



### **Sample Checklist for Relaunching In-person Worship Services**

- Are we permitted to relaunch?**
  - Based on Federal, State, and Local guidance, are we permitted to relaunch?
  - The White House released Guidelines for Reopening America Again (4/16/20)
  - The Governor's Office released The Governor's Report to Open Texas, and a new Executive Order (4/27/20)
  - The Attorney General's Office updated its Guidance for Houses of Worship During the COVID-19 Crisis (4/27/20)
- Are we able to meet Minimum Standard Health Protocols in order to relaunch?**
  - Health protocols for attendees:
    - Encourage the at-risk population to participate remotely
    - Designate an area inside the facility for the at-risk population, or offer a service for at-risk population attendees only
    - Ensure proper spacing between attendees by keeping two empty seats between parties (or six feet separation) and alternating rows between attendees
  - Health protocols for employees and volunteers:
    - Train employees and volunteers on appropriate cleaning and hygiene
    - Screen employees and volunteers
    - Ensure employees and volunteers wash or sanitize hands upon entering
    - Maintain six feet of separation from others, or implement other measures including wearing face coverings
    - Consider having employees, volunteers and attendees wear non-medical grade cloth face coverings over the nose and mouth
  - Health protocols for facilities:
    - Regularly clean and disinfect any regularly touched surfaces
    - Disinfect seats and other items that come into contact with attendees between services

- Make hand sanitizer, disinfecting wipes, soap and water, or similar disinfectant readily available
  - Post signage to encourage best hygiene practices
  - Maintain rigorous sanitation practices when preparing or serving anything edible
  - If providing meals, package food individually
- Are we aware of any virus spread in our county, city, community, and congregation?**
- The Governor's Report to Reopen Texas makes a distinction between counties with greater than or fewer than 5 confirmed cases of Covid-19 when determining permissible occupancy for reopened businesses.
  - How many, if any, confirmed cases are currently in our county, city, or community? (A quick online search yields results for COVID-19 cases by county in Texas in the following way: confirmed, recovered, and deaths.)
  - Do we have any confirmed cases amongst our congregants?
  - How do we best love our neighbors at this time? By resuming services, phasing in church functions, or simply waiting for confirmed cases to decline?
- Are our employees, volunteers, and attendees in agreement and prepared to relaunch?**
- There is wisdom in counsel as opposed to unilateral decision-making. Are all church leaders in agreement about relaunching, or is more time for prayerful consideration and discussion needed?
  - One option to understand the level of preparedness for congregants is to send a church-wide survey. This could help church leaders to gauge who is ready to return to the facility and when.
  - If not relaunching all ministries at the same time, do we agree about a rollout or phased relaunch over weeks or months?
  - Will we continue to make online services and resources available for those not able or willing to attend in-person?
- Do we have policies, procedures, or contingency plans in place?**
- Do we have a plan in place if an employee, volunteer, or attendee gets sick at church?
  - In the event of a "second wave," an increase in confirmed cases, or a case amongst congregants, are we prepared to revert back to previous methods of remote worship?
- Have we prayerfully considered relaunching?**

- Have we planned and prayed, as church leaders, for an “orderly way” of bringing God’s people back to the church? 1 Corinthians 14:40 is instructive here, “Everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.” Some will rush to be the first, and others will wait and see. Have we brought the hearts and minds of God’s people into a unified conversation?
- A reopening involves the mechanics of checking the HVAC, cleaning the carpet, making the coffee, etc. As we relaunch as a result of the worldwide pandemic, we do well to contemplate the heart of God in using this experience for the greatest good imaginable. Are we thinking less about the metrics of a relaunch, and more about what God is doing in, to and through us?
- We may never be given a better time to affect change in the local church than now. The changes we implement in the coming days, weeks, and months may impact the trajectory of our churches for years to come. Are our hearts challenged to see a movement of God in our community, church, and heart?
- Are we focusing on church-wide prayer? You may consider launching a planned Prayer Service to establish a renewed desire to serve the purposes of God. Similar to the launching of a new church, or new building; a dedicated prayer service could focus God’s people toward Him in a unique way.
- As with the story of David and Goliath in the Old Testament, David changed the conversation away from the greatness of the problem (in their case, Goliath) to the greatness of our God. We can do the same by taking our eyes off the greatness of our problem (Coronavirus) and toward the greatness of our God and His activity in our midst.