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A WORKBOOK TO RE-OPENING YOUR CHURCH BUILDING
A Faith-Based Approach

The Three "Ps"
PLAN, PREPARE AND PRAY

INTRODUCTION:

The purpose of this, "*WORKBOOK TO RE-OPENING A CHURCH BUILDING—A Faith-Based Approach*," is to help churches re-open with the three P's in place: **PLAN, PREPARE and PRAY**. Through effective and efficient planning, a church can rebuild a level of trust with its members. Knowing that a "***plan"*** is in place removes the unknown and can serve as guidance to the church membership in returning to church. This guide also can "***prepare***" a church in the development of a step-by-step action plan that identifies all operational functions of the church. And lastly, the church has, as its foundation, the ability to "***pray***" through good and difficult times. This pandemic, COVID-19, has forced the church to leave its buildings and rely on faith to sustain and guide it through these difficult times.

As churches re-open, this manuscript encourages its members to follow and consider the guidelines outlined in this workbook. These are considerations, not mandates. The churches should follow the guidance set out by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), and state and local authorities, including the health department.

What Is Your Church's Three "Ps"?

- Plan
- Prepare
- Pray

Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.
(Phil. 4:6)

TASK STEP 1: PLAN - Launch A COVID Work Group Initiative

A. Announce the Concept and Explain Why a Work Group Is Needed
B. Appoint A COVID-19 Coordinator
C. Identify Members of the COVID-19 Work Group (consider the functions of the church and appoint the necessary church members)

Activities that can be used:

- Identify a representative from various church committees (trustees, choir, ushers, etc.)
- Develop the work group's specific roles
- Ensure that the work group understands their role and responsibilities

WORKSHEET/NOTES:

Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.
(Proverbs 16:3)

TASK STEP 2: PLAN - Conduct A Survey to Find Out What Church Members are Feeling

A. Identify a Survey Tool
B. Collect Input from Church Members
C. Review, Analyze, and Develop a Summary of Church Member's Responses

Activities that can be used:

- Use a survey, such as Survey Monkey
- Use your calling post to ask questions
- Develop a short index card survey and ask them to drop it in a drop box at the church or send in the mail

WORKSHEET/NOTES:

So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding;

(Proverbs 2:2)

TASK STEP 3: Informing Your Church:

Develop a method to inform the church that you are preparing for the arrival and return to church:

Activities That Can Be Used:

- Flyers on the Doors
- Email to all members
- Use the Calling Post with a standard message
- Use social media
- Be sure to use words like, "clean", "safe", and "we are mindful of health needs and issues in preparation for a non-touch experience" or something that is sensitive and reassuring.
- Develop a kind way to say "if you are sick, returning to church would be a risk for your health and safety, as well as the safety of others".
- Consider having an identified group of members training in "sensitive communications", etc. – There may already be individuals trained and experienced in this area within your church.

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Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.
(Hebrews 10:25)

TASK STEP 4: PREPARE – Prepare the Church to Re-Open

A. Cleaning – Disinfecting – Training
B. Logistic – Service Times, Schedules, Calendars
C. Church Worship Services
D. Identifying and Managing Crowd Size, Registration, Calling Ahead
E. Phasing in Groups to Return – Members: Young Adults and Adults (those with no health issues); Seniors, Fragile/Disabled/Children
F. Activities During Church – Restrooms, Distribution of materials, Hand Sanitizer, Mask Distribution, etc.
G. Manning the Church Entrances
H. Handling Special Ministries – Sunday School, Children Church, Small Group Meeting, Groups that use the church (e.g. AA Groups, Weddings, Funerals, etc.)
I. Protocol and Processes for Choirs, Music Ministries, Praise Teams, Pianist
J. Technology's Role

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Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.
(Luke 21:36)

