

# Calvary Baptist Church – Covid-19 Response Plan

## 1. INTRODUCTION

As we work through the challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the health and safety of our church, staff, and community are our top priority. Our plan, therefore, is rooted in the recommendations of government and health officials; it tries to take into account the realities of coronavirus spread in our community; and it is aimed ultimately at the safety of everyone who participates in the life of our church family. We will continue to monitor developments with respect to COVID-19, and certain elements of the plan—especially the target dates—may be adjusted to conform to the guidance provided by health officials.

## 2. KEY OBSERVATIONS

In drafting our response plan, our deacons are seeking to honor several key observations about the work of the church in this or any time:

- The work of the church is an essential service; and as people called to obey God rather than human authorities, we recognize our fundamental right to conduct worship whenever and in whatever form we feel led to do so.
- However, while we may have the right to do many things, not all things are beneficial or productive (see 1 Corinthians 10:23); and therefore, we are called not to seek our own good but the good of others.
- Further, while the work of the church is essential, the use of a church facility—while helpful—is not essential. The church is the people of God, and our work can continue even when we are not able to meet in the same physical space.
- Finally, we acknowledge that when the church *does* meet in the same physical space, our presence with each other is very different than it would be in other public spaces. Unlike a store, where customers go in, get what they need, and leave; church members inhabit the same space for extended periods of time and in close proximity. This reality changes the practices that must be observed to protect the safety of all involved.

## 3. CHURCH ACTIONS TO PREPARE FOR REOPENING

In preparation for the gradual resumption of regular church activities, Calvary Baptist is taking the following steps to provide a safe environment for all our members and guests.

- We will continue to provide a worship experience that is live-streamed on Facebook every Sunday morning so that people in “high risk” groups (i.e. children, the elderly, and those with underlying conditions) can continue to be a part of the worship life of our church family.
- We will install touch-less soap dispensers in all bathrooms and touch-less faucets in the bathrooms located in the sanctuary lobby to minimize the chance of cross-contamination.
- We will develop a disinfectant plan for all common areas and will acquire the equipment and supplies needed for the custodian to implement this plan.
- We will prepare cleaning checklists for all meeting rooms and will acquire the supplies to needed for users of those rooms to clean them after use.

- We will plan hand sanitizer stations in all entrances, offices, and meeting areas.
- We will purchase infrared touch-less thermometers to facilitate quick temperature scanning at entrances when church activities resume.
- We will remove hymnals and pew Bibles from the pews and coffee pots from the fellowship hall and classrooms to minimize the chance of cross-contamination from the use of these objects.

#### **4. REOPENING THE CHURCH FACILITY**

Based on the current recommendations of health officials and the current realities of coronavirus activity in our community, ***it is our goal to resume in person worship on Sunday, June 28***. However, because the recommendations and realities are subject to change, it must be understood that this is a target, not a date that is set in stone; and it may need to be adjusted as circumstances change. When the church facility does reopen, we anticipate that the following guidelines will need to be in place until at least the beginning of August, at which time they will be evaluated and revised as conditions allow.

##### **A. COMING TO CHURCH**

- During this season when we are meeting with safeguards, there will be no nursery provided, and there will be no children's Sunday School classes.
- We will ask all those who participate in activities at the church facility to maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from each other. Social distancing is key to protecting our members, staff, and community during this potential time of rapid virus spread.
- Face coverings will be required in the church facility, except for those who are involved in active teaching and/or worship leadership. Masks will be provided for those who do not have them.
- Participants in church activities will be asked to enter the facility through one of four entrances: the Chapel Door, the covered entrance near the Fellowship Hall, and the two main doors to the Sanctuary.
- Greeters will be stationed at all four entrances to hold doors for those who are entering and exiting the facility.
- Temperature screening will be conducted at all four entrances. Anyone registering a high temperature will be asked to worship and study with us at a different time.

##### **B. COMING TO WORSHIP**

- Because there are challenges involved in providing adequate cleaning between successive worship gatherings – and because certain elements of our traditional service may not be possible at this time (like choral anthems and congregational hymns) – we will offer one worship experience each Sunday morning during this time that we are meeting with safeguards.
- Seating in the sanctuary will be limited to facilitate social distancing. If the number of worship participants exceeds capacity, additional guests will be invited to sit in the Fellowship Hall or chapel, where the worship gathering can be viewed on a large-screen television.
- Offering plates will not be passed in worship. Instead, worshipers can use our online giving tools or can place their offerings in the lockbox that will be available as they enter and leave the sanctuary.

- Until social distancing recommendations are lifted, there will be no sanctuary choir. Worship music will be provided by smaller ensembles of musicians, who will seek to maintain proper social distancing.

### **C. COMING TO SUNDAY SCHOOL**

- During the time that we are meeting with safeguards, Sunday School classes are encouraged to continue meeting online or offsite. For those who wish to meet at the church facility:
  - There will be three classrooms available: the Fellowship Hall, the Chapel, Room 119, and Room 121. These rooms have been selected because they are large enough to allow social distancing – and because they have few upholstered surfaces, which will facilitate cleaning.
  - Reservations for these spaces will have to be scheduled in advance with our church administrator.
  - No more than 3 classes will be permitted to meet at any one time, and the total number of participants onsite must not exceed 100 people.
  - Any class using the church facility will be provided with a cleaning checklist and all necessary cleaning supplies and will be expected to clean their room at the end of the class session.
  - Classes are discouraged from serving food as part of their gathering, and any food and drink served should be prepackaged.

