



WSBC MINISTRY IN THE NEW NORMAL: GREEN PHASE

June 14, 2020

The WSBC Advisory Council, prayerfully and in consultation with its boards and ABCOPAD, and with review of official rules and resources, presents this plan for ministry as we enter the initial weeks of the Green Phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan considers the logistics of reopening our building, returning to in-person worship, refocusing our ministry, and reassuring our people as we move to our new normal. And while we rejoice in the opportunity to once again meet together in fellowship, we emphasize that our ministry needs to be inclusive for, and respectful of, those whose health still requires separation, and those who may not yet be comfortable in in-person settings.

Much of the plan recognizes that some elements of “breaking the chain” will continue for the near term under Green – masks, social distancing, limitations on mass gatherings. Our outline will be modified concurrent with updates in state rules and CDC guides. Links to some of the resources we consulted are at the end of this document.

We will continue to pray, to think strategically, to consult with the congregation, and to continue to embrace our call to make disciples who believe, belong, bridge, and become in this significant season.

1) The Church will observe all applicable rules and guidelines issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Health, the CDC, and other official sources.

- a) The Church building will be open, but with limitations.
- b) Masks must be worn when in the Church. Anyone visiting the building is encouraged to bring their own, but to assure no one in need of ministry is turned away a supply of disposable masks will be available.
- c) Social distancing must be observed in the Church and at any other Church-sponsored event.
- d) No one will be permitted entry if they exhibit any COVID-19 symptoms or if they fail to adhere to other protective requirements.
- e) State-required notices regarding facility use will be posted on the doors.
- f) Hand sanitizers will be available at each entrance.
- g) Cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be established, specific to each type of gathering and building use. The Church will arrange to have adequate disinfectant and sanitizing supplies on hand.

- h) Incident reporting and contact tracing procedures will be established and will be strictly enforced, consistent with official guidelines.
- i) Pastor Kelly Legg is designated as the official COVID-19 officer for reporting and information purposes.

2) In-person Sunday worship will begin on June 21, although we will also continue live streaming.

- a) Internet-based live-streaming will continue for members and guests who are not able, or are not yet comfortable, to attend in person. We anticipate live streaming will become a permanent part of our ministry.
- b) Before reopening, a volunteer team will do a thorough cleaning and sanitizing of the full facility.
- c) We will not initially resume coffee café.
- d) We will not initially resume Sunday School, instead continuing use of Yellow Phase resources, tools and relationships.
- e) We will not initially resume Children's Church.
- f) We will not initially provide nursery care, but will make space available for parents or other caregivers to provide care. Toys and equipment will be limited, and sanitized.
- g) We are blessed with technologies that allow us to share the worship time together, and have allowed us to welcome others who have mobility issues or who participate from far outside our local community.
- h) We are grateful to those who have enabled and supported the technology, and to those who have adapted their ministry to these platforms.

3) We need to observe some special rules as we resume in-person worship.

- a) Before deciding to come to worship, please consider whether you are exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms, have been in the presence of anyone with symptoms, or have recently traveled in any area with higher rates of COVID-19 cases. If so, please respect your health and that of others and stay home.
- b) To minimize in-person contact, please enter the building through the center or lower 21st Street doors, and exit through the Market Street lobby doors.
- c) Please bring and wear a mask. Until Commonwealth and CDC guidelines change, social distancing is still required, which we will maintain by marking available/unavailable pews (to give guidance in spacing for worship), by limiting the number permitted in the sanctuary, and by having overflow seating in Davidson Chapel, where the service will be live-streamed. Families may sit together, which may include some limited spread onto cordoned-off pews or by rearranging chairs in Davidson Chapel. Simply put, maintain two pews distance from those not of your household.
- d) Greeters and ushers will be at each main door and each entrance to the sanctuary and Davidson Chapel. While they will not be permitted to shake hands or hug, they will provide a welcome and will help attendees adjust to the worship experience including any mask and social distancing requirements. They will note location of hand sanitizer and masks, if individuals have not brought their own. Importantly, they

