

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH



Dear Friends of First Baptist Church,

First, I want to thank you so much for your Christ-like attitudes during this unprecedented time; you all have been such a great encouragement to me. You have served your neighbors and community well by sheltering in place, giving generously, caring for your community, and encouraging the staff that serves you. You have genuinely glorified Jesus during this pandemic, and I am so proud to be your pastor.

Many of you have asked and perhaps wondered when we are going back to church. I want you to know that I have an answer for you. Before I give you that answer, let me first say that we all may not agree on this decision, but with much prayer and consideration, it feels that this is the best solution for our church. These times are tough, and there is no handbook for leading through a global pandemic. So, I ask that we all extend grace on top of grace as we walk together through these issues together.

I have developed a three-phase strategy for reopening the church. On June 7th, we will implement Phase 1 of our reopening strategy. Phase 1 consists of resuming in-person worship services in our sanctuary. There will be live music, preaching, and prayer. There will be no childcare, children's ministry, or on-campus Small Groups/Sunday School.

We are taking precautions to open up the building in as safe a manner as possible. There will be extra hand sanitizer available; I will make masks available for those who want them. We will have donation plates at the back of the sanctuary instead of passing an offering plate, and we will take precautions to ensure no one needs to touch any door except the restroom door, etc. We are asking families who live together to sit with each other, and for people to space out as much as possible in the sanctuary. Please, if you have it and want to bring your own mask or hand sanitizer, please do so.

For those who are uncomfortable with being in the building, we understand entirely believe you should act in a way that satisfies your conscience. This means if you are at risk or vulnerable, you may want to stay home a little longer, but please join us virtually. We will continue to livestream via Facebook Live. And we look forward to the day when we can worship with you in person.

Phases 2 and 3 are outlined in the attached documents and will be implemented as we deem them safe to return to normal church life, that is why there is no date associated with each phase.

The greatest tools we have in these times are the exercise of personal responsibility, conscience, and liberty. We are asking you to use these tools wisely as we reopen the church.

Please pray for the leaders of First Baptist. These are trying times, and I know I personally am in great need of wisdom and guidance from the Lord, to do what is right in His eyes and to serve you well. I love you, and I am praying for you. I love being your pastor.

In Christ,

Pastor Josh

Mobile: 309-339-6410

Email: pastorjosh@fbwashington.org

Address: 1113 Peoria Street, Washington, IL 61571

FBC Reopening Plan

Phase-1

Ministry

- Open Sanctuary to Morning Worship, which is at 10:30 am. There will be preaching, prayer, and live music.
- Continue Live Streaming service via Facebook Live
- There will be no child care or children's ministry. Families are encouraged to bring their children to worship service.
- There are activity **bags** to help parents with children
- Encourage People to pick up Sunday School book to use on their own
- Encourage social distancing

Safety precautions

- There will be extra hand sanitizer set up at church in common areas.
- We will not pass the offering plate. Plates in back of the sanctuary or give online or by mail
- Greeters will not be handing out bulletins. You will need to pick them up in the welcome area on your own
- We are asking families who live together to sit with each other during the service.
- Masks Available for those that need them

Phase-2

Ministry

- Open Children's Ministry and small groups/Sunday school
- Fellowship Time with social distancing

Safety precautions

- There will be extra hand sanitizer set up at church in common areas.
- We will not pass the offering plate. Plates in back of the sanctuary or give online or by mail
- Greeters will not be handing out bulletins. You will need to pick them up in the welcome area on your own
- We are asking families who live together to sit with each other during the service.
- Masks Available for those that need them

Phase-3

Ministry

- Celebration Sunday to mark the reopening of ministry as normal.
- Celebration offering and potluck
- Return to normal ministry activities, i.e., children and youth gatherings/trips, community, and school involvement. senior events. mission trips, hospital visitation

Safety precautions

- There will be extra hand sanitizer set up at church in common areas.
- During this time, others may still want to wear masks; please respect their desire and refrain from "mask shaming" others during any time.
- Please be respectful of other desire to still social distance during this time as well

RE-OPENING STRATEGY

3 Phases

- On-site Worship 10:30AM No childcare
- Rooms available for parents if needed
- Families encouraged to sit together and bring children to worship

- Childcare and small group/Sunday school resume
- Resume fellowship time

- Celebration Sunday
- Celebration offering & potluck
- Return to normal ministry activities

Phase 1

Phase 2

Phase 3