## **5. WHEN WILL WE GET BACK TO “NORMAL”?**

As we understand the guidance being provided by state health officials, restrictions designed to slow the spread of the coronavirus may be lifted toward the end of the summer, providing that we have been successful in “flattening the curve” of infections, hospitalizations, and deaths. As new recommendations are offered, our church family will review our response plan to minimize inconveniences and the maximize the full practice of our shared ministry. However, we must be prepared for target dates to change; and there may be periods when restrictions need to increase rather than decrease as we respond to spikes in virus activity.

Along the way, we encourage everyone to take the precautions that they feel are necessary to safeguard themselves and their family. We ask everyone to respect the guidelines that we have put in place for the benefit of our congregation and community. And we urge everyone to respect the decisions and feelings of their brothers and sisters in Christ, who may have differing perspectives on how our COVID-19 response should be coordinated.

# COVID-19 Response Plan – Supplemental Materials

## PREVENTION GUIDELINES

### A. Health and Hygiene:

- a. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially when first entering the office or jobsite, after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- b. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- c. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- d. Avoid close contact with (being within 6 feet of) people who are sick.
- e. **Stay home if you are sick** – follow guidance provided by North Carolina Public Health and CDC guidelines. Please contact the church office if you have entered the church within 14 days of becoming sick so safeguards can be relayed.
- f. Cover your cough or sneeze with your arm or a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- g. Clean and disinfect frequently-touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- h. Conduct daily thorough cleaning of offices and worksites (not just high-touch areas).
- i. Face masks/coverings/shields that cover one's nose and mouth and gloves are recommended. The wearing of a mask or face covering is required when using the Church until further notice. Avoid touching your face covering with unwashed hands or removing it unnecessarily. Re-usable face coverings should be cleaned regularly.
- j. Temperature monitoring will be in place to protect our members and community.
- k. Consider eliminating food storage and preparation in office kitchens and site break areas.

### B. Social Distancing/Reducing Numbers

- a. Social distancing of 6 feet should be maintained whenever possible.
- b. Create alternating schedules for the office in order to reduce numbers in the office.
- c. Allow staff to work remotely to the extent feasible.
- d. Avoid in person office meetings unless necessary, and if an in-person meeting is deemed necessary, practice social distancing.
- e. Avoid large gatherings. Stagger meetings with smaller groups where possible.
- f. Limit visitors to the office. Visitors should be required to wear a face covering.
- g. Restrict carpooling.
- h. Avoid congregating for meals or breaks at coffee machines, water coolers, hallways, stairways, elevators or elsewhere in the office.
- i. Shared equipment (such as printers and copiers) will be cleaned regularly.

### C. Travel:

- a. Travel by church bus is prohibited until the period of meeting with safeguards is over. Additional guidance will be given after that time.
- b. Refrain from all non-essential face-to-face meetings on church grounds until August 9<sup>th</sup>.
- c. After personal or business travel, self-quarantining is required as recommended by the CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notice.html#travel-1>.

## **LOGISTICS**

As the impact from the virus will continue to change, so will CDC guidance and requirements with respect to safety and hygiene. It will be important, therefore, to expand church safety beyond traditional considerations to consider site or task specific risks, and individual circumstances to reduce exposure and transmission of COVID-19. Our policies and rules, should provide the following at a minimum:

### **A. Health/Hygiene**

- a. The church should provide adequate soap, cleaning and sanitizing supplies.
- b. Disinfecting stations should be established by entrances and be properly maintained.
- c. Properly clean/sanitize common areas, including daily sanitization and cleaning of bathrooms. Doors, surfaces commonly used, AV equipment and computer equipment should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the day
- d. Offering plate will not be passed in worship.

### **B. Proper procedures for the mutual notification of illnesses including COVID-19:**

Personnel who test positive are asked to notify the church so any affected member(s) can be notified. Notification will be confidential, and no names will be used during the notifications to protect personal health information

Where appropriate, the affected members will be notified using the guidance of the Surry County Health Department.

## **EXPOSURE/POTENTIAL EXPOSURE GUIDELINES**

As much as we will try to mitigate, prevent and avoid illness through the preventative measures listed above, inevitably someone may still become ill at their office or jobsite. The procedures set forth below should be followed.

- A. All members who are ill must stay at home.
- B. We will work with an employee who is ill to learn about the employee's symptoms or possible exposure, assist with accommodation and leave requests and benefits coordination, and follow-up with medical providers on back to work procedures.
- C. In cases of a suspected COVID-19 infection, we will compile a list of other employees potentially exposed to the applicable employee during the period that person may have been contagious, require them to isolate themselves as appropriate, and assist those persons with information, accommodation and leave requests, benefits coordination and medical documentation, as needed.
- D. The Deacon Body will determine whether the illness needs to be recorded or reported in accordance with federal, state and/or county health and safety requirements.

- E. All medical information, including the identities of employees who are suspected or confirmed as having COVID-19, must be maintained confidentially to the extent possible and consistent with applicable law, including without limitation, HIPAA and the ADA.

## **NO DISCRIMINATION**

We prohibit discrimination, harassment, and retaliation because of a member's disability or medical condition, including illnesses related to COVID-19.