- will be REQUIRED to turn away anyone exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms, and to report any incidents to the COVID-19 officer (Pastor Kelly) for follow-up as needed.
- e) Bulletins and other hand-outs will be set out for individual pick-up, rather than handing them out.
 - f) Guest/prayer request/praise cards will be available in the pews and a space will be designated for their placement after completion.
 - g) Before and after each service, and in coordination with the Church custodial staff, volunteer teams will sanitize common areas and assure sanitizer supplies and masks are available at the entrances.
 - h) Consistent with the guidelines for mass gatherings, masks must be worn during the full time in the building, including during the worship service. Exceptions include individuals who have breathing limitations, and small children. The Pastors will be exempt during the presentation of the liturgy and message, with protection accomplished by placing congregants a safe distance from the stage.
 - i) We welcome voices lifted in praise in responsive reading, prayer, and singing. However ... recognizing that the guidelines, as well as guidelines offered by choral and other performance groups, acknowledge the increased potential of transmission by singing or speaking in a loud voice, masks must be worn.
 - j) Bibles and hymnals will be removed from the pews. Bible verses and words to hymns will be projected on the screens, and congregants are encouraged to bring their own Bibles.
 - k) We will initially use individually-packaged communion, placed in the pews prior to service.
 - l) Rather than passing an offering plate, we will place offering baskets at the entries to the sanctuary, and continue to encourage on-line giving.
 - m) Choral and band participation in the service will include social distancing and limitation on the number of singers.

4) The Church will be available for gatherings of small groups, with limitations.

- a) To assure that meeting space is managed safely, groups wishing to gather at the Church (Boards, community groups) must contact the Church office in advance to reserve meeting time.
- b) All rules for church occupancy, including masks, sanitizers, and distancing, must be observed.
- c) Most classrooms are insufficient to maintain distancing, and so meetings should be held in Fellowship Hall, the sanctuary, or Davidson Chapel.
- d) To minimize facility exposure, groups meeting in the Church should limit their travel through the building just to the area where they are meeting, and should use just the set of restrooms closest to the meeting location.
- e) Groups meeting in the building are required, at the conclusion of the meeting, to use disinfectant wipes to clean common surfaces contacted during the meeting, including tables, chairs, handrails, restroom counters, door handles, and the like.
- f) The Church has secured a corporate Zoom account, which will be available by reservation for use by Boards, committees, community groups and other teams.

5) Other Church ministries will be maintained, consistent with established guidelines.

- a) Individual visits with the Pastors at the Church are permitted, although advance arrangements are encouraged acknowledging the Pastors' schedules. Note that Office Manager Janet Spriggs will resume regular office hours (Monday through Thursday, 8 AM to 3 PM) beginning June 15.
- b) Children's ministry and youth ministry will continue in the formats used during the Yellow phase, augmented by additional resources such as RightNow Media. The Board of Christian Education will continue to monitor and adapt as we work through the Green phase, and may make additional program announcements.
- c) Other community outreach, such as Clothes Closet, will not resume until permitted by official guidelines.

6) We will continually monitor and adjust protocols based on evolution of state and CDC guidelines and congregational needs.

- a) Resumption of coffee café, children's church, Sunday School, youth ministry, nursery and related activities will consider evolution of applicable guidelines, the capacity and comfort levels of volunteers, and the comfort levels of participants and parents.
- b) Resumption of external ministries such as the Clothes Closet will use the same set of considerations.

GREEN PHASE: THE NEW NORMAL

Looking beyond simply regathering and seeking to use this experience strategically for the Kingdom of God, let's also prayerfully consider what God might be inviting us to:

• **STOP**

- 1) Are there any ministry activities that, having not been able to do them for the past three months, simply do not seem as important to us now? If so, should we consider celebrating and sunsetting them, to make bandwidth for other ministry activities?
- 2) Are there meetings we haven't had (or had in different formats) that we didn't miss and didn't need? Should we stop having them?

• **START**

- 1) Are there ways of doing ministry and mission that we took on in the past three months that we need to continue (or start for the first time) after this? Pieces of the past three months that we should catapult into the future?
- 2) Have we identified a new set of needs that we need to seriously consider how we can meet either through recruitment of new staff or volunteers?

• **STRENGTHEN**

- 1) How might we honor and strengthen those we've seen step up into new forms of ministry, so they can continue to do so in the future?

COVID-19 RESPONSE RESOURCES

[PA Commonwealth comprehensive guide to COVID-19 phased reopening](#)

[Church-specific CDC guidance](#)

[Church-specific CDC guidance: Additional commentary](#)

[CDC COVID-19 website](#)

[CDC Considerations for Events and Gatherings](#)

[Federal COVID-19 website](#)

[USA.Gov COVID-19 website](#)

[Federal Guidelines for Opening Up America Again](#)