**UPDATE – June 9, 2020**

**FLORIDA PHASE 2**

Florida entered Phase 2 of its reopening plan on Friday, June 5. As mentioned in an earlier update, this plan does not ment6ion churches directly, but does give guidance regarding public gatherings and at-risk populations:

* Individuals older than 65 years of age and individuals with a serious underlying medical condition (such as chronic lung disease, moderate-to-severe asthma, serious heart conditions, immune-compromised status, cancer, diabetes, severe obesity, renal failure and liver disease) should continue to stay at home. When leaving the home, these individuals should follow social distancing and other general mitigation guidance.
* All individuals should continue to maximize physical distance from others in public, particularly in enclosed environments.
* Individuals should avoid socializing in groups of more than 50 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate social distancing of at least 6 feet. ([Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step. PLAN FOR FLORIDA’S RECOVERY](https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/covid19/Taskforce%20Report.pdf), page 23)

The Florida Department of Health’s [COVID-19 Dashboard](https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/96dd742462124fa0b38ddedb9b25e429) reports an increase in new infections since the beginning of June, averaging over 1,000 new infections per day. (For the most part, deaths continue to trend downward.) The reasons for the increase are likely multiple and diverse, from a greater number of more accurate tests being conducted to people letting their guard down through the Memorial Day holiday weekend and other public gatherings. As sessions continue to implement reopening plans, they should pay attention to the guidance of local officials, particularly if this trend continues.

In the counties of Central Florida Presbytery, the incidence of COVID-19 has remained fairly consistent.

* Higher impact counties: Orange (2,449 infections, 390 hospitalizations, 45 deaths); Osceola (762/165/21); Volusia (837/164/46); Seminole (556/117/12).
* Moderate impact: Brevard (471/73/13); Lake (339/82/15); Sumter (264/45/17).
* Lower impact: Indian River (167/37/11); Highlands (150/41/9); Okeechobee (143/13/0).
* Statistics as of 06/08/2020 and represent at least three months’ data.

Unsurprisingly, the more densely populated counties along the I-4 corridor have experienced the higher impact from COVID-19, while the other six counties in the presbytery have seen lesser impact. Our son, Jonathan, told me they have seen a decrease in infections in the New Orleans metropolitan area, but have seen an increase in some of the parishes that border the metropolitan area. This is anecdotal information, but sessions should be attentive to the possibility that something similar could happen here in Florida as social interaction increases during Phase 2.

**CLEANING, DISINFECTING, AND SANTIZING FACILITIES**

Congregations looking for additional guidance on protocols to follow for resuming in-person worship may want to register for a one-hour course offered by CongregationU titled “[Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Worship Facility](https://congregationu.com/online-course-cleaning-and-disinfecting-your-worship-facility/).” This course covers these subjects:

* The differences among cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing
* Tools and materials needed for an effective cleaning program
* Planning for the frequency and variety of tasks for specific areas within a facility
* Training your staff and volunteers about safety.

The cost for the course is $20 per user.

**RACIAL JUSTICE RESOURCES**

Sessions and leaders seeking resources on racial justice issues following the unfortunate events in Minneapolis may want to visit the [resource page](https://www.pcusa.org/racial-justice-resources/) on the General Assembly web site. This page includes statements from the General Assembly and various mid-councils, worship resources, recommended books and other materials for study, training, and discussion.

Dismantling systematic racism is one of the three “legs” of the Matthew 25 movement. Congregations that have registered as Matthew 25 Congregations should have received information about a Zoom online gathering on June 10, from 1:50-3:00 p.m. The gathering will

* celebrate this bold invitation and your commitment to become a Matthew 25 church
* inspire with amazing stories of the impact of Matthew 25 churches
* commission participants to share the Matthew 25 vision so that others may wake up to the possibilities of serving God’s people.

There are limited spaces available. Register for the event [here](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJIpfuuhqz0vE9DY8GyaS6vkT9Sw3-Dng_QV?utm_source=ActiveCampaign&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Register+Today+for+the+Matthew+25%3A+A+Gathering+and+Commissioning+on+June+10th&utm_campaign=Matthew+25+May+2020+reminder).

**SPAM EMAIL**

Over the weekend, I received word of an attempt to spoof me with an appeal for EBay gift cards to be given to hospice care patients. The email address used is a Gmail one which is not mine, and the message is signed “Rev. Dr. Dan Williams,” a form of signature I do not use. When I am signing things formally, I use “Daniel S. Williams,” most of the time without “Rev. Dr.” Of course, the Presbytery does not request anyone to send gift cards as contributions for purported worthy causes, as this email requests. Please ignore this if you received it.

Dan Williams

Executive Presbyter / Stated Clerk