

HCOG REOPENING PLAN

Since Governor Abbott announced the reopening of Texas, we all have been eagerly anticipating the return to corporate worship. Anticipation is high, although concerns remain about just how quickly to get “back to normal.” Some will see us as rushing back too soon, some will see us as overreacting. Either way, we must make good decisions about the safety and security of all the congregation. Regardless of your feelings about the pandemic, it is clear we cannot return to “business as usual.”

Perhaps we should apply I Corinthians 14:40-43 to our present situation: “Let everything be done decently and in order...since God is not a God of disorder...” While the verses refer to orderliness in the worship service, the *principle* of orderliness in God’s house can be applied to the church’s return to its facilities.

This is our moment to celebrate our return not just to the campus, *but to one another*. As we return to one another on campus and in our Bible study groups, orderliness and thoughtfulness are important.

Regardless of our personal feelings about any safety measure, we must do everything we can to ensure the safety of all members.

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Philippians 2:3-4

If you are unsure or hesitant in any way, please do not feel pressure. We love you and want you to be able to worship freely and comfortably. Ultimately, our focus is not on a church building but on the worship of our Lord.

Please read over the following plan so that you may be informed about what to expect when we return to the building.

Phase 1

Focus: Returning to the Church Building

NOTE: IF YOU ARE VULNERABLE, HIGH-RISK, OR UNSURE IN ANY WAY, PLEASE STAY HOME. STREAMING OF WORSHIP SERVICES WILL STILL OCCUR ON FACEBOOK AND YOUTUBE.

- To maintain safety, extensive cleaning/sanitation of all facilities has been undertaken by the custodial staff. Every surface has been thoroughly sanitized multiple times.
- In addition to sanitation, we are installing REME HALO duct air purifiers in our HVAC system for the auditorium. The dual ionizers reduce airborne particulates, kills 99% of bacteria and reduces sneeze germs by 99%. UV Light filters are also being installed to further purify the air in our facility. These systems will help reduce contagion but are not “fool proof.” They need time to operate. The best “real-time” prevention measure is to wear a mask.
- We will begin our return with a worship-only strategy. That means no classes, no SNT, no Wed night. We will focus in this first phase on safely and successfully getting the congregation back together.
- Social distancing is encouraged. We will set up the seating in such a way as to facilitate this for everyone present. Ushers will be available inside the auditorium to help with seating and maintaining social distancing.
- All attending over age 10 will be required to wear masks in order to protect the more vulnerable of our number. We will have some masks available at “THE HUB” to provide if necessary.
- We will have thermometers on hand to test staff and volunteers (as well as any members who might feel it necessary.)
- Prepackaged communion cups will be left in Ziploc bags on the seats. Offering baskets and trash cans for used cups will be located at exits. No trays will be passed.
- Live broadcasts via Facebook Live or other online services will continue to continue to minister to those not in attendance.

- Sanitizer will be readily available throughout the building.
- Restrooms will be available but all water fountains will be shut off.
- No Children's Church.
- A nursing area with video will be provided for nursing mothers. The cry room will also be available.
- We will attempt a "staged exit" encouraging the "vulnerable" to leave first. While we all will be thrilled to see one another, we ask that we move to the exits in a manner consistent with social distancing.
- There is no timeline for Phase 1. Instead we will monitor conditions and institute the next phase when appropriate.

Phase 2

Included in this Phase:

- Instituting mid-week services. Still no classes in classrooms, we will meet corporately for Bible study in the auditorium.
- Extensive sanitizing will be conducted multiple times during the week by the custodial staff.
- Social distancing will still be encouraged in all spaces.
- Masks will still be encouraged
- Temperature will still be taken as needed
- Any groups wishing to use facility will need to go through the church office. Reservations will include a guideline for cleaning and sanitizing the facility after use. All groups will be responsible for sanitizing the area used upon completion of their activity/event.

Phase 3

Included in this Phase:

- Classes will be reopened for children, youth and adults.
- Classrooms must be sanitized at greater levels than ever before
- Teachers will receive training to help them learn best practices for sanitizing rooms & children's toys
- All facility use will involve extensive cleaning/sanitizing before and after use. Guidelines will be provided when reservations are made through the church office.
- Some traditional ministries may take place in alternative ways (ie. VBS, Youth activities, Prime Timers, etc)
- Classroom attendance will be limited to allow physical distancing
- Adult and student rooms get tech upgrades (wall-mounted flat screen televisions and appropriate cables will allow groups to use Zoom technology to provide a live experience for group members who are not comfortable coming back to the campus); new people can be reached online, too
- Creation of special "online only" groups that can be new front doors to people seeking to connect with the church.