

REOPENING FOR WORSHIP SAMPLE

THANK YOU TO DOVE OF THE DESERT UMC FOR SHARING THEIR WORK

MANAGING THE GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

1. Continue three Sunday morning worship services at 8:00, 9:30, and 11:00
2. Shorten the length of the worship service to 34 – 40 minutes to allow for adequate time to clear the church for cleaning and sanitizing between services
3. Encouraging social distancing always beginning when people leave their cars and enter church, throughout worship, and until returning to their vehicle. To accomplish this, the following changes are planned:
 - a. Parking will not change however everyone should maintain six-foot separation with others when exiting their vehicles to enter church. Wait until the person who you are next to has walked a safe distance.
 - b. Establish a direct path in and out of church. All entering will follow There will be posted signs guiding everyone entering the church to enter through a single door to the sanctuary. Once the service concludes all will be directed through another door to exit church establishing one-way traffic path in the church. This will help maintaining necessary physical separation.
 - c. Markings placed on the floors in the church will promote appropriate social distancing. When exiting the sanctuary refrain from everyone leaving at once and allow for six-foot separation gaps with the people next to you. (This is changing as we have learned that social distancing is more than space between us but is space, time and area we are in. We now know that air conditioning recirculates air and the filters are not designed to remove the droplets or virus. This now challenges us to reassess how we will practice real social distancing in our safe gathering.)
 - d. No gathering time will be permitted inside the church. People can gather in a marked, designated area outside the church or in the parking lot, where a six-foot minimum physical separation distance is practiced.
 - e. Face masks will be required for all attending church. People without masks will be given one upon entering the church.
 - f. Two types of seating will be available in the sanctuary. Groups of small clusters of chairs for those in the same household and individual seating placed where there is a minimum of six feet separation between seats. Ushers will assist by helping people to their seats. (Again, this will be changed based upon the most current data that helps us see what is necessary to gather in enclosed spaces.)

- g. Signs will be posted on the expected etiquette inside the church. the flyers will promote messages like; “A smile is better than a handshake” ... “Six feet is the new personal space” ...” No hug zone”.
- h. Hand sanitizing dispensers, wet-wipes, and disposable gloves will be placed at stations in the church.
- i. No bulletins or handouts will be available. All announcements, liturgy and songs will be shown on the overhead screens.
- j. The attendance registration pads will be removed. Ushers will still complete a head count at each service.
- k. The Passing of the Peace time in the service will be eliminated.
- l. The offering where the plate is passed will be changed to allow people to walk to baskets set up in the back of the sanctuary to place their offering as they exit. Ushers will provide guidance and ensure the security of the offerings in the baskets, as necessary. Giving by electronic deposit or payment through the mail is suggested.
- m. No childcare or Sunday School will be provided. These programs will resume when public schools are permitted to reopen. (Again, with the politics of reopening entering into even this, we will use schools reopening as a guideline, but will still use the best science and safety practices to decide when we restart our Sunday School program and nursery.)
- n. Communion procedure will change and all entering the church will pick up a closed container of the elements of the sacrament and take to their seats. All individuals will be invited to take their communion home and share it around their family table.
- o. All choirs and soloists offer their music in prerecorded videos that will be played on the screen. No congregational singing until it is declared safe. (This guideline will change and there will be no singing during worship or gathering for many months to come.) Instrumental music will be played except wind instruments will not be used.
- p. The children’s playground is closed for use and will be locked.
- q. The office will be closed on Sunday. A mailbox will be established for dropping off letters, checks and envelopes.
- r. All in person Adult Sunday School will be suspended until conditions permit in the future.
- s. Baptisms should be reviewed to determine what steps can be taken to comply with social distancing measures.

OTHER ITEMS TO CONSIDER

- A. How to sanitize the church to comply with CDC requirements. Ask the Trustees to review current guideline and determine how what compliance measures for our church are necessary and how they could be accomplished with estimated costs. Please refer to the CDC publication,

“Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes”
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>
- B. Encourage people to inform the office if they are planning to attend worship and which service. Use Facebook, email and calls for people to notify the church if they will be attending and which service, they plan to attend.
- C. All staff and volunteers serving will have their temperature checked. Persons will be sent home if they have a fever.
- D. Poll volunteers helping as parking lot greeters, ushers, cleaning crews and temperature checkers assisting Sunday worship to determine if they are available to serve when church resumes on site worship.
- E. Close all bathrooms during Sunday morning services.
- F. Vacation Bible School (VBS) has been canceled.
- G. Create an Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) including identifying a space that can be used to isolate staff or participants who become ill at the event and cannot go home immediately.

