



A Probable Relaunching of the Church:

Getting Back in the Building with a Compassionate Return

Be cautious and controlled. This may not work for every church but adjust your plans to fit your people. Give constant and consistent information to your congregation and let them know that stages could be reversed if there are those who do not adhere to the plans. Develop a relaunching plan to which the majority will agree.

We have experienced new methods of doing ministry and connecting with our communities. These must not be allowed to dissolve and be obsolete. Churches have been reaching people around the globe with our new technological methodologies. Keep utilizing these methods so others may hear about our Lord and Savior.

Manipulate this manual and practice a plan to which you are comfortable. The Marines' motto is – adapt, improvise, and overcome! Let us do the same!

Stage 1 - 100% Worship Seating Reentry Plan

Major Points:

- Listen for permission from political officials to increase seating limits and respect and honor their decisions.
- You may want to relaunch with a worship-only strategy.
- Add worship services or viewing areas to allow for continued physical distancing.
- Children and preschool ministries may require additional workers and parents may still desire to take children to “big church.”
- Encourage volunteers to consider getting the vaccine.
- Still plan on sanitizing more diligently and eliminating physical contact

- Restrooms use: Consider maintaining a masked and gloved bathroom monitor who will spray and disinfect between users.
- Bulletins are laid out for pick up; announcements made via PowerPoint.
- Worship centers should continue to be sanitized between services.
- Collecting the offering by having receptacles placed strategically at doors in and around the worship center and lobby.
- Continue Live broadcasts via Facebook, YouTube, or other online services; continue to upgrade and enhance this ministry.
- Cease registration for attendees when your church and leadership are comfortable the threat of virus spread is behind us.
- Church leaders should provide discipleship aids for home use.
- Continue safety procedures for administering the Lord's Supper, baptisms, and the invitation.
- Plan for stringent sanitizing of entrances and exits.
- Decide what to do about weddings, use of facilities by outside groups, etc.
- Encourage Bible study groups to continue connecting and contacting members via phone, text, email, Zoom, Facetime, Skype, etc.

Stage 2 - Reinstating Events/Groups/Ministries

Major Points:

- Space...physical distancing may necessitate relocating groups to appropriately sized rooms; groups may still need to be offered on days other than Sunday to meet space criteria.
- Members and workers who are at-risk or fearful should be allowed to stay away for the time being.
- Classrooms must be meticulously sanitized.
- Teachers will need new kinds of safety training in best practices for sanitizing rooms & children's toys
- If Children's Church is a ministry that was suspended, decisions will need to be made about how to practice physical distancing when it resumes.
- Adult and student rooms get tech upgrades (wall-mounted flat screen televisions and appropriate connections to allow groups to use Zoom-type technology, providing the live experience for group members who are not comfortable returning to the campus)
- Creation of special "online member" groups; recruit workers who are passionate about continuing with a virtual group.

Stage 3 - Redesigning Processes and Systems

Major Points:

- Some will prefer to continue worship and Bible study groups online.
- Re-evaluate budget needs and plans so the church can move forward and upward with missions and ministry.

- Plan now for Fall Festivals, Thanksgiving meals – What will be too early for such a large gathering of people? Consider catering.
- Ministry to struggling families and individuals may continue to increase. Consider asking community leaders to help your church in hosting a job fair. Refer or offer counseling to help people cope with post-COVID depression and loss during the time of isolation.
- Benevolence ministry may require additional funds and volunteers.
- Preach on HOPE for a brighter tomorrow and cast vision a clear and compelling vision for the balance of 2021 and into 2022.
- Be positive, open, and transparent with the congregation about any budget needs/adjustments and be expectant that the church will thrive in spite of this.

Stage 4 - CELEBRATE

Major Points:

- Call the people to Praise and Thanksgiving.
- Consider a memorial event for those who passed during the pandemic.
- Look back, offer personal testimonies, and celebrate the victories and progress in ministry, baptisms, outreach, attendance, etc. from March 2020 to date.
- Challenge the congregation to remain flexible and open to new ways of “doing church/ministry”.
- Display God’s hand of healing, deliverance and guidance. Celebrate Him!
- Continue to offer spiritual formation materials for home use.
- Begin planning now for summer activities and 2022 mission trips (VBS, camps, mission trips, etc.) Make them a 2022 priority!
- Help the people see the benefits we have learned from the COVID-19 crisis.

As you can see, this info is not exhaustive, but represents concerns we will all have to address as we all return to the church’s meeting place, as we relaunch ministries and continue to “do church” wisely, safely and incorporating the technologies we have learned to embrace. Go forward and upward for the Kingdom of Christ!