



The following COVID-19 Regathering Plan comes from our church council, deacons and staff as a prospective guide for resuming activities at The Church on the Hill. Specific dates for each phase implementation will be determined by careful observation of the dynamics in our community, CDC guidelines and our leadership. We appreciate your prayers, dedication and patience as we continue to work on Regathering our fellowship.

## Objectives

- PHASE 1 Acclimate to a new worship space; Work out bugs with new livestream equipment; Clearly establish precautionary measures and reasons for them
- PHASE 2 Provide focused discipleship to Pre-K; Reopen Church Office to the public; Continue to monitor effectiveness of precautionary measures
- PHASE 3 Take steps to restore the “old normal”; Facilitate congregational unity through one service; Relax some precautionary measures while maintaining others
- PHASE 4 Strive to restore weekday discipleship and fellowship opportunities; Continue to minister to those most vulnerable and/or unable to attend; Research and implement a “new

## Primary Items

PHASE 1  
**RED**

PHASE 2  
**ORANGE**

PHASE 3  
**YELLOW**

PHASE 4  
**GREEN**

### Worship

Sunday Worship services only (9 AM & 10:45 AM) at Braselton Historic Gymnasium (activity packs for kids)  
 One Sunday service at 10:45 AM  
 Kids Service @ 10:45 for 3-y.o. up to 5th Grade  
 2-years and under nursery room available  
 Simultaneous livestream on church website and Facebook at 10:45 AM

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### Sunday Groups

Adult small groups and Kids/Student Ministries  
 continue online-only activities  
 Sunday Morning Bible Studies encouraged to meet in homes at all times  
 Sunday Morning Bible Study classes resume in-person gatherings

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# Primary Items

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ORANGE  
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GREEN

## Weekday Groups

- Kids/Students continue Zoom meetings
- Socially-distanced Kids and Student Ministry activities during the week
- Committees continue online meetings
- Committees meet in-person at chair's discretion
- Home Groups gather at their own discretion
- Home Groups and Weekday Bible Studies regather<sup>1</sup>
- Church Office open (limited hours)
- Church Office open (normal hours)
- Adults, Students, and Kids activities resume weekday activities for all those who are comfortable attending

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## Precautionary Measures

### Social Distancing

- Social-distancing, including seating (6-feet on all sides); families sit together
- Maintain a social-distance seating section while allowing the rest of the worship space to return to regular seating

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### Physical Contact

- Physical contact prohibited (e.g., hugging, handshakes)
- Fist-bumps and "Hugging Buttons" permitted
- Fist-bumps, "Hug Buttons," linger for social-distanced conversations
- All physical greetings restored at worshipper's discretion

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### Masks

- All leaders & volunteers wear masks in both services
- All attendees strongly encouraged to wear masks (available at entrance); required at 9 AM service<sup>2</sup>
- All attendees strongly encouraged to wear masks (available at entrance)
- Mask-wearing optional by all (available at entrance)

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### Other Measures

- No bulletins or handouts (electronic bulletin available through Realm, email or text.)
- Bulletins available; no other handouts (Electronic versions available)
- Bulletins and handouts available from greeters (Electronic available)
- Stay-in-seat invitation (contact member of pastoral team for any decisions)
- Social-distanced invitation responses
- No-pass offering (dropbox available, or online giving)
- Multiple hand-sanitizer stations
- Different entry & exit points
- Sanitary distribution of Lord's Supper elements

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<sup>1</sup> Assuming the church is able to procure available meeting space.

<sup>2</sup> Determination made in consideration of the most vulnerable members of our fellowship, as well as a liability concern.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. **How was this plan crafted? What were the main influencers of these determinations?**

There were several stages of information-gathering and research that went into putting together the Phased Regathering Plan. First, we compiled a list of recommendations, based on both the latest research on the Covid-19 virus and how it is spread, and our own church-wide survey on the subject of regathering. Once our staff and Church Council discussed and added their input on these recommendations, we then set out to develop this detailed plan according to the best-practice recommendations of several science agencies and ministry organizations, including the Centers for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, advisements of state and local authorities, the Georgia Baptist Mission Board, and the Southern Baptist Convention. Additionally, we talked with fellow pastors and observed the practices of other churches in Georgia as well as other states – some that have already resumed meeting, and others who are also preparing for a regathering in June.

## 2. **Are there specific dates for when we will enter a new phase?**

No, there are no specific dates. Because the situation with this virus is fluid, and the potential for new spikes will likely remain through the rest of the year, it would be unwise for us to force these phases onto specific months or weeks of the calendars. That said, it is the view of your Church Staff that Phase 1 will likely extend through July (though we certainly will evaluate week-to-week), and we will likely make adjustments around the time school resumes and we can observe their best practices.

Additionally, it should be understood that none of the points in any phase is set in stone. For instance, we may progress to Phase 2, yet retain a particular Phase 1 precaution because of the latest recommendations from health authorities. Or, a Phase 3 activity may be included within Phase 2 because we deem it safe to do so. The point of the Phased Plan is to offer a general trajectory of a safe return to a sense of normalcy.

