

## Spring 2021 Reopening Task Force Policy for Ministry Visits to Homes

*Approved by MTC 5-25-21*

### **Background:**

- Our church has many members who may need caring visits for a variety of reasons
- The pandemic has disrupted much of these activities
- With vaccinations now available, in person visits may be able to be restarted
- However, in person visits should not depend on knowledge of vaccination and should be independent of the vaccination status of the individual.
- Therefore, certain precautions are required for the safety of our minister or ministry team members, as well as, potentially, of the church member

### **Guidance:**

- If any member of the proposed visiting team is ill, the minister or another ministry team member, with symptoms of COVID or any other illness (e.g., cough, fever, chills, runny nose, stomach pains or other gastrointestinal complaints, headache, new onset loss of taste or smell, headache, shingles), that member should either consider converting the visit to a remote technology (zoom or phone), or identify a substitute for that visit
- Someone should call the person to be visited on the day, whether a member of the team or another volunteer, to confirm the time, and that they have no new symptoms of illness that could be linked to COVID. If new symptoms have occurred, the team may need to confirm the information with a family member or the facility, if the member is not considered reliable, the type of symptoms (e.g., likely associated with another underlying condition like cancer), and the goal (e.g., to drop off food or supplies vs planned conversation), to consider whether or how to proceed.
- At this time, even if fully vaccinated and visiting with a member who states they are fully vaccinated, members of the ministry team should always be masked when visiting with a person in an inside location, such as a house, apartment, retirement home, or hospice.
- If visiting someone in a facility other than their residence, it is wise to also check with the facility on the day of the visit to confirm their current policies and to ask about any recent outbreaks of COVID or other infection that might change their plans.
- At this time, it is also recommended that the visiting team does not eat or drink during the visit, and that they wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after the visit.