

Statement of Churches in the Greater Houston Area
Concerning the Pace of Resuming In-Person Worship
April 24, 2020 (*Updated April 27, 2020*)

The pastors and leaders of the undersigned churches and Christian groups continue to pray for an end to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are lifting up all those who are grieving, those who are sick, the front-line first responders, healthcare workers and others who are putting themselves at risk for the welfare of our communities.

Our congregations and organizations are working hard to find creative ways of ministering to our people and serving our communities. We are mobilizing our people to make masks to share with those who need them. We continue to reach out to our neighbors to meet their physical needs.

We appreciate Governor Abbott's recognition of religious liberty, and that churches provide "essential services." We also agree with our governmental leaders that the resumption of in-person gatherings for worship, study and fellowship needs to be intentionally slow and deliberately guided by medical expertise so that we do no harm as Christian communities.

We believe that in-person gatherings for worship that are larger than 50 persons should not take place in April or May. We will not have in-person worship but will continue offering worship online. In making this decision, we have the unanimous support of the leaders of the Texas Medical Center who strongly recommend these actions for all the faith communities of Greater Houston. We can see clearly at this time that resumption of larger group gatherings should not happen in the next six weeks. Deciding when to resume in-person worship for larger gatherings should be evaluated as new information about the rate of new cases and the availability of testing is available.

As pastors and leaders we have all expressed a need for better insight and more guidance as we determine next steps. Over the next few weeks we intend to share information and best practices with one another so that we can be faithful to our calling in Christ, guided by expert medical counsel and respectful to our government officials.

Denominational organizations

Bishop Andy Doyle, Episcopal Diocese of Texas

Rev. Josh Ellis, PhD, Executive Director, Union Baptist Association

Rev. Lynn R. Hargrove, General Presbyter + Stated Clerk for Administrative Process, Presbytery of New Covenant, PC(USA)

Bishop Scott J. Jones, Texas Annual Conference, The United Methodist Church

Congregations

Agape Community Bible Church

All Saints' Episcopal Church - Hitchcock

Ascension Episcopal Church - Houston

Atascocita Presbyterian Church

Bayou City Fellowship
Bering Memorial United Methodist Church
Bethany Baptist Church
Bissonnet Baptist Church
Cambodian Baptist Church of Houston
Chapelwood United Methodist Church
Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral - Houston
Christ Episcopal Church - Eagle Lake
Christ Episcopal Church - Matagorda
Christ the King Episcopal Church - Alief
Cornerstone Church Ministries
Cypress Trails United Methodist Church
Ecclesia Houston
El Mesias United Methodist Church
Emmanuel Episcopal Church - Houston
Faith United Methodist Church - Spring
Faithbridge Church
Fellowship Community Baptist Church - Baytown
First Metropolitan Church
Free Indeed Church International
Garden Oaks Baptist Church
Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church
Good Shepherd Episcopal Church - Friendswood
Good Shepherd Episcopal Church - Kingwood
Good Shepherd Episcopal Church - Tomball
Good Shepherd Episcopal Indian Church - Stafford
Grace Episcopal Church - Alvin
Grace Episcopal Church - Galveston
Grace Fellowship United Methodist Church - Katy
Grace Presbyterian Church
Harvest Point Fellowship
Higher Expectations Church
Holy Apostles Episcopal Church - Katy
Holy Comforter Episcopal Church - Spring
Holy Spirit Episcopal Church - Houston
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church - Dickinson
Hope Episcopal Church - Houston
Houston Mennonite Church
Houston Northwest Church
Houston Praise And Worship Center
Humble First United Methodist Church
Iglesia Episcopal San Pedro - Pasadena
Iglesia Episcopal San Romero - Houston
Iglesia Episcopal Santa María Virgen - Houston
Jacinto City United Methodist Church
Jones Memorial United Methodist Church

Kingwood United Methodist Church
Klein United Methodist Church
Lake Houston United Methodist Church
Lakeland Missionary Baptist Church
Lakewood United Methodist Church
Long Point Baptist Church
Lord of the Streets Episcopal Mission - Houston
Nartown Church
New Beginning Community Baptist Church
New Testament Baptist Church - Conroe
Northside Episcopal Church
Northwoods Presbyterian Church
Nueva Creación United Methodist Church
Park Village Baptist Church
Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church - Houston
Pleasant Hill Baptist
River Pointe Church
Riverside United Methodist Church
Second Baptist Channelview Church
Shaw Tabernacle United Methodist Church
Silverlake Church
Sloan United Methodist Church
South Main Baptist Church- Houston
South Main Baptist Church- Pasadena
Spring Woods United Methodist Church
St. Alban's Episcopal Church - Houston
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church - Pearland
St. Andrew's Episcopal Church - The Heights, Houston
St. Andrew's United Methodist Church
St. Augustine of Hippo Episcopal Church - Galveston
St. Catherine of Sienna Episcopal Church - Missouri City
St. Christopher's Episcopal Church - Houston
St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church - Houston
St. Francis' Episcopal Church - Houston
St. George's Episcopal Church - Texas City
St. Isidore Episcopal Church - Spring
St. James the Apostle Episcopal Church - Conroe
St. John the Divine Episcopal Church - Houston
St. John's Episcopal Church - LaPorte
St. Luke's United Methodist Church
St. Luke the Evangelist Episcopal Church - Houston
St. Mark's Episcopal Church - Houston
St. Mark's Episcopal Church - Richmond
St. Mark's United Methodist Church (Patterson)
St. Martin's Episcopal Church - Houston
St. Mary's Episcopal Church - Cypress

St. Paul's / San Pablo Episcopal Church - Houston
St. Paul's Episcopal Church - Katy
St. Paul's United Methodist Church - Conroe
St. Philip the Evangelist Episcopal Church - Houston
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church - Houston
St. Stephen's United Methodist Church
St. Thomas the Apostle Episcopal Church - Nassau Bay
Strawbridge United Methodist Church - Kingwood
Sugar Land Baptist Church
Sweetwater Christian Church
Tallowood Baptist Church
The Church Without Walls
The MET Church
The Woodlands United Methodist Church
Trinity Episcopal Church - Baytown
Trinity Episcopal Church - Galveston
Trinity Episcopal Church - Midtown Houston
Trinity Episcopal Church - The Woodlands
Truevine Missionary Baptist Church
University Baptist Church
Webster Presbyterian Church
West University United Methodist Church
Westbury Baptist Church
Westbury United Methodist Church
Westminster United Methodist Church
Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church
Wilcrest Baptist Church
WoodsEdge Community Church