TASK STEP 5: Preparing Your Church

- Know the layout of your church – High traffic areas, unused areas within the building, possibly closing off unused parts of the church (due to cost considerations)
- Deep clean your entire church. Identify surface areas, those that are heavy traffic area. Consider shampooing carpets, sanitizing pews, bathrooms, light switches/covering, and microphones.
- Identify disinfectants and cleaners that has been approved by the FDA and/or CDC. There is an approved list on the CDC website. (https://www.cdc.gov/)
- Develop a checklist for cleaning and checking church areas (where are the filters; change out according to a documented schedule, flush and clean out water fountains, etc.).
- Remove anything that is non-essential from rooms to limit surfaces for potential contamination and do a thorough cleaning in between uses. If the church has a preschool/children's church area, special attention should be given to items that are shared, areas where children may place their mouths, and any surfaces that are regularly used by children and others.
- Pews – Remove any objects that maybe stored on the back of the pews, i.e., bibles, hymnals, pens, visitor's cards, fans, etc.
- Signage – Identify appropriate informational signage.

Activities that can be used:

Place in a visible, eye level traffic areas. Signage categories

a. Hand Washing
b. Social Distaining
c. Wear Mask
d. Stay Home If You Are Sick
e. Who you should contact with concerns or questions?
f. Others as needed

WORKSHEET/NOTES:

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Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out;
and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. **(Matt. 12:44)**

TASK STEP 6: Logistic – Planning Your Services Times and Location

- Evaluate the need for keeping an online meeting option (Zoom, live-streaming, etc.) for those that are afraid and/or unable to return to service face-to-face.
- Identify opportunities for holding multiple services to manage large crowds gathering in order to adhere to social distancing.
- Registering for service may be a way to monitor church attendance size.
- In scheduling meeting and services times, take into consideration lead times for cleaning between meetings and services.
- Consider using technology to manage attendance (invite and sign-up for events).
- Update information on all church members (correct phone number, email, and address) in case individuals are needed to share information.
- Use your calling post and other ways to notify members electronically or by phone and/or text, etc.
- Evaluate the use of volunteers in handling certain functions within the church operations; note if volunteers have preexisting conditions and those over 65 years of age – minimizing exposure risk.
- How to collect tithes, offering and collecting of money
  - Utilize technology as a possibility, i.e., CashApp, Givelify, etc.
  - Decide on best way to collect church giving (money) – minizine as more movement as possible
  - Place envelops in the tithe boxes in the church

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But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. **(1 Cor. 12:24b-27)**

TASK STEP 7: Social Distancing: Develop a Plan to Adhere to the SOCIAL Distancing Requirements

Activities that can be used:

- Considering using some lines to block off areas in your sanctuary or classrooms to ensure social distancing
- Tape off areas -- 6 foot spacing [use tape (paint tape is easy to use)].

WORKSHEET/NOTES:

And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. **(1 Peter 4:8)**

TASK STEP 8: Standard Screening Questions

1. Do You Have A Fever?
2. Have You Been Exposed/or Been Around Anyone Who Has COVID-19?
3. Do You Have Any Symptoms?

Activities that can be used:

- Evaluate all entry points (designate a plan that allows everyone to enter through identified door entrances).
- Screen with standard questions
- Take temperature with no-touch thermometer
- Place a color-coded band on each arm to identify who has been screened; change colors each Sunday or for the activity of the day.
- Develop a process for entering the church for other than the scheduled opening hours
- Develop a process for vendor(s) to enter the church
- Adhere to protocol established by the church if someone is "SICK"

WORKSHEET/NOTES:

Where no counsel is, the people fall:
but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety. **(Prov. 11:14)**

TASK STEP 9: Develop a plan for contact tracing (if needed)

What is Contact Tracing? In the event a person becomes infested (tests positive for COVID-19) the church will be able to trace who that person has come in contact with and necessary action can be taken.

Activities that can be used:

- Sign-In Cards at each service (use index cards)
- Sign-In sheet (secure name and phone number)
- File the card by the date
- Use established protocol for greeting church attendees (no-touch temperature taking, ask screen questions) (See standard Screening Questions)

WORKSHEET/NOTES:

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world. **(John 16:33)**