

Bethel Baptist Church of Owasso, Oklahoma

A Plan to Return to Corporate Worship May 3, 2020

Summary

Based on the following guidance and with an abundance of caution, on May 3, Bethel will gather in the auditorium for Sunday Morning Worship. Please review the Details section for more information.

On Friday, April 17, Governor Kevin Stitt held a Zoom Video Conference with Oklahoma Pastors. In that meeting he stated that beginning on Sunday, May 3, any congregation that could gather “safely and responsibly” should plan to come back together in settings that would incorporate “social distancing” and “best safety practices.” Following local and national plans, we will implement a phased approach on our journey back to normal.

This announcement by Governor Stitt coincides with the recent announcement by President Donald Trump regarding his “Re-Opening America Plan.” In that plan, his information on Phase One reads in part: “LARGE VENUES (e.g., sit-down dining, movie theaters, sporting venues, **places of worship**) can operate under **strict physical distancing protocols.**”

Please carefully review the following details so you are aware of coming changes.

Details

Bethel’s Pastoral Ministries Team met (via Zoom) on Sunday afternoon, April 19, and joins the Facilities’ Use Team in commending the following:

PHASE 1: On Sunday, May 3 at 10:45 a.m., we will come back together for corporate worship.

Seating in the auditorium will be by family units. With care taken to allow for appropriate distance between each family we will sit in alternating rows or at opposite ends of two rows.

Nursery and Preschool will not be provided. Since “social distancing” (*remaining at least 6 feet apart from someone who is not a family member, as well as from a family member who is manifesting COVID-19 symptoms or who has tested positive for COVID-19*) is not possible in our

Nursery and Preschool area, there will not be childcare for our children. Rather, we will encourage the entire family to gather in the auditorium for worship. Rooms 133 and 136 will be available for parents to sit with children who may experience a challenging time sitting through the service. The worship service can be viewed on the TV in each room. **PARENTS**—It will be especially important for you to keep close watch on your children and keep them with you at all times.

Collection of Tithes and Offerings. To promote personal safety and avoid personal contact, we will dispense with passing offering plates and cultivate the habit of giving by placing our tithes and offerings in an offering box conveniently located in the foyer. This can be done on the way into the auditorium prior to the worship service or on the way out of the auditorium.

Observance of the Lord's Supper. Since May 3rd is the first Sunday of the month, we will celebrate the Lord's Supper. To promote personal safety and avoid personal contact, prepackaged elements (wafer and juice) can be picked up as you enter the auditorium for the worship service.

Exiting the auditorium. At the conclusion of the worship service we will dismiss by family units/rows. As we adjust to this new normal and our individual levels of comfort, please exit the building and resist the urge to congregate.

Wednesday Evening School of Prayer. Please continue to join our Wednesday evening School of Prayer at 7 p.m. One of the "pleasant surprises" during our current challenge has been the positive response to our Prayer Meeting by means of the Zoom Video Conference App. (If you have not been joining us for this time, let me encourage you to take advantage of Prayer Meeting without leaving the comfort of your home. You can participate in a Zoom Video Conference by using a computer, tablet, and/or smart phone. I will be glad to walk you through setting this up on your device.)

Personal Safety. We want you to return to our gathered time of worship with a measure of confidence. We will continue to provide sanitation stations (offering liquid hand sanitizer as well as anti-bacterial wipes) and work with our janitorial staff for enhanced cleaning and sanitization practices. However, if you feel more comfortable wearing a mask and/or gloves,

please feel free to do so. If you do not have a mask or gloves, please let us know ahead of time and we will be glad to provide them for you free of charge.

If your health condition places you in one of the immuno-compromised categories, then we want to protect you and encourage you to feel free to remain at home and watch our Sunday Morning Service over Bethel's YouTube channel.

If you or a member of your family are sick or manifesting COVID-19 symptoms, or if you have been in contact with someone showing signs of a respiratory infection, then please remain at home (self-quarantine) and watch our Sunday Morning Service over Bethel's YouTube channel. Additionally, we will continue to suspend our traditional "Meet and Greet" time, our monthly Fellowship Meal, 9:30 a.m. Sunday Bible Study, and 6:00 p.m. Sunday Service.

As concerns over the spread of the COVID-19 Coronavirus pandemic dissipate and restrictive protocols are relaxed, we will consider plans to implement **PHASE 2** which will address re-instituting our other meeting times that have been suspended for the time being.

Positive Testing

In the event that someone in our congregation tests positive, we will:

1. Work with health officials to take reasonable steps in "contact tracing" efforts
2. Request impacted congregants self-quarantine for 2 weeks from the date of testing or exposure
3. Take precautionary measures in isolating and disinfecting impacted areas in the Bethel facility
4. Discuss further options with those potentially exposed