

FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
PHASED APPROACH FOR RE-OPENING CHURCH FACILITIES FOR MINISTRY

(Adapted from Resources Provided by the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta)

The Session of Faith Presbyterian Church

June 17, 2020

*We begin with love for God and love for neighbor.
Love for neighbor, during a pandemic, requires that all
will necessarily make sacrifices for the few.*

The tables below place the Opening Up America Guidelines according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and The White House next to the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta's specific recommendations with regards to returning to our church buildings *alongside specific, contextual plans* for Faith Presbyterian Church. *These plans are subject to change* based on environmental and health factors, and we certainly intend to follow all local or state regulations, as well as CDC recommendations. The long list of resources at the end of this document have been very helpful in our deliberations. (Obviously the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta is not our own Presbytery, but given its staff and resources, the Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (PGA) was able to develop and circulate guidelines. While not from Cherokee Presbytery these PGA guidelines are just that guidelines, but informative and helpful.)

NOTE: Session will continue to meet periodically to approve the date to enter each successive phase.

*Churches can be the site of community-changing superspreading events
in relation to Covid 19.*

FIRST - PLEASE STAY HOME:

- if you feel sick or have potential symptoms of the virus;
- if you have been in direct contact with someone who tested positive for the virus.
- if you feel uncomfortable for any reason attending in person a church activity we urge you to stay home and take advantage of the many other ways to be involved in the life of the church.

INFORMATION REGARDING COVID-19 CONTACT TRACING

All members and friends of Faith Presbyterian Church please be aware of the following:

Should any member or friend of Faith Presbyterian Church be diagnosed with or test positive for Covid-19:

- It is recommended for the good of Public Health that the individual inform, with confidentiality, the Pastor or Clerk of Session of this fact. and their local Department of Health
- It is that individual's responsibility for the good of Public Health to share who they have been in contact with, in order that contact tracing may occur using the epidemiology process
- If the individual was inside the church, the building will be closed for deep cleaning as prescribed by the Administration Team
- the Session will determine what if any phase change is indicated

Phase One		Phases A - B
Opening Up America Guidelines	Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (PGA) Recommendations for Churches	<p>Faith Presbyterian Plan</p> <p>PHASE A – CURRENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship services will continue to be offered online and shared. • Choir should only rehearse and record music virtually. • Individuals performing required essential tasks or services in the church must use social distancing and wear face masks. • For those working outdoors, social distancing must be observed • High Risk individuals, including staff, should continue to shelter in place • Small groups, Bible studies, meetings, etc. shall continue to function in a virtual format • An open house at the new church building using social distancing, masks and other safety measures is under review • Place holder: funerals, memorial services, weddings TBD <p>CRITERIA & CORE RESPONSIBILITIES TO MOVE TO PHASE B</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Average downward trajectory of new cases for a 14-day period in Fannin, Union and Gilmer Counties.* 2. A supply of masks, gloves and cleaning supplies are readily available for purchase by the church. 3. Widespread availability of testing (per Riverstone and GA Mountain Health) 4. FPC has completed, circulated and regularly updated a policy concerning increased hygiene and risk reduction in all areas of the church, including bathrooms and the kitchen

- All vulnerable individuals should continue to shelter in place.
- No more than 10 people should gather and should maintain 6 feet of social distancing.
- Encourage telework; if possible, return to work in phases.
- Close common areas where personnel are likely to congregate and interact.
- Visits to senior care facilities and hospitals should be prohibited.
- School and organized youth activities should remain closed.
- Large Venues, including places of worship, can operate under strict social distancing protocols.

- Churches should continue holding virtual worship services only.
- Worship leaders should consider resuming recording in their sanctuary while maintaining and modeling 6ft of social distancing.
- High Risk individuals, including staff, should continue to shelter in place.
- Small groups, Bible studies, meetings, etc. should continue to function in a virtual format.
- Weddings and memorial services should be kept to less than 10 in attendance, maintaining social distance guidelines and wearing masks.

PHASE B

- Worship services will continue to be offered on-line and shared.
- Session and pastoral staff can consider recording worship service from the church sanctuary
- Choir should only rehearse and record music virtually.
- Individuals performing required essential tasks or services in the church must use social distancing and wear face masks.
- Outdoor worship can be considered with social distancing
- Staff have the support of Session to maintain their own safety and are in no way pressured to take part in any activity that could put them or their families at risk. Staff will communicate any such situation to Session ahead of time whenever possible.
- High risk individuals, including staff, should continue to shelter in place
- Small groups, Bible studies, meetings, etc. shall continue to function in a virtual format
- For those working outdoors, social distancing must be observed
- An open house at the new church building using social distancing, masks and other safety measures is under review

CRITERIA & CORE RESPONSIBILITIES TO MOVE TO PHASE C

- Average downward trajectory of new cases for a 14-day period in Fannin, Union and Gilmer Counties.*
- A supply of masks, gloves and cleaning supplies are readily available for purchase by the church.
- Widespread availability of testing (per Riverstone and GA Mountain Health)
- FPC has completed, circulated and regularly updated a policy concerning increased hygiene and risk reduction in all areas of the church, including bathrooms and the kitchen

