



The DCP in collaboration with Pacific Open Bible is offering this resource.

Re-Gathering as Church Communities after Covid-19

What does re-entry look like for churches that have not been gathering coming out of the Coronavirus stay-at-home directives?

A word from Chris:

My next-door neighbor works in emergency management at the University of Washington. I've spoken with him about what it might look like when the stay-at-home order is lifted. He said that one of their primary concerns is the possibility of a second flare-up of the virus. So when it is lifted he believes that it is likely that in many places (like Washington, Oregon & California – who are now coordinating their efforts) it will be lifted gradually. People will be allowed to gather but probably in smaller groups at first so that the outbreak numbers can be monitored. He also believes that we will be asked to continue to maintain many of the social distance practices at least for a while. So for churches, what will this look like? I believe it is important **right now** to begin to develop a strategy for how your church will navigate re-entry.

Some of the questions that probably should be considered are:

- **Strategy**

- If they allow groups of 10, what will that look like for your church? Who will gather? Who will lead them?
- If they allow groups of 50, what will that look like?
- If they allow groups of up to 100, what will that look like?
- If they open it completely up, what will that mean for your church?
- The fact that gatherings are allowed may not automatically mean your church should resume business as “normal.” And if you do, it will be important to recognize that some in your church will need to ease their way back in.
- Not all churches will respond in the same way. Be true to your values, your congregation and your church and community culture.
- Will you continue to provide an online option for those who are ready to step back in? Is there language you may need to discuss with your staff and congregation about how to communicate the messaging so that those who aren't ready to gather yet don't feel less-than or faith-less?
- What about events/conferences/outreaches?
 - How soon will you allow an event to be put on the calendar? Summer? Fall?

- **Mission Reset**

- What are some new missional innovations that have come out of this time that would be good to continue to leverage?
- What are some things/ministries your church was doing that have now stopped during this crisis? Is there anything(s) that doesn't need to be re-started, or maybe can be done another way? What will help your mission advance?

- **Communication:**
 - How and when will you begin to communicate your re-entry strategy?
 - What means of communication will you use?
 - How frequently will you communicate?
 - Would it be helpful for your church to provide a “Frequently asked questions” page on your website specific to re-entry? If so, what are those questions?

- **Dealing with Uncertainty**
 - Depending on each person’s view of and experience in this crisis, there will likely be a variety of responses within your congregation:
 - Some will be very nervous about being in groups again for a while.
 - Others will want to jump in with both feet, unafraid of any social contact.
 - Most will probably be somewhere in the middle.
 - How will you communicate enthusiasm to gather while maintaining sensitivity to those who are afraid?

- **Care**
 - How will you care for those who have lost someone?
 - How will you provide support for the essential workers, some of whom have been putting in many extra hours and/or who have been exposed to difficult situations on a daily basis?
 - How can you support those who have lost work or have had work interruptions?
 - Are there creative ways you may want to celebrate health care workers?

- **Finances**
 - How has our budget been impacted?
 - Is there any expectation of change in our budget as we come out of this crisis?
 - Are there any staffing changes that need to be made? (Remember, if you are receiving a Paycheck Protection loan through the CARE Act it will only be forgivable if you can show that you used the money to maintain the same level of staffing.)

- **Just in Case**
 - In the event of a second wave of the virus and another shutdown, is there anything that needs to be prepared and ready to go?

The DCP has set up a COVID-19 resource page on their website at www.discoverchurchplanting.com/resources . There you will find many helpful resources about navigating the Covid-19 crisis, helpful articles, governmental links, etc.

We’re praying for you. Please let us know if you need any help!

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