

**CULTIVATING
THE CHURCH
AFTER THE CRISIS**

A Guide to Help Churches

Navigate through

**Re-Engaging Corporate
Worship**

May 11, 2020

“Cultivating the Church After the Crisis”

Saints of God, we are on the cusp of reentering our houses of worship. We must admit, none of us are experts in pastoring and leading through a pandemic. For many, re-engaging in worship is bitter-sweet. We desire to assemble in the fashion in which we were accustomed however, we must prepare to safely do so. We should precede with extreme caution and sincere prayer as to the timing of our re-entering. African American are high risk in terms of susceptibility, and senior citizens are at an even greater risk. I need not tell you what can possibly happen to our churches if the curve isn't truly flattened and if we have a resurgence of the virus.

Please use wisdom and discretion and don't allow necessity to press your congregations into an untimely return. The information below can be used as a guide to aid in thinking through many of the processes we should be evaluating before entering and precautionary measures to be taken to keep worshippers and those they come in contact with safe.

THE PRACTICAL PRIORITIES

- How do you creatively handle fellowship while practicing social distancing?
- Should you consider multiple worship services (for distancing purposes)?
- New cleaning and proper sanitation protocols
- Can we legally take the temperatures of worshippers upon entering church events, and should you?
- Passing offering trays & Communion trays are no longer safe practices
- Will choirs still be used (because of the spread of germs through droplets) creating greater risks?
- Should each person speaking in a microphone have their own and then disinfected after each service?
- Re-evaluate Pot lucks/Meals from home
- Mask, take temperatures?
- Safe protocols for handing out bulletins
- How do we handle baptisms?
- Social distancing decals/ restrooms/ seating?

Contributed by: Pastor Emory Berry-Greenforest Community Baptist Church

God is alive and at work! As we prepare to reopen our houses of worship amidst our global pandemic parameters and COVID-19 confinement, Greenforest Community Baptist Church joins other churches in taking the necessary steps. Below is a blueprint we've developed, not a comprehensive approach but one to allow C.H.R.I.S.T. to order our next steps.

C – Communicate constantly. Over-communicate with your core leaders, local congregation, and surrounding community on consistent days, in consistent ways, and on consistent platforms/mediums.

H – Highlight health protocols

Emphasize new safety practices and label where the new “sanitation stations” are located.

R – Recruit a relaunch team

Recruit at least 5-7 people to assist with strategizing, implementing, and assessing the reopening process. Also develop a coronavirus task force to monitor and inform the church of health updates, data, and local health resources.

I – Implement in increments

Slowly introduce and include new practices, small groups, youth ministry, additional worship services, new ministries, and philosophies.

S – Study the stats

Compile, review, analyze, and report the analytics, data, measurements, and trends to help drive future decisions. This info will help you prepare for your 2021 budgetary process.

T – Try creating a timeline

Establish a tentative 4-month timetable (June, July, August, September) that everyone can follow.

There will be questions you'll need to address before relaunching. Below are the ones we've developed.

Health and Safety

What are the local, county, state, and national parameters for gathering?

Will we need to check temperatures of the parishioners? Legal ramifications?

Will you set up additional “Sanitization Stations” around your church?

What safety measures are you implementing around social distancing?

Will attendees be asked to wear masks, gloves, or other PPE?

How will Communion, Baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and Offering be done differently?

Communication and tech teams

What will be your primary ways of communicating with your members?

Do you need an online pastor?

Have you assigned someone to capture data and measure analytics? (i.e. worship attendance, worship viewership, classes, and giving)

Worship services

Will you continue to offer online virtual worship and classes?

Do you need to establish new worship times or shorten your services?

How will your church practice social distancing for weddings, funerals, mid- week worship, receptions, fellowships, and other large gatherings?

Congregational care

What counseling will you provide people who are mentally struggling?

How will you care for your senior citizens?

How will you care for the sick, shut-in, and bereaved?

Amenities and bathrooms

Are you planning to thoroughly sanitize your facility before opening?

How often will your deep-cleaning intervals take place?

Preschool, children, youth, and teens

How will you slowly and methodically convene young people?

Small groups Bible Studies

Which month will you start to slowly implement Small Groups?

Ministries

How will you make prayer a priority in the church?

Have you mapped out your preaching for the next quarter?

What new evangelism strategies do you need to implement?

What ministries do you need to combine, add, or eliminate?

Choirs and band

Will the choir sing from the choir loft?

Does the band need to social distance when playing their instruments?

Will you utilize congregational singing or only use a small praise team?

Staffing and volunteers

Will the staff work entirely virtually? In person? Hybrid?

Does your staff need new or additional training?

Are there any staff you need to transition to places of need or phase in?

Finances

How will you monitor the church's financial income and expenses?

Will you launch a giving campaign? Or start sacrificial giving?

Have you asked lenders for a reprieve on mortgages or other debt?

What additional expenses do you need to incur for your relaunch?

Rescheduling ministry events

Do you need to reschedule key events? (Graduations, Revival)

Are you willing to do Virtual VBS and other yearly ministry events?

These are considerations we haven't had to make as pastors, and so developing a plan is crucial to how we continue to minister and share the love of Christ effectively.