Phase Two		Phase C
Opening Up America Guidelines	Presbytery of Greater Atlanta (PGA) Recommendations for Churches	Faith Presbyterian Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · All vulnerable individuals should continue to shelter in place. · No more than 50 people should gather and should maintain 6 feet of social distancing. · Encourage telework if possible. · Close common areas where personnel are likely to congregate and interact. · Non-essential travel can resume. · Visits to senior care facilities and hospitals should be prohibited. · School and organized youth activities can reopen, maintaining social distancing guidelines. · Large Venues, including places of worship, can operate under moderate social distancing protocols. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Churches should continue offering virtual worship services. · Churches may consider hosting in-person worship for groups of >50 people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Require social distancing and face masks for all participants. o Use no-touch alternatives for passing the peace, collecting offering, etc. o Create a healthy hospitality strategy for ensuring compliance and preparing for sanitation. o Remove congregational song from the service as singing is a risky behavior that could increase transmission. o Give serious consideration to options for Communion that minimize contact, this might mean postponing in-person communion. o Track attendance and create a plan of action in case one of your worshippers becomes infected with COVID-19 after gathering. · High Risk individuals, including staff, should continue to shelter in place. · Clergy and staff may resume working in the church office, maintain social distancing and wearing masks. 	<p>PHASE C</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worship services will continue to be offered online and shared. • Pastoral staff may consider sharing a live-streaming worship service from within the sanctuary • The music director may consider playing piano music during the worship service recorded in the sanctuary • Choir should only rehearse and record music virtually. • Individuals performing required essential tasks or services in the church must use social distancing and wear face masks. • Outside worship service can be considered with social distancing • Staff have the support of Session to maintain their own safety and are in no way pressured to take part in any activity that could put them or their families at risk. Staff will communicate any such situation to Session ahead of time whenever possible. • High Risk individuals, including staff, should continue to shelter in place. • Small groups of 10 or less may meet in the building but must understand and follow the FPC Increased Hygiene and Risk Reduction Policy. The meeting will also be available via technology. • Outdoor pastoral care meeting could be considered with ten or less people with the necessary precautions of self-distancing. • Persons other than staff may stop by or meet with a staff member following the same guidelines as above. • We are going to seek guidance and use our current experiences before determining the use of the building to outside groups.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Small groups, Bible studies, meetings, etc. may begin to meet in-person maintaining physical distancing guidelines and wearing masks. · Weddings and memorial services should be kept to less than 50 in attendance, maintaining social distance guidelines. and wearing masks. 	<p>CRITERIA & CORE RESPONSIBILITIES TO MOVE TO PHASE D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average downward trajectory of new cases for a 14-day period in Fannin, Union and Gilmer Counties.* • A supply of masks, gloves and cleaning supplies are readily available for purchase by the church. • Widespread availability of testing per (Riverstone and GA Mountain Health) • FPC has completed, circulated and regularly updated a policy concerning increased hygiene and risk reduction in all areas of the church, including bathrooms and the kitchen <p>After gaining experience with Phases A, B and C, Faith Presbyterian Church Session will add further phases. The document used as a template from Decatur Presbyterian Church has 7 phases.</p>
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“The following sites are used as resources regarding documented cases for at least 14 days in our area, specifically Fannin, Gilmer and Union Counties.

Georgia Department of Public Health: <https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-daily-status-report>

Atlanta Journal Constitution: <https://www.ajc.com/news/coronavirus-georgia-covid-dashboard/jvoLBozRtBSVSNQDDAuZxH/>

Johns Hopkins University Covid-19 Dashboard
<https://gisanddata.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opsdashboard/index.html#/bda7594740fd40299423467b48e9ecf6>

Reference Links

www.Covidexitstrategy.org

From PCUSA 20 page document on recommended guidelines from OGA

https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/covid-19/returning_to_public_worship_may_2020.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0KIxKFJ3CFjTRujPiCSDKRdHi788hEoHYRQr1wLrbrE0SYGkA7ERSqOdM

Quick sheet <https://www.pcusa.org/covid19/>

From Methodists <https://www.ngumc.org/newsdetail/bishop-and-cabinet-churches-not-to-gather-at-this-time-but-to-prepare-13651168>

From the CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/organizations/guidance-community-faith-organizations.html>

Returning to Church <https://www.wichurches.org/2020/04/23/returning-to-church/>

Johns Hopkins data <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/us-map>

https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/?utm_source=jhu_properties&utm_medium=dig_link&utm_content=ow_jhuhompage&utm_campaign=jh20

From the WHO

https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/getting-workplace-ready-for-covid-19.pdf?sfvrsn=359a81e7_6

From EP of Greater Atlanta

<http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?m=1011272361012&ca=0991fa9c-afb8-4a59-8b08-af6be09561f6>

Guidelines for funerals

<https://www.wichurches.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Guide-for-Christian-Funerals-During-COVID-19-final.pdf>

From the White House <https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/#criteria>

From St. Luke's https://slpres.org/guiding-principles-faqs/?fbclid=IwAR0wSYyR2Z2UwS1_EKqVORVCrOBj0pddkte08bzcrn_h5RZYOSK6mQKwN0A

About singing

https://www.drheathernelson.com/singingandcovid19?fbclid=IwAR08HKFYC71ACH_Uq1nSSUr-dLK1-qOHE-Zvzjy9oxDwlCwLEyz-pBwlwlg

Other

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/29/germany-to-set-out-rules-for-religious-services-including-singing-ban?fbclid=IwAR094mObxGGDdtz0w4sjexTWvvBNW7rHp2zmmhJdB6hRqJCSG0VO90mgRqU4>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

<https://dph.georgia.gov/covid-19-daily-status-report>

<https://kenbraddy.com/2020/04/18/20-questions-your-church-should-answer-before-people-return/>

<https://www.middleclassartist.com/post/nats-panel-of-experts-lays-out-sobering-future-for-singers-no-vaccine-no-safe-public-singing>

<https://slpres.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Saint-Lukes-Guiding-Principles-During-the-Coronavirus-Pandemic.pdf>

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica/>

<https://www.wichurches.org/2020/04/23/returning-to-church/>

Presbymusic.org