

Statement of Churches in the Greater Houston Area  
Concerning the Pace of Resuming In-Person Worship  
April 24, 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<sup>[SEP]</sup> place in April or May. We will not have in-person worship but will continue offering<sup>[SEP]</sup> 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<sup>[SEP]</sup> 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  
Chapelwood United Methodist Church  
Christ Church Episcopal Cathedral - Houston  
Christ Episcopal Church - Eagle Lake  
Christ Episcopal Church - Matagorda  
Cypress Trails United Methodist Church  
Ecclesia Houston  
El Mesias United Methodist Church  
Emmanuel Episcopal Church - Houston  
Faith United Methodist Church - Spring  
Faithbridge Church  
First Metropolitan Church  
Free Indeed Church International  
Good Hope Missionary Baptist Church  
Good Shepherd Episcopal Church - Friendswood  
Good Shepherd Episcopal Church - Kingwood  
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 Spirit Episcopal Church - Houston  
Holy Trinity Episcopal Church - Dickinson  
Hope Episcopal Church - Houston  
Houston Mennonite Church  
Houston Northwest Church  
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  
Lakewood United Methodist Church  
Lord of the Streets Episcopal Mission - Houston  
Neartown Church  
Northside Episcopal Church  
Northwoods Presbyterian Church  
Nueva Creación United Methodist Church

Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church - Houston  
Pleasant Hill Baptist  
River Pointe Church  
Riverside United Methodist Church  
Shaw Tabernacle United Methodist Church  
Sloan United Methodist Church  
South Main Baptist Church- Houston  
South Main Baptist Church- Pasadena  
Spring Woods United Methodist Church  
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. Christopher's Episcopal Church - Houston  
St. Francis' Episcopal Church - Houston  
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. Mark's Episcopal Church - Richmond  
St. Mark's Episcopal Church - Houston  
St. Mark's United Methodist Church (Patterson)  
St. Martin's Episcopal Church - Houston  
St. Paul's / San Pablo Episcopal Church - Houston  
St. Paul's United Methodist Church - Conroe  
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  
Tallowood Baptist Church  
The Church Without Walls  
The MET Church  
The Woodlands United Methodist Church  
Trinity Episcopal Church - Baytown  
Trinity Episcopal Church - Houston  
Trinity Episcopal Church - Galveston  
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