

## BELMONT PHASED REOPENING PLAN

Belmont Family-

Words cannot express how much we have missed being able to gather with you in person during this season of quarantine. Our prayer is that your love for Jesus is deepening during this time and that we will all come back from this with a greater appreciation for the need for fellowship with other believers.

We have been praying about what reopening our physical gatherings should look like and planning a timeline that is intentional and easy to understand. Some things that we have kept in mind as we planned are:

- The call to fellowship with other believers. Online fellowship is a good complement to our ministry but not a complete alternative.
- The responsibility to love our people and protect our more vulnerable population without making them feel left out of church life.
- The need to follow guidelines from civil authorities whenever possible.
- The call to be a witness to the love of Jesus in the practical steps that we take and in the way that we talk about reopening. We want our speech to be gracious and seasoned with salt.
- The need for a wise plan with realistic timing. We don't want to jump in too early and have to keep readjusting when the virus spikes in our area. We also need time for our team to get safety protocols in place for reopening our physical campus and to get our live stream equipment up and running for our online campus.

We have been blessed with several medical professionals in our faith family and have been developing this plan in consultation with physicians and nurses. Of course, there is no perfect reopening plan that will suit every church member's preference. As we take steps to reopen, let's all willingly submit our preferences to a generalized plan to achieve the greater good, maintaining the unity of the body. We understand that this plan will feel too fast for some and too slow for others. That's the beauty of having a diverse congregation! Thank you for using this as an opportunity to honor others in our church family who feel differently than you and for honoring your church leaders as they shepherd.

The plan on the following page is meant to be flexible. Adapt it to fit your unique situation and your own caution level while at the same time not giving in to fear or becoming apathetic about the need for fellowship. COVID is obviously a fluid situation with unpredictable regional spikes. As a result, while this timeline represents our planned phased re-opening, we may have to adjust our timeline based on the COVID status in the community.

We love each and every one of you and are honored to serve and lead this church family.

Belmont Elders

May 13, 2020

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CHURCH GATHERINGS	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
Worship Services	Online/Watch Parties	Outside/Online	In Sanctuary/Online	TBD
Children's Ministry	Not Available	Not Available	0-5 yrs. Old	TBD
Community Groups	Online	Online/In Person	In Person/Hybrid	TBD

### MAY

- Our Online Campus will be our primary Sunday gathering. We will continue to build this and train volunteers.
- A Watch Party is a small group that gathers physically at a home/building to watch the online service at 11am.
- Watch Party groups will follow CDC guidelines and help lead the way for what our physical return looks like.
- Anyone who has a fever, symptoms of sickness, or has been exposed will be asked not to attend.
- A designated team will take the lead on deciding/implementing measures for a safe physical return in June .
- Children's Ministry will not be offered in May. Children will be with their families at home or at Watch Party.
- Community Groups will continue to meet online.

### JUNE

- Sunday services will be held outside in the courtyard at Belmont which will be fun and also safer than inside.
- Seating sections will be clearly marked for families to make it easier to keep physical distancing.
- Families will bring their own blanket or lawn chairs to sit in and any snacks or drinks they might want.
- Vulnerable populations will have special parking spots where they can participate from their car.
- Details on masks, cleaning plans, social distancing, singing, etc... will be shared as June gets closer.
- This service will also be live streamed so that our online attenders can still participate.
- If the weather is bad, we will revert to our Watch Party and Online options. Advance notice will be given.
- Community Groups can return to meeting in person based upon the comfort level of the group leader and following any guidelines required by state and local officials.
- Appropriate safety measures and clear communication with the Community Groups Director is needed.
- Some groups will offer a hybrid model so that people can participate in-person and online.

### JULY

- Sunday services will return to the sanctuary at Belmont. We will use the balcony to help spread people out.
- Appropriate safety/distancing measures will be practiced based upon whatever current standards may be.
- Childcare will *tentatively* be available for Birth - 5 years old only. Must not be exhibiting any signs of sickness.
- This service will also be live streamed so that our online attenders can still participate.
- Community Groups will continue meeting in person based upon the comfort level of the group leader.
- Appropriate safety measures and clear communication with the Community Groups Director is needed.
- Some groups will offer a hybrid model so that people can participate in-person and online.
- We will have 'online-only' groups available for folks who cannot attend in-person meetings for whatever reason. This could be health concerns, work schedules, family situation, or geographical distance.

## **SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT FOR REOPENING PLAN** (NASB Version)

### **FELLOWSHIP**

-Hebrews 10:24 "and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging [one another;] and all the more as you see the day drawing near."

### **LOVE**

-John 13:34-35 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.""

-1 John 2:10 "The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him."

-1 John 4:7-11 "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. By this the love of God was manifested in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

### **SUBJECTION TO GOVERNMENT**

-Rom 13:1-7 "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for [rulers] are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax [is due;] custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."

-1 Peter 2:13 "Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. [Act] as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but [use it] as bondslaves of God. Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king."

### **UNITY, GRACE**

-John 17:23 "I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me."

-Ephesians 4:3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

-Colossians 3:14 Beyond all these things [put on] love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

-Colossians 4:6 "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person."

### **SUBMISSION TO ELDERS**

-Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit [to them,] for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

### **WISDOM**

-Proverbs 16:3 "Commit your works to the LORD And your plans will be established."

-Proverbs 16:9 "The mind of man plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps."

-Proverbs 15:22 "Without consultation, plans are frustrated, But with many counselors they succeed."

-Proverbs 21:5 "The plans of the diligent [lead] surely to advantage, But everyone who is hasty [comes] surely to poverty."

### **PRINCIPLES OF CONSCIENCE**

-Romans 14 "Now accept the one who is weak in faith, not for [the purpose of] passing judgment on his opinions. One person has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables [only.] The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who eats, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. One person regards one day above another, another regards every day [alike.] Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God. For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, "AS I LIVE, SAYS THE LORD, EVERY KNEE SHALL BOW TO ME, AND EVERY TONGUE SHALL GIVE PRAISE TO GOD." So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God. Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this--not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way. I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil; for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who in this [way] serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another. Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense. It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or [to do anything] by which your brother stumbles. The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because [his eating is] not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.