm 41:1 (NIV).

As a community of faith, we are called to do "no harm" and to "be our brothers and sisters' keeper."

Although we can't stop this current crisis, we can do our part to care for our fellow human beings by limiting our gatherings while still sharing the love of Jesus online.