

Path Toward Re-Opening First Christian Church of Aransas Pass

As the nation discusses re-opening businesses and easing gathering restrictions, congregations are beginning to consider similar decisions. As much as I wish this was a simple process, it is not. Congregational leaders have the final decision-making authority for their places of worship. With much prayer and consideration, the leaders of FCCAP have taken steps toward re-opening the church for corporate worship.

Our decision is to take a phased approach rather than a one-time event. We have taken advice from the CDC and from our Southwest regional leaders. Our goal in taking this approach is to mitigate the risk of resurgence of the virus and avoid putting at risk the most vulnerable in our fellowship.

The following is a summary of a 3-phase approach to re-opening corporate worship.

Phase 1: (April 28th) Phase one will begin 14 days after the number of new cases in the state/region flattens or begins a decline (est April 14th). We will continue to offer worship via Livestreaming on the churches Facebook page. You can access the Facebook page at “**First Christian Church (DOC) Aransas Pass**”. Services are live from church every Sunday morning at 11am. We will stay in Phase 1 for 14 days. During Phase 1, vulnerable individuals should continue to remain sheltered in place.

Phase 2: (May 12th) Continue to Live Stream, Phase 2 will be a monitoring phase with no evidence of reinfection and continued downward trajectory of new cases for a second 14-day period. In other words, Phase 2 is not reached until an area has had 28 days total of declining cases. During Phase 2, vulnerable individuals should continue to remain sheltered in place.

Phase 3: Sunday May 24th with no evidence of reinfections and we reach a third 14-day period of declining COVID-19 cases or 42 days of declining cases. This is when there is the greatest degree of free social interaction though precautions should be taken (Wearing of face mask will be optional). At Phase 3 we will resume corporate worship in the church building. Note: Live Streaming will continue on FCCAP Facebook page.

Steps have been taken to reduce risk of infection at beginning of phase 3, they are as follow:

1. We have installed an Ultraviolet air treatment system in AC/Heating systems to kill airborne bacteria. (Kills up to 99% of bacteria, mold and viruses)
2. There will be designated ushers at every entrance and exit to open/close the doors to minimize touching of doors.
3. We have individually sealed communion cups with juice and wafers. They will be available in pews.
4. Church contributions will be collected via a lock box at exit of church.
5. There will be hand sanitizer stationed at all entryways and soap dispensers in restrooms.
6. Our custodian will disinfect all possible touch points every Saturday prior to Sunday morning service.
7. We will NOT be greeting or passing the peace by handshake
8. The vulnerable with health factors, might consider remaining at home and enjoying the service on the churches Facebook page via live Streaming
9. I would ask those who are sick to please stay home which is good for them and good for the congregation.

Thank you for your patience as we go through this difficult time. May God Bless you and keep you well.

David H. Dear - Sr. Pastor FCCAP