

Re-Opening Announcement & Plan At Greenville Church of the Brethren

We recognize and accept that life is not going to return to what it was before the COVID-19 crisis. This means that how we live out our mission as the Church will not go back to what we have always known. We must trust that our God is sovereignly directing us to change, adapt and implement new ways of being the church.

Our return to public gatherings and worship is not, and never should be, based on our own comfort, desires or preferences. It is based on our fulfilling God's mission and purpose for us, which in succinct form is to love and serve God and love and serve others. This unique event in our history is moving us to be even more missionally-focused. We have great opportunities to be weaned off of a high dependency on our church building for doing ministry. God is helping us to move into the community to love, serve and build relationships with the people who have yet to come into personal relationship with Christ. This time is requiring us to be more other-oriented, more sacrificial. We are learning that our choices can and will impact others.

We also must recognize that this will not be a one-size-fits-all approach to startup. Those who are most vulnerable (Those over 65 and/or with pre-existing conditions) are encouraged to be abundantly cautious and consider avoiding crowds.

At this time, the Elders and Deacons are setting Sunday, June 14, 2020 as our initial re-opening date.

Below are listed some guiding principles and guidelines that were taken into consideration as we moved toward re-starting our in-person church activities.

Guiding Principles

The following are some of the factors that we must consider:

- The safety of our members, attenders and the community.
- Biblical wisdom on fellowship and gatherings.
- Our public witness.
- The prayerful wisdom of our church local, denominational and district leaders.
- The particular needs and circumstances of our local congregation.
- The guidance of our insurance company and legal counsel.
- The latest recommendations/orders from governmental authorities.

Communication Strategy

As Deacons and Elders, we must outline a strategy for how we will communicate our upcoming plans. Keep in

mind the following perspectives:

- Guidelines and recommendations are being updated continually. It's important for our people to be fully informed of our plans and protocols via email, website, and phone calls.
- Some will be thrilled to meet again, as soon as possible. Others will feel that a "wait and see" approach is more fitting. We must choose our words as carefully as possible when conveying your plans. We must avoid using wording that conveys any shame or guilt for any of the positions held by our church people.
- As sensitively as possible, we must help families with young children, senior citizens, those who are at risk, etc., to understand why others in our congregation will reasonably have concerns about their attendance. For example, some persons will be disappointed and concerned if other individuals come too close to them while in the building.

Below you will find the first phase of our plan which is being implemented for our re-opening scheduled for June 14, 2020.

Plan for Re-Starting Our Public Church Gatherings

Phase 1

Possible Marker: After Stay-at-Home orders are lifted or amended

A. Days Leading Up to Service(s)

1. Work to secure masks, gloves, hand sanitizers, wipes, and spray bottles with sanitizing solution.
2. Check with our insurance company, and the latest recommendations/orders from the Federal Government, Ohio Department of Health, local health commissioners, etc.
3. Develop tentative re-entry schedule with team of leaders
4. Communicate preparations and expectations via One Call Now, email, Mailings, Church website and Church Facebook page.
 - a. No Sunday School classes; no nursery
 - b. Strongly encourage CDC recommendations (masks, washed hands, hand sanitizer, etc.)
 - c. Advertise adjustments below
5. Encourage elderly, ill, and at-risk groups to stay home
6. Continue online/alternate worship experience using Zoom
7. Post signage of protocols outside and inside
8. Set up Sanctuary with physical distancing markers to show where persons can sit. Pews will be marked to show where people can be seated using painter tape.

9. Water cooler will be off limits
10. Water lines will be flushed out
11. Hymnals, Pew Bibles and other items removed from pews.
12. Sanitizing Stations will be set up. One by each entry door and one by Sanctuary entrance.
13. A checklist will be created to insure all aspects of the plan are being carried out.
14. Secure 2 ushers and at least 1 greeter per worship service.
15. Create printed sanitizing instructions for restrooms
16. Restroom across from offices and one across from Nursery will be the only ones available.

B. Day of, Before Service

1. Front and side doors will be propped open to limit touching door handles. All other doors will remain locked from outside.
2. Recommend that all attendees take temperatures before arriving and be asymptomatic. A thermometer will be on site if necessary to take people's temperatures
3. Strongly recommend that all attendees wear masks
4. Custodian and any requested volunteers begin sanitizing bathrooms, door handles, and other places most likely to be touched.
5. Bulletins will not be handed out. Bulletins will be distributed via mailing on Wednesdays
6. Greeters will wear masks and will greet persons while standing 6-10 feet from doors.
7. Greeters will also record attendance which can also assist in tracing if required.
8. No Fellowship Time, Coffee stations and cafes should remain closed at all times
9. No Sunday School hour
10. Supply masks upon entry and hand sanitizer through the building, if available
11. Closed signs on Oliver Hall, Sunday School rooms and Nursery, Basement with any doors locked
12. Institute staggered seating requirements
13. Ushers maintain distance while guiding people to seats
14. Safe distancing should be practiced in all seating. Seating will be marked ahead of time to assist in maintaining proper distancing.
15. Ceiling fans, Heater blowers, Air conditioning will not be used.

C. During Service

1. Masks are to be encouraged to be worn by all persons when inside the church building.
2. No nursery available (children stay with family)
3. Do not direct people to shake hands, hug, etc., as you might normally do. Greet persons while maintaining safe distances and without physically touching the person. There will be no formal

greeting time practiced during the worship service.

4. Encourage only family/household units to sit together
5. Announce and observe latest social distancing protocols
6. Worship leading participants model social distancing while avoiding sharing mics, instruments, stands, etc.
7. Initially, we will avoid corporate singing, responsive readings and sharing times.
8. Service length should be shorter than normal (e.g. 60 minutes or less)
9. Church folks will be able to drop their offering into a container that will allow them to follow safety standards. Offering plates will not be passed from person to person.
10. Utilize projector screen. Avoid using hymnals and pew Bibles.
11. To all extent possible, no laying on of hands or holding hands, etc.
12. Plans to celebrate communion and baptisms will be thoroughly thought out and planned in advance in order to maintain safety for all when observed.
13. All other small-group offerings, including Sunday School and Missional Community groups, should only be held where all safe-distancing guidelines, including the use of masks, can be practiced. Opportunities to have Bible studies and other ministry events broadcast live over Zoom or recorded will be considered.

D. After Service

1. Structured dismissals (e.g. by rows or sections) allowing people to leave in smaller groups and go outside (no congregating in lobby)
2. There will be a plan to clean and disinfect thoroughly all spaces used by people after every use. This includes, but is not limited to, door handles, light switches, seats, tables, countertops and any other surface that is touched by people throughout the building. Hand sanitizers and wipes will be readily available in all areas that are open for use: sanctuaries, restrooms, hallways, church office.

Please read the front article of the June newsletter for Biblical direction on our re-opening. Let us demonstrate full allegiance to our Lord Jesus and His Word. Let us also display genuine love toward one another, so that we can prove to the divisive world that unity is attainable, with Christ's help.

We welcome all who will plan to attend on June 14 in person. We also welcome all who will join us via Zoom on June 14.

Greenville Church of the Brethren Elders & Deacons