

Leadership Team Meeting: Reopening the Campus

05/17/2020

I first want to thank you for your time meeting today as we develop plans for reopening – it is greatly appreciated, and our conversation was productive!

As determined by our discussion, we will tentatively plan to reopen the campus during [Phase 2*](#) of the [Badger Bounce Back](#) plan. The preceding links provide details on the plan and a brief overview, and you can also see what is [necessary](#) to move into the different phases. I want to provide a summary of what we talked about and invite any additional comments, corrections, or suggestions.

In the Interim

We will continue with Sunday services through the Church Online Platform and linking to the church YouTube page for previous services. We will provide reminders to these links through the church website, Facebook page, weekly newsletter, and additional communication avenues. There is a list of approximately 15 people that currently do not have the technology/ability to connect online – Trey has this and is able to reach out. **What might be some solutions for those unable to connect digitally? How can we ensure they do not feel overlooked?**

In addition to the digital platform, Life Groups may have the opportunity to meet physically. While the current recommendation is to limit gatherings under 10, this may be an opportunity to provide some face-to-face connections. This may also be an occasion to start a special focus Bible study that does not detract from existing Life Groups.

Campus Gatherings

We understand there will be varying degrees of comfort and personal precaution. We will provide, upon reopening the campus, digital options to connect as well. Zoom Webinars may be the most feasible option as anyone with a device can connect or even call in -- the technology team will oversee this integration and logistics.

Jolina has a team on stand-by to deep clean the church once we know when we will reopen. Ongoing protocols for cleaning the bathrooms and high traffic areas/surfaces will also be identified. Appropriate signage with reminders will be posted throughout the building. We also plan to limit the entrance through the main doors. Hand-sanitizing stations can be set up nearby and in various locations throughout the building.

Adjustments to the meeting space can happen at any point and may take some time to determine the best layout. Round tables in the fellowship hall, tables in the sanctuary, and clusters of chairs spaced out appropriately will allow for the recommended distances to be maintained while giving family units the ability to sit together. We will also provide space in the children's wing for parents to take their child if necessary. The service could be accessed there while the parent needs the room. Initially, beverages will not be provided.

Service Structure

The greeting time will be replaced with testimonies of praise and prayer requests, both fostering congregational involvement as well as leading into the corporate prayer. To facilitate people feeling open to share, we will try having at least two people planned to start the time.

Singing is an integral part of our worship to God as individuals and a congregation – we plan to maintain this important component while being prudent as well. Remaining seated with distance already in place, we can reduce some of the projection that occurs while singing. The stage will also be configured to maintain social distancing.

Children's church will take on a different shape. Instead of going back to one of the classrooms for a portion of the service, the children will be invited up to the front for a children's message with clear markings to maintain appropriate distance. In addition, bags with material will also be provided for during the service. This would include activities, treats, necessary supplies, as well as additional items. The tables set up will give space for families with children.

Tithes & Offerings will make use of the prayer box, recognizing our offerings are a part of our worship to God. Instead of passing a basket, people will be encouraged to drop their offering in the box as they depart or to give online. We will continue to pray for our offerings & tithes.

Pray-Connect-Serve cards can be completed online. QR codes can be embedded on a slide and used quickly to access various forms/sites. Pens & cards will be removed from the seats for the near future and the digital option encouraged. For those unable to, we can provide a physical copy of the card. **What other elements of the service may need addressed?**

Supplies

Hand sanitizer will need to be purchased. Current cleaning supplies should be evaluated. There is an abundance of disposable gloves.

Communication/Attitude

Our intentions, protocols for cleaning, expectations, will be communicated through our various platforms. A survey will be developed to ask for congregational input in concerns & precautions. **What are some key considerations for communicating effectively?**

Along with clear communication, we want to be gracious in our interactions with others. Some will wear masks, some will not. Some will think there is an overreaction, others will think we have not done enough. Even still, some will be eager and quick to break down the door for our physical gathering, and some will remain home for a little while longer. We want to be careful in our language towards everyone.

If I've overlooked something, please let me know to update this document. I have also attached a few additional links/thoughts that demonstrate some of the communication of other churches, a helpful article about our attitudes as we reopen, and the MWBC guidelines again.

[Rebooting the church campus in the wake of Covid-19](#)

[Church, Don't Let Coronavirus Divide You](#)

Leo Endel – “Will You Wear a Mask?”

May 15 at 8:19 AM ·

Will you wear a mask?

As many of you know, God has placed me in a ministry role where I hear the polar extremes of nearly every contemporary issue.

Theologically, I hear pastors sparring with each other over fine points of theology that have been debated for two-thousand years. Somehow, we think we have definitively settled the debate with our feeble little insights.

Now, I hear us positioning over the COVID-19 response and the reopening of our economy and our churches. Some are arguing churches should have never closed (religious liberty) or that the whole thing has been overexaggerated for political purposes. Others are arguing for caution for the health of the vulnerable and respect for our governing officials (Romans 12).

I tend to be a bridge builder, one who often finds himself in the *via media*, the middle way between two poles. I look to one position and say to myself, “He’s got a point” and then look to the other side and again say to myself, “He’s got a point.” Many times, when things get overly heated, I shake my head and say, “What is the point?”