Guiding principles and assumptions for this Plan

- Phase 1 criteria, at a minimum, must be met before re-opening
- Space people apart at all times
- Plastic chairs from Room 15/16 shall be used in place of cloth chairs for ease of disinfecting.
- Use signage to direct people where to go
- Restrict areas using caution tape
- Quick entry and exit from Sanctuary
- Keep from touching surfaces as much as possible
- Utilize easy to clean surfaces
- Suspend Welcome Center, all kitchen activities, and recycling
- Do not allow either drinking fountain to be used (provide bottled water).
- Do not put out hymnals or sign-in pads
- Allow Men’s, Women’s, and Family bathrooms to be used, but allow only one person at a time. Have them clean surfaces they have touched with sanitizing wipes.
- Assume someone has used the Sanctuary the day before service
- All buildings are locked and unoccupied except Bldg A
- The Safe Sanctuary area (BCD courtyard) gates are closed and locked on Sunday.
- Assume we’ll still have the 8, 9:30, and 11am services.
- Assume each service will be a maximum of 45 minutes in duration.
- It is recommended you take temperatures as people enter the building.

- The Parlor shall be used to isolate staff or participants who become ill during Sunday services and cannot go home immediately.
- Those who refuse to wear a mask shall not be allowed in but can sit outside on the patio (socially distanced) and listen to the sermon via a speaker.

Pending Issues to be Addressed over Time

The following questions need to be answered in order to complete this plan. The plan needs to be flexible and adjusted as new information is received.

- Are we limited to the recommended number of people or by the size of our Sanctuary assuming 6-ft distancing?
- How do we handle more people showing up than the number of chairs we have in the Sanctuary? Do we turn people away? Do we make them stand in the back? Seat them outside?
- Are we going to tape/broadcast a service for those who are sheltering in place?
- Should we keep the Sanctuary glass doors open and the Narthex doors open during services for air replacement?

Recommendations for Dove's re-opening Plan

- **Initial, one-time preparation of our facilities**
 - Sanctuary chair arrangement
 - Using plastic chairs, create 5-chair groups, 2-chair groups, and single chairs to accommodate large families, couples, and singles. Note number of each group needed and adjust quantities for the next Sunday.
 - Ensure first row is at least 10 feet from the stage.
 - Utilize the choir loft for extra seating.
 - The Trustees will do this task.
 - Establish foot traffic flow within Bldg A
 - Create signage using foam board and magic markers.
 - Create a hallway in the Narthex between the outside doors and the Sanctuary glass doors by using white duct tape on the floor and yellow caution tape.
 - Create signage for entry/exit at Narthex doors.
 - The Trustees will do this task.
 - Establish foot traffic flow outside of Bldg A
 - Create small signs anchored in the lawn to direct people leaving the Narthex.
 - Departing guests shall follow signs forming a path from the east Narthex door, onto the lawn, and around the north side of the pitcher fountain. This will keep opposing foot traffic apart.
 - The Trustees will do this task.
 - Purchase the following items (the Trustees will do this task):
 - Disposable face masks
 - Bottles of hand sanitizer (>60% alcohol content)
 - Spray bottles for the disinfecting solution
 - Disposable rags

