

# **Recommendation to Re Physical Presence Ministries**

Bridgepoint Church at Toco Hills

May 4, 2020

*This recommendation from the church staff to the Direction Team is based on the best information and advice available to us from knowledgeable sources for the sole purpose of saving lives by not creating situations that could put our church participants in danger of COVID-19 infection. While there are many of us who desire to return to normal activities immediately and do not fear the possibility of being infected, we believe to be consistent with the teachings of Jesus in John 15:13 "Greater love has no one than this, that someone down his life for his friends" and Matthew 22:39b "Love your neighbor as yourself" we must be more concerned about the effects it could have on others than ourselves. With a significant number of the COVID-19 virus infections in Georgia spreading from church and funeral services, we have a responsibility to not create opportunities that, while important in our faith walk and based on scripture, could harm other people unknowingly.*

## **Timing**

The roll-out of any type of gathering opportunities will be after June 1<sup>st</sup> as the situation develops and informed by knowledgeable sources based on White House Guidelines for 14 days of declining infections and deaths due to the COVID-19 virus. We will announce the commencement of gathering opportunities and their accompanying guidelines at least seven days in advance utilizing email and social media.

## **Phase-In Stages**

- **Initial** (When Situation Allows a Safe Pathway)
  - **Sunday Opportunities**
    - Two identical worship services at 9:30am and 11:00am so people can be distanced
    - Streaming remains a priority alternative
    - No physical greeting time, bulletin, cards and announcement/prayer sheets
    - No small group studies but mothers with small children can use the nursing room
    - No snacks or refreshments provided
  - **Wednesday Opportunities**
    - No food service
    - No adult or children activities
    - Virtual is encouraged but youth may meet with approved social distancing and hygiene practices
  - **Weekday Meetings and Study Opportunities**
    - Virtual highly recommended but approved social distancing and hygiene practices used if in-person is desired
    - Normal Sunday morning groups may meet during the week or after 2:00pm on Sundays with strictly controlled approved social distancing and hygiene practices
    - PointGroups meet as desired with strictly controlled approved social distancing and hygiene practices applied if in-person is implemented
    - Stand-alone short-term age-graded activities allowed with strictly controlled approved social distancing and hygiene practices
    - Office will remain open 10:00am-4:00pm Monday - Thursday
- **Intermediate** (Once the pandemic is well under control for an extended time)
  - **Sunday Opportunities**

The same as the Initial Phase with the addition of small group studies and the provision of coffee using approved social distancing and hygiene practices
  - **Wednesday Opportunities**
    - Children may meet if all public schools in our community are meeting with approved social distancing and hygiene practices implemented
    - Desired adult activities may meet if desired with approved social distancing and hygiene practices

- No food service
- **Weekday Meetings and Study Opportunities**
  - Virtual highly recommended but approved social distancing and hygiene practices used if in-person is required
  - PointGroups meet as desired with strictly controlled approved social distancing and hygiene practices applied if in-person is implemented
  - Short-term age-graded activities allowed with approved social distancing and hygiene practices applied
  - Office will be open 8:00am-5:00pm Monday - Thursday
- **Eventual** (Vaccine developed and dispensed into the population or virus is totally controlled)  
A return to pre-pandemic services, ministries and meetings that are deemed vital for Bridgepoint to fulfill her mission and purpose while enhanced by new opportunities and systems discovered during the pandemic that improve our work.

## **Procedure**

- Enlist volunteers to move from 10:45am service to the identical 9:30am service
- Capture contact information at a welcome station or using an app without the use of paper
- A deep cleaning of facilities in use before occupation
- Ventilation rates and purification options researched and upgraded if needed
- Wash hands for 20 seconds as often as possible
- Use hand sanitizer which will be available
- Doors held open as people enter and windows remain open if possible
- No physical greeting enabled

### **Important Georgia Guidelines...**

- Medically fragile & persons over 65 should continue to shelter in place and utilize virtual services
- Those not feeling well, have a fever, or have had direct contact with someone who likely has or is confirmed to have COVID-19 should not attend
- Facemasks Required (One-time use paper masks available for those w/o masks)
- Maintain at least six feet between the person in front of you, behind you, and each side of you during the entire service
- Family members may sit together
- Immediately be seated upon arrival and once a service ends everyone should immediately go to their vehicles
- Removal of items touched by multiple people such as offering plates, bulletins, announcement sheets, hymnbooks and communal communion items

## **Long-Term Adjustments**

We are not certain where the next few years will take us but it is obvious that our life as Bridgepoint Church at Toco Hills after the pandemic will be different than before. That is not necessarily a negative reality. As the writer of Hebrews reminds us in chapter 1 verse 8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever," we know that God's word and the Gospel never change. But during this time, we are discovering some fresh new avenues of communication and community enhancement that might be repositioning us to be a more effective Body of Christ than we could be without these new revelations. Will our life in the future expect everyone to attend physically to be considered active? How can we make the virtual experience more personal? What have we learned about connecting with and serving our community that needs to be continued? Do we need all the space we have to accomplish that which is expected of us? Can our space be used in a different way in order to be more Gospel relevant? Have the changes we have been forced to implement moved us from our normal traditional comfort zone and closer to being a 24/7 church? What would a 24/7 church look like on our corner? Are there better ways for our guests to feel at home without a physical touch? Can a "High Touch" church flourish in a "No Touch" world? Could placing offering in a designated location be the first step for us to have a more interactive worship service? We don't have the answers yet to these and other questions but we are going to love discovering the solutions in the days ahead. **These are days of great expectation ahead!**