



# Western North Carolina Conference

The United Methodist Church

## COVID-19 Update for Local Churches – February 26, 2021

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*Follow Jesus, Make Disciples, Transform The World*

Yesterday, Governor Cooper issued an easing of Covid-19 restrictions. The Bishop and Cabinet remain committed to our biblical mandate to “love our neighbors as ourselves” and our Wesleyan call to “Do no harm.”

We celebrate that percentages of positive test results and hospitalizations continue to show improvement while vaccine distribution increases. However, we are also aware that people across our conference are losing loved ones each day. Thus, we continue to recommend that all local churches and other ministries follow the guidance of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services ([NCDHHS](#)) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC](#)) as they make decisions about indoor worship, small groups, and other gatherings.

Using Governor Cooper’s [Executive Order No. 195](#) as a guide, the Bishop and Cabinet make these specific recommendations:

- For those churches whose counties are not in the “[red](#),” indoor worship may be considered using a limit of 30% capacity or 250 persons, whichever is less. When determining the number who can safely gather in the sanctuary or worship space, social distancing should be maintained, and masks must be worn. The recommendation for no full-choir or congregational singing remains in effect.
- A 25-person limit should be maintained for all other gathering inside the church building. Please continue to socially distance and wear masks at these events as well.

As we continue to journey through the season of Lent, may we be mindful of the over 500,000 persons in the United States who have lost their lives during this pandemic and may keep all of those who mourn their loss in prayer.

[FAQ for Executive Order No. 195](#)