- Clorox bleach
 - Place a table at each door of the Sanctuary with donation baskets.
 - Trustees will locate and place the tables.
 - Marti will handle the donation baskets.
 - Post '20-sec hand washing' reminder posters and kid's reminder posters on bathroom mirrors.
 - The Trustees will do this task.
- **Inform congregation what is expected of them**
 - The office staff shall compose a weekly email and send it out with a minimum of the following information.
 - Help them decide if they should attend:
 - If you have been tested positive for COVID-19, have come into contact with someone who has, or are 65 or older and have a serious underlying medical condition please stay home and watch Dove's services on YouTube.
 - If you think you've got COVID-19, feel sick, have a fever, have a dry cough, or have difficulty breathing please do not come to Dove, but rather contact your family physician to get tested for COVID-19.
 - If you plan on attending, go to the Dove website and look for Re-Opening Attendance link. Click on the service time you plan to attend. This will help predict headcount and allow the office to send out an email notice if a service will be too crowded. (This will require a webpage update.)
 - Wear a mask except if you have trouble breathing or if children are younger than 2. If a person is able to wear a mask but refuses, they will be asked to sit outside on the patio in order to respect the health of others.
 - Remind them that 6 ft. social distancing applies at Dove, regardless of masking.
 - While at Dove remember to not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth since COVID-19 can be picked up from surfaces that others have touched.
 - Tell them there is no childcare available.
 - Dove will use a hand-wave gesture in lieu of shaking hands/hugging.
 - Inform them where they will enter the Sanctuary.
 - How chairs will be configured so they'll know what to look for when entering for the first time.
 - What time to arrive for each service to avoid congestion with departing guests.
 - If you've attended a Dove service and have now tested positive for COVID-19 to contact the Dove office.
 - Let congregants know that Dove understands if they don't want to attend a service in person.
- **Preparation on Sunday prior to services**
 - The ushers and other volunteers shall take their own temperatures using a forehead thermometer.
 - If anyone is running a temperature higher than 100.4 degrees then they must leave the premises.
 - A forehead thermometer shall be available in the office.

- Mix up a new batch of bleach/water solution for all spray bottles (4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water) on Sunday morning.
 - A Trustee does this task.
 - Disinfect all chairs in the Sanctuary using Clorox bleach solution.
 - A Trustee does this task.
 - Place a speaker outside on the patio wired to the Sanctuary sound system for those who want to attend but either doesn't want to enter the Sanctuary, or for those who refuse to wear a mask.
 - The soundboard guys do this task.
 - An usher shall set up a table and chair outside by the west Narthex entrance to provide masks to those who don't have one.
 - A Trustee shall place no-touch trash cans with liners outside of the Narthex and by the entry arch to encourage keeping their mask on till they reach the parking lot.
 - Marti will ensure the office doors to the hallway and outside are locked.
 - Marti will ensure the west hallway door is locked and a sign is posted outside to use Narthex entrance.
 - A Trustee will cordon off the hallway east of the Family bathroom using a sign on a post.
 - A Trustee will cordon off the hallway west of the Women's bathroom using a sign on a post.
 - The Welcome committee will put out small bottles of water in the Narthex entrance for guests.
- **Duties of ushers on Sunday**
 - The head of ushers shall provide enough personnel to accomplish the duties set forth below.
 - Ushers are to guide people to enter through the west Narthex door and leave through the east Narthex door. Post appropriate signage as well.
 - Ushers are to wear gloves since you'll be touching door handles.
 - There shall be at least two ushers offering hand sanitizer as guests walk into the Narthex.
 - An usher shall be at a table outside ensuring people over the age of 2 are wearing a mask and offering a facemask if they don't have one. Anyone refusing to wear a mask will be asked to take a seat in the patio to listen to the sermon.
 - Ushers shall guide people through the west Narthex door into the Sanctuary keeping them from lingering in the Narthex.
 - An usher will be at each bathroom door metering people using the bathrooms. They will open the door for people entering the bathroom and only allow one person at a time to enter.
 - This task is only necessary between services.
 - Ushers shall ensure the doors into the Narthex and Sanctuary are propped open when people are entering.
 - Ushers shall guide people out of the Sanctuary after the service through the east Narthex door. Back row first, first row last.
 - Ushers shall offer hand sanitizer to everyone leaving the Narthex.
 - Ushers shall direct people to leave using either the southeast sidewalk, or using the west lawn path around the north side of the pitcher fountain.

- **Duties between services**
 - One or more Trustees shall disinfect the Sanctuary chairs.
 - Disinfect Sanctuary chairs by first ensuring all congregants have exited the Sanctuary, close the Sanctuary doors, then wipe down each chair with a solution of Clorox/water (4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water) using gloves and a sponge. Leave solution on surface of the chairs for at least 1 minute. Once all chairs have been wiped open the Sanctuary doors and allow the next service's congregants to enter.
 - Pick up any trash left by previous service.

- **Pastor duties at end of each service**
 - Inform the congregation that they will be directed out of the Sanctuary by the ushers row-by-row starting from the back.
 - Mention that tithe baskets are near the door.