## 3. **Will childcare be available in Phase 1?**

As of right now, best practices for churches is to forego childcare and Kids Ministry programs. Our staff understands the strain on families who are used to putting their young children in childcare, but we also recognize that the goal of Phase 1 is chiefly to acclimate to the opportunity to meet again. Thus, we have delayed resuming any childcare and Kids Ministry activities until later phases. For those families who choose to attend a worship service in Phase 1, our Children's Pastor, Chad Robinson, will be providing Bible-themed activity packs (individually packed and distributed) for children to work on during the worship service if they choose.

## 4. **Why are there two worship service times?**

There are two main reasons for starting out with two services (9AM & 10:45 AM). The first is based on best-practice recommendations from both the CDC and Georgia Baptist Mission Board, which encourage churches to limit the number of people in their sanctuaries at one time. The second is to provide a more effective way to protect our congregation's most vulnerable and immuno-compromised members by offering a service in which everyone wears masks for the protection of others.

The worship services will be identical in structure – the same music, sermon, and time frame. The worship space will be sufficiently sanitized following each service.

5. **Why do I have to wear a mask?**

The latest research shows that simple, cloth masks worn over the mouth and nose significantly reduce the amount of particulates expelled into the air whenever we speak, cough, sneeze, laugh, or sing. It also shows that even in a well-ventilated building, aerosolized particles can linger in the air for up to 3 hours. We've also learned that a person infected with Covid-19 is at his/her most contagious before exhibiting any noticeable symptoms. (Essentially, you may feel completely healthy and still spread the virus you don't even realize you have.)

Masks do not protect the wearer from inhaling contaminated air, but they do prevent an infected person from spreading the virus through the air. In other words, I wear a mask not for myself, but for others. It is a tangible way to practice Jesus' command to "love your neighbor as you love yourself" (Mt. 12:31), to embody the Christian responsibility to look not to our interests alone, but to the interests of others (Phil. 2:3-4).

We realize masks can be uncomfortable, nor do we like to be reminded of the danger of infection. But regarding those at greater risk of infection and complications with this virus, we should consider what simple actions we can take to allow them the same opportunity to worship in-person. Thus, in Phase 1, we're asking everyone who attends the 9:00 AM service to wear a mask. (If you do not have a mask, one will be provided when you enter.) While we also strongly encourage folks to wear masks in the 10:45 AM service, it is important our first service, at least, include this precaution for the sake of all those who would need or prefer it. We appreciate your understanding.

6. **Will I be able to choose where I sit?**

Yes, to an extent. We are setting up the worship space with chairs in clusters of 4, each spaced six feet from other clusters. When you arrive for the service, you can proceed to the cluster of your choice. (Families of 5 or more will be assisted by a staff member or deacon in adding more chairs.) Once you choose a seat, we ask that you remain there for the entirety of the service. Also, while the Braselton Historic Gym has bleachers, in order to make the sanitization process easier, we are asking that people only sit on the first bleacher row, closest to the floor.

7. **Do I have to make a reservation ahead of time to attend?**

No, that is not necessary at this time. While some churches have implemented a reservation system due to concerns about space, presently we do not anticipate running out of space in either service. Obviously, we will monitor congregation size and make adjustments to this policy as needed.

8. **How will the livestream be different?**

First of all, it will be available at 10:45 AM (i.e., the second service) rather than 9:30 as in the past. Second, it will be a multi-camera recording of the service from beginning to end. It will continue to be available on both Realm and Facebook, and can also be viewed later in both platforms as well as the church website.

9. **What are "Hug Buttons"?**

"Hug buttons" is how, beginning in Phase 2, we will allow for hugs and closer-proximity greeting while remaining sensitive to other members' decision not to hug. We will provide buttons to identify those congregants who are willing to give and receive hugs for all of us itching to greet others with a warm embrace instead of just a wave.

## 10. **What can I do to help?**

There is SO much you can do to help us regather with excellence. We are in great need of additional volunteers to assist with set-up, tear-down, and sanitizing the chairs and surfaces after each service (contact Eric Dillingham at [eric@hill.church](mailto:eric@hill.church)), to assist the Tech Team and/or operate our livestream cameras, or even to serve with the Worship Team (contact Trey Bradley at [trey@hill.church](mailto:trey@hill.church)), or help greet and direct worshippers as they arrive (contact Chad Robinson at [chad@hill.church](mailto:chad@hill.church)).

Additionally, please help us spread the word about our regathering, and encourage one another to pray for this entire endeavor. It is so easy to focus on all the precautions, or the schedule, rather than on the purpose of gathering in the first place – to connect with God and one another, and to unite in praise and reverence of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We know our services won't look or feel the same as they used to, but we still have the great privilege of getting to gather in-person and worship together. May that be what we focus on, and what brings us joy in the midst of this hard season.