It often amazes me that even small things can separate brothers and sisters because of our human sinfulness. No wonder our Lord, and the New Testament, challenges us to love one another and reminds us that “love covers a multitude of sin” (1 Peter 4:8). Frequently the sin is not in the issue at hand; frequently the sin is the loveless, arrogant attitude that insists that we are right.

Christianity is not about our rights; in fact, almost the opposite is true. Christ gave up his rights (Philippians 2) and died on a cross of love for you and for me. Paul instructs us that love gives up rights for others (1 Corinthians 13), and that we should sacrifice our rights for our brother (1 Corinthians 8).

Our adversary, the devil, will use anything to separate the people of God. Unfortunately, because of our human arrogance and our willingness to turn ant hills into mountains, we quickly escalate from differing opinions to vilification, we make tertiary issues, third level issues, into primary issues. We fight over tiddlywinks while the world goes to hell.

In these days, there are going to be differences of opinion regarding the reopening of our churches for public worship. Prayerfully extend grace to your brothers and sisters who may see things differently than you do. Go the extra mile to make your church family comfortable by abiding by the collective wisdom of your leaders. If you feel uncomfortable with the decisions your leaders make, stay home a little longer. If you are at risk due to health issues, please be safe and wait. Out of love, your brothers and sisters will understand.

Please wear the mask, or whatever else you must do, for your brother, and don’t grumble about the sacrifice you are making. Jesus never grumbled about what He did for you.

--Leo Endel, 5/15/2020

Bart Barber – “Maintain Your Personal Status Quo”

April 29 at 11:34 AM ·

When church members ask me whether they should attend in person this weekend or catch the livestream, this is how I’m advising them: Maintain your personal status quo. Here's what I mean.

Some of you are going to Brookshires, Walmart, Chick-fil-A, and Lowe's every week. Your experience here at church is going to be similar to that, only more strict (because unlike those places, we're actually going to enforce social distancing once you're inside). So, if that's you, you might want to come attend in person.

Some of you are going to all of those places, but you're wearing a mask, or maybe even a mask and gloves. Maintain your personal status quo. You're absolutely welcome to attend our worship service wearing all of those things.

Some of you have been inside your house since March 15. You've had your groceries delivered. You've had Amazon deliver everything else. You've cooked all your meals in your kitchen. If that has been your practice, then I'd recommend that you maintain your personal status quo and let us deliver the worship service to your home via live-streaming over the Internet.

We aren't trying to change the status quo. Farmersville has been barely touched by COVID-19 (0 deaths, 1 hospitalization, 4 people at home, 11 full recoveries without hospitalization), and what we've been doing up until now has apparently been working great. We're just giving the opportunity for people who have all along been going to the stores to come on Sunday to an experience that will be like the Walmart experience, only quite a bit more strict about social distancing.

Everyone can make their own decisions, but my advice to people has been for them to maintain their own status quo. I hope that helps those who are uncertain about what to do.

An Example of a Church's letter on returning together:

Information for returning to worship together.

If you are ill, running a fever or believe you may have been exposed to Covid-19 or some other illness, please worship with us online in your home. Thank you!

If you are not comfortable being in a group, we encourage you to remain at home and join us online.

At First Baptist Church Charlotte, we are going to return to worship together, this Sunday, May 17, 2020 at 10:45 AM.

- We have disinfected the building, including often touched surfaces.
- Our greeters will be wearing gloves and masks.
- Our greeters will ask how you are feeling – this is NOT just small talk, please help by responding appropriately.
- We will have hand sanitizer available that our greeters will spray on your hands.
- We have a FEW masks available if you would like to wear one. If you have one, please bring it.
- The doors will be propped open – if you are on time – so you don't have to touch those surfaces.
- Ushers will be available to lead you to a place for you and your family to sit together – ALTHOUGH - it may not be YOUR seat – thanks for understanding.
- Please refrain from handshakes, hugs, etc. as you enter and exit – BUMMER HUH?
- The pews – every other row is taped off to provide social distancing. Please sit together as your family unit (those who live in the same house). Others please observe the 6 foot "social distance".
- We can seat 50-60 people in our auditorium with these precautions, and will have the fellowship hall set up for more folks to be present and worship together.
- We will NOT have childcare or Sunday school at this time. Please bring your children and they will add to the worship experience.
- Offering plates will be available at the doors to receive your offering – they will not be passed.

Remember I asked you to be ready to share what God is teaching you about Him during this pandemic, so please be prepared to come to a microphone and share. Thank you!

We will be observing the Lord's Supper this Sunday. When Pastor Duane is finished teaching about the Lord's Supper, the elements will be on tables at the front. Please come, pick up the cup(s) (there will be 2 cups - the bread will be in the bottom cup and the juice will be in the top cup) and return to your place. When you are ready, you may take the bread and drink the juice. Men, you may want to lead your family in this Celebration.

Thank you for your cooperation and understanding. Please be aware some of you are extremely concerned about meeting together again and at the same time some of you are not at all concerned. Remember, we are a church family and our love for God and our brothers and sisters is what enables us to worship Jesus together. Please don't allow someone else's preferences or concerns to distract you from worshipping Jesus.