- **Duties after all services are done**
 - Leave plastic chairs in the Sanctuary for next Sunday.
 - Trustees shall discard into a sink all bleach/water spray bottle solution.
 - Trustees will pull trash can liners and take to dumpster, then move trash cans inside the maintenance closet.
 - Trustees will reset patio chairs and tables.
 - The soundboard guys shall stow the patio speaker.
 - Trustees will turn the lights out, ensure candles are out, and lock up. (No disinfecting is necessary since COVID-19 does not last more than three days on surfaces.)

- **Communion**
 - In-person Communion should be suspended. If distributing single use elements, be careful of cross contamination. What happens when an attendee touches a server's glove? How can the server maintain the 6' distance and distribute elements? Consider having folks take their communion elements home and take them around their family table. Consider the special needs of those with hand tremors or those unable to open the packets.

- **Money counters**
 - Counters shall use either/both the work room and/or Room 4 in order to maintain a 6-ft separation while ensuring second-person verification.
 - No congregant foot traffic is allowed in the west hallway.
 - Counters shall confirm that the west hallway door is locked.

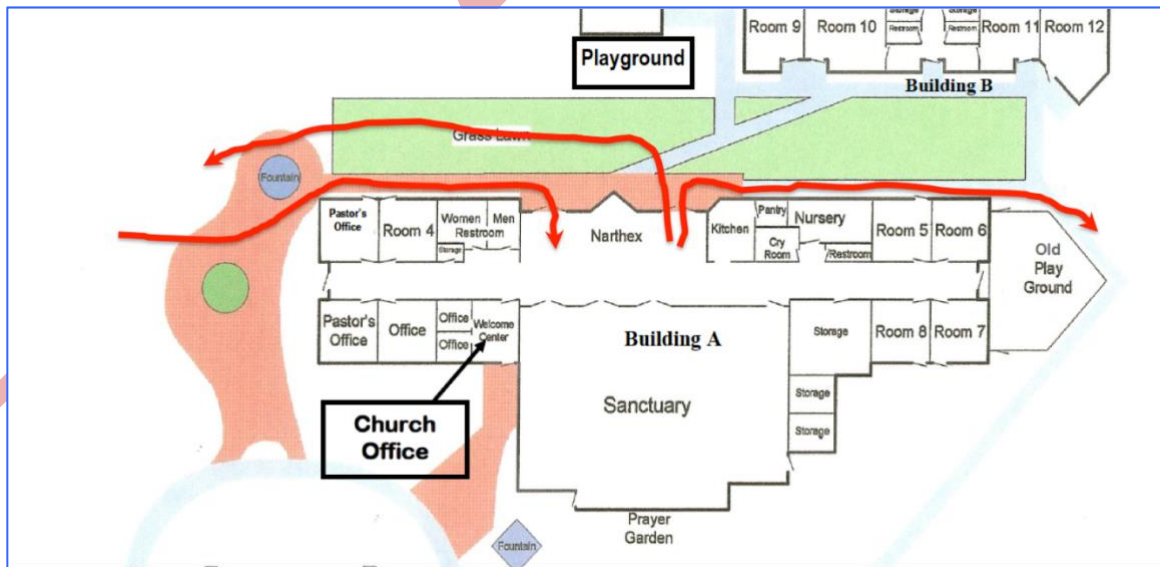
- **Normal work week operation**
 - A sign posted outside of the office door shall state that a mask is required to enter the office.

- If the office gets word during the following week of a prior guest that's tested positive for COVID-19 then a Trustee shall ensure all chairs, door knobs, horizontal surfaces that were accessible to congregants the prior week shall be cleaned with a spray bottle filled with a Clorox/water solution (4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water) at least 24 hours prior to the next Sunday service.

Items that must be purchased to accomplish this Plan

- Clorox bleach for disinfecting chairs
- Disposable rags for disinfecting chairs
- Hand sanitizing solution
- Disposable facemasks
- 4 Spray bottles
- Duct tape for foot traffic control
- Roll of caution tape for foot traffic control
- Foam board for signage
- Packing tape to post signs
- Food serving gloves for communion
- Disposable gloves for disinfecting chairs
- Small bottles of water since water fountains will be inaccessible
- Forehead thermometer
- Responsibility is TBD for these items at this time

Map out One-way entry/exit paths



Posters for bathroom mirrors



AMPLE





References

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/faith-based.html>

https://azgovernor.gov/sites/default/files/guidance_for_places_of_worship.pdf

<https://dscumc.org/church-opening-guidelines/>

Reopening Guidelines Ver 1.docx (Pastor George